

*A CONCISE CHRONOLOGY  
OF BIBLICAL HISTORY*

**PART I**

*FROM THE CREATION OF THE  
WORLD UNTIL YETZIAS  
MITZRAYIM*

**PhD-DISSERTATION**

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*„Remember the days of  
old, consider the years  
of many generations;  
ask your father, and he  
will show you; your  
elders, and they will  
tell you.”*

*(Devorim 32:7)*

## Preface

יִשְׂמְחוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְתִגַּל הָאָרֶץ<sup>a</sup>, „*Be glad, oh Heavens and rejoice, oh Earth*”, blessed be *Hashem*, our G-d, King of the Universe, Who kept me alive, sustained me, and brought me to this moment when He who graciously endows man with wisdom enabled me to end the first part of this work.

The following paper was originally intended to serve as working material for a series of lectures which I held years ago in a high-school. Essentially, it followed the „*Sefer Seder haDoros*” of Jechiel HALPERIN.<sup>1</sup> With the time, I collected more and more material, from many other sources, primarily the *aggadic corpus* of the Two Talmuds, the different *Midrashim* and the commentaries.

What actually the reader will find on the following pages, after an introduction about time-reckoning, the different calendar systems and *World-Eras*, is a chronological overview of Biblical history from Creation until the *Exode*. Although the Torah is not a book of history, nevertheless we can find there many „historical” informations also. And the background of these short informations has been conserved by the *aggadic* tradition.

Besides the actual chronologically organized compilation of the *aggadic* material, the reader will find in footnotes commentaries of modern scientific sources, my own critical remarks concerning the difficulties to coordinate certain data of the different rabbinical sources, as well as Greek and Ancient Middle East mythological parallels to certain stories of the *aggada*. Naturally, the paper

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<sup>1</sup> Yechiel HALPERIN, *Seder haDoros*. [The Order of Generations] Bnai Berak: Sifrai Or haChayyim, 2003. The successive editions of the work, originally published in 1779, accumulated quite a great number of printer's errors. Although the last edition of 2003 pretends to have emended these errors, there are still quite a lot left. When necessary, I will mark these in footnotes.

is accompanied by a bibliography. Hebrew names occurring in the text are generally given with Hebrew characters also in brackets. From the Hebrew sources, places in the *TANACH* are indicated in brackets with Latin characters, places in the Talmud, the *midrashim* and rabbinical commentaries in brackets with Hebrew characters. As I consider this dissertation being the elaboration of a *religious* topic with *scientific* methods, during the whole text I used the transliteration of Hebrew words customary in the American *yeshivah*-world, and for many years by the *Artscroll* series also.

Naturally, this kind of work can never have any aspiration to completeness. The „*Sea of the Talmud*”<sup>1</sup> is an endless source for *aggadic* researches. What this paper proposes is an approximative idea about what did a „learned” Jew know – before the apparition of „modern” historiography, let’s say until the end of the 18th century - about the history of mankind and more concretely of the Jewish people.

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<sup>1</sup> Although the well-known expression, „*the sea of the Talmud*” (*Yom shel Talmud*), does not figure in the Talmud itself, we find several places in the *TANACH* which compare the vastness of knowledge to the sea: *e. g.* *Yeshayah* 11:9, *Iyov* 11:9. One of the first occurrences of the expression can be found in the *RAMBAM*’s introduction to his commentary to the *Mishna*. It is also present in the introduction to R. Yitzchak ABOAB’s „*Menoras haMaor*” (c. 1400): „The precious pearls that lie upon the bed of the sea of the Talmud, the *aggadic* passages so rich in beauty and sweetness” (*cf. jSotah* 8:3, 22d).

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## Introduction

### 1. *Basic terms: Day, month, year, week:*

The alternation of the days and the nights, the cold and warm *viz.* the dry and rainy seasons influences fundamentally the everyday life and activities of mankind. Consequently, for the societies based on regular and organized food-production – agriculture and stock-breeding - it was always of vital importance to observe these changes, and also to establish the regularities of these changes. Consequently, in Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia where agriculture was based on irrigation, it was of vital importance for the population to be sufficiently prepared for the repeated risings of the rivers, the Nile and the Tigris and the Euphrates, and also to organize public works in the possibly best way. This created the need for an utmost „exact” study of the natural phenomena which influence decisively the survival of the peoples. It is for this purpose that the first time-reckoning systems are born, based on astronomical observations and computations.

In order to redact an *astronomical calendar*, first of all it is necessary to recognize the fact that the regularly repeated natural phenomena are dependent upon the movement of the planets or at least are connected to them; and that the duration of these movements can be determined even in relation to each other.

To redact an *astronomical calendar*, three *celestial motions* are to be taken into consideration:

- ▶ 1./ the rotation of the Earth around its axis (the apparent East-West motion of the Sun across the sky),
- ▶ 2./ the revolution of the Moon around the Earth,

► 3./ the revolution of the Earth in its orbit around the Sun.

**1.1. The Day.** Old English *dæg*,<sup>1</sup> Lat. *dies*, Sanskrit *dive*, Hebr. יום 'day'; Hungarian *Nap* 'day' is homonymous with *Nap* meaning 'Sun' presumably of Finno-Ugrian origin.

A day is the time necessary for a single rotation of the Earth around its axis (the apparent East-West motion of the Sun across the sky).

The Earth makes 365,25 (more exactly 365,242199) rotations around its axis until it returns during its revolution around the Sun to the same point. The *solar day* is thus the time during which the Sun apparently revolts around the Earth because of the rotation of the latter around its axis, and returns to its *meridian*. The length of the *solar day* varies with 5 to 15 minutes. Consequently, time-reckoning is based on the so-called *average solar day*: the mean of these fluctuations.

The – arbitrary - subdivision of a day into hours, minutes and seconds goes back to Ancient Mesopotamia. The Sumerians used, parallel with the decimal system, a sexagesimal system also, intended for the expression of larger units. Conforming to the approximately 360 days of the year, they divided a circle into 360 degrees and, accordingly, the orbit of the (apparent) revolution of the Sun, the day, also into 360 degrees: into 2 x 6 hours of 30 minutes each. In the 5th century BCE, these units came to be divided into two, thus creating the actual system. The French Revolution made an attempt to introduce the use (based on

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<sup>1</sup> The etymologies of the English words are generally taken from *WEBSTER'S Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*. Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster Inc., 1987. The Hungarian etymologies are from Lorand BENKŐ, Lajos KISS & Laszlo PAPP eds., *A magyar nyelv történeti etimológiai szótára (TESz) I-IV*. Budapest: Akadémiai, 1967-84.



the decimal system) of 10 or 20 hours' days. However, the revolutionnary calendar did not survive the Revolution.<sup>1</sup>

**1.2. The Month.** OE *Monath* < OE *Mona* 'Moon', OHG *Manod*, Lat. *mensis* < Gr. *mené* 'Moon'; Hebr. *שדח* 'new'; Hung. *hónap* < hold[hó]nap 'lunar month'.

The *sidereal month* is the time it takes the Moon to return on its orbit to a given position among the stars (Lat. *sidus*, *sideris* 'constellation, star'): 27,321661 days (27 days 7 hours 43 minutes 11.5 seconds).

The *phases* of the Moon are dependent on the position of the Moon with respect to the Sun as seen from the Earth. The average period of the Moon's revolution with respect to the Sun is called *synodic month* (Greek *σὺν ὁδῷ*, *syn hodō*, 'with the way [of the sun]'). As the Earth is progressing in its orbit around the Sun, the Moon, while orbiting the Earth, after completing a *sidereal* month, has to move a little farther to reach the Earth's new position with respect to the Sun. When the Sun, the Moon and the Earth are in line, *i. e.* the Moon is in between (called *Sun-Moon conjunction*), only her face to the Sun is enlightened: this is the astronomical New Moon (called in Latin *accensio lunae* 'the day [before] the Moon's apparition; in Hebr. *molad* [מולד] 'birth'). However, peoples of the Antiquity considered the first appearance of the thin crescent of the „new” Moon as the begin of the *lunar* month. Upon observing it, they proclaimed the begin of the new month. From the moment of the *conjunction*, the Moon moves on a slightly elliptic orbit from West to East, „showing” always greater and greater part of her enlightened face to the Earth. When the Moon reaches a position opposite the Sun, the enlightened face is circular: the Moon is at the full. Thereafter, the Moon again approaches *conjunction*.

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<sup>1</sup> See below, p. xxxix.

The average length of a *synodic* month between two New Moons (*lunation*) is in one year 29,530589 days, *i.e.* 29 days 12 hours, 44 minutes and 3 seconds: about 45 minutes longer than 29 and a half days. However, because of astronomical reasons, there can be a difference of up to 13 hours, between the length of the different *lunar* months. Consequently, the new Moon can appear a day earlier or later than expected.

In Babylonia, in the 5th century BCE, a calendar-system based upon *lunar* months of 29 and a half days has been established. Thereafter, observation only sanctioned computation. In order to avoid problems resulting from the accumulations of the monthly half-day differences, a part of the months has been fixed as having 29 days and the others 30 days. The remaining almost 45 minutes monthly plus has been compensated through declaring by times an „extraordinary” 30 days’ month. Consequently, the length of a *lunar* year is 12 *lunar* months, 11 days, 8 hours, 48 minutes and 36 seconds.

In calendars based upon the motion of the Sun, a month is no more a *lunar* month, it is simply a twelfth part of the year.

**1.3. The (solar)year.** Lat. *annus*, Hebr. שנת החמה 'solar year'. West Saxon *gear*, Anglian *gēr* continues Proto-Germanic *\*jǣram* (*\*jē<sub>2</sub>ram*). Cognates are Old High German *jar*, Old Norse *ár* and Gothic *jer*, all from a PIE *\*yērom* „year, season”. Cognates outside of Germanic are Avestan *yare* „year”, Greek *ἔτος* „year, season, period of time” (whence „hour”), Old Church Slavonic *jaru* and Latin *hōnus* „of this year”. Latin *annum* is from a base *\*at-no-*. Both *\*yē-ro-* and *\*at-no-* are based on verbal roots expressing movement, *\*at-* and *\*ey-* respectively, both meaning „to go” generally. Latin *annum* has a cognate in Gothic *aþnam* „year”. The Greek word for „year”, ἔτος, is cognate to Latin *vetus*

„old”, from PIE *\*wetus-* „year”, also preserved in this meaning in Sanskrit *vat-sa-* „yearling (calf)”. Hung. *év* is of Finno-Ugrian origin.

One year is the time during which the Sun, because of the revolution of Earth around the Sun, moves apparently around the Earth on a full elliptical orbit following the *ecliptic*. Already the peoples of the Antiquity were able to observe this, due to the fact that the Sun, after one year can be seen in the same position when defined in relation to one of the twelve constellations which form the *Zodiac* along the *ecliptic*.

The term *Zodiac* comes from Latin *zōdiacus*, from Greek ζῳδιακός [κύκλος] ‘circle of animals’, derived from ζῳδῖον, the diminutive of ζῷον ‘animal’. *Zodiac* is „an imaginary belt in the heaven usually 18 degrees wide that encompasses the apparent path of all the principal planets except Pluto, has the *ecliptic* as its central line, and is divided into 12 constellations or signs each taken for astrological purposes to extend 30 degrees of longitude”.<sup>1</sup> Beginning from the *vernal equinox*, these twelve constellations are:

- Lat. *Aries* ‘Ram’, Hebr. *Tale* (טלה): allusion to the *Pessach* lamb;
- Lat. *Taurus* ‘Bull’, Hebr. *Shor* (שור): allusion to grazing animals;
- Lat. *Gemini* ‘Twins’, Hebr. *Teumim* (טאומים): allusion to abundance;
- Lat. *Cancer* ‘Crab’, Hebr. *Sarton* (סרטון): allusion to summer heat;
- Lat. *Leo* ‘Lion’, Hebr. *Aryeh* (אריה): the king of animals;
- Lat. *Virgo* ‘Virgin’, Hebr. *Besuloh* (בתולה): allusion to the daughter of Israel;
- Lat. *Libra* ‘Scale or Balance’, Hebr. *Moznayim* (מאזנים): allusion to the Eternal’s judging the world on *Rosh hashonoh*;
- Lat. *Scorpio* ‘Scorpion’, Hebr. *Acrov* (עקרב): allusion to the thirst after water;

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<sup>1</sup> WEBSTER, p. 1.372.

- ▶ Lat. *Sagittarius* 'Archer', Hebr. *Keshes* (קשת): allusion to the rainbow after the Flood;
- ▶ Lat. *Capricornus* 'Horned Goat', Hebr. *Gedi* (גדי): allusion to going out to the fields;
- ▶ Lat. *Aquarius* 'Water-Bearer', Hebr. *Deli* (דלי);
- ▶ Lat. *Pisces* 'Fish', Hebr. *Dagim* (דגים): allusion to the blessing that Avrohom's descendants will be countless as the fish.

The time during which the Sun's *zenith* returns, on a given geographical place, to the same place in heaven is called *tropical year* (Greek *tropai* 'vernal point'). Concretely, what is taken into consideration is one of the two intersections of the *ecliptic* (the plane of the Earth's orbit) and the celestial *Equator* (the terrestrial Equator, the plane perpendicular to the rotation axis of the Earth, projected to the celestial sphere). The two form an angle of  $23^{\circ} 27'$  degrees, and are called *vernal* and *autumnal* points. The intersections taken into consideration are observed on the day of the *vernal* or the *autumnal equinox*, on March 21 or September 23, respectively.

The apparent celestial path of the Sun starting from one fixed star back to the same fixed star, is called *sidereal year*. Its length is 365 days 6 hours 9 minutes 9,8 seconds, slightly longer than a *tropical year*. The difference is due to a slight motion of the *vernal* point on the *ecliptic* from East to West. This motion is called *precession*, and astronomically it means the slow but continuous changing of the orientation of the Earth's rotational axis, which traces out a conical shape in a cycle of approximately 25,765 years, the so-called Great- or Platonic year. According to our actual knowledge, it was the Greek astronomer, HIPPARKHOS of Rhodes (or Nikaia), who discovered *precession*. Although his works – „*On the Displacement of the Solsticial and Equinoctial Points*“, „*On the Length of the*

*Year*”, „*On Intercalary Months and Days*” - are no more extant, we know largely about them from PTOLEMY’s *Almagest*. We do not even know the exact dates of his life, however, the lunar *eclipses* he observed can be established that took place in 146 and 135 BCE. Actually, Hipparkhos discovered *precession* comparing his own measurements to those of TIMOKHARIS of Alexandria (early 3rd century BCE), as did, almost five centuries later, Ptolemy to his.<sup>1</sup>

And as the *precession* is not constant, the length of the *tropical* year is also not constant: its average length is 365,242190 days, 365 days 5 hours 48 minutes and 46 seconds. As a result of different observations (the observation of the *vernal* point, the shortest shadow, the *zodiac* etc.), in the Egypt of the Old Kingdom, in the 3rd millennium BCE, they were using a calendar of 365 days and, in the middle of the 2nd millennium, one of 365 and  $\frac{1}{4}$  days.

**1.4. The Week** < OE *wicu*, *wucu*; akin to OHG *wehha* ‘week’; cf. Lat. *vicis* ‘change, alternation’. Lat. *septimana* or *hebdomada*, Hebr. שבוע ‘a week of seven days’. Hung. *hét* ‘seven’.

The week is a calendrical unit generally independent of the computation of months and years. Nevertheless, the seven days’ *week* can be related to the *phases* of the Moon (New Moon, prime of the Moon, full Moon, wane of the Moon).

The Egyptians already used the seven days’ week as a time-unit. According to their astrological ideas, the seven celestial bodies visible by naked eye (the three external planets – *Uranus*, *Neptunus*, *Pluto* – were still unknown) reign over the days of the week. The Latin names of the seven „planets” are: *Luna* [‘Moon’] *Mercurius*, *Venus*, *Sol* [‘Sun’] *Mars*, *Iuppiter*, *Saturnus*. Consequently, the

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<sup>1</sup> See below, p. xli-xlii.

*Saturnus* (identified later with the G-d of the Jews), rules over the first, eighth, fifteenth and twenty second hours of Saturday. The twenty fifth hour, *i.e.* the first hour of the next day is under the rule of the Sun, which is the third „planet”, counting backwards, and so on. In the Germanic languages, the days of the week are named after the German deities identified with the above Roman ones.

The names of the seven days of a week in the Germanic and Romance languages are:

Latin *dies Solis*: English *Sunday*, German *Sonntag*; but French *Dimanche*, Italian *Domenica* from Latin *dies Dominica* 'the day of the Lord';

Lat. *dies Lunae*: Fr. *Lundi*, It. *Lunedí*, Eng. *Monday*, Germ. *Montag*;

Lat. *dies Martis*: Fr. *Mardi*, It. *Martedì*; but Eng. *Tuesday*, Germ. *Dienstag*, from the name of the German deity *Ziu* identified with Roman *Mars*;

Lat. *dies Mercurii*: Fr. *Mercredi*, It. *Mercoledì*; but Eng. *Wednesday* from the name of the German deity *Wotan/Odhin* identified with Roman *Mercurius*;

Lat. *dies Iovis*: Fr. *Jeudi*, It. *Giovedì*; but Eng. *Thursday*, Germ. *Donnerstag*, from the name of the German deity *Thor/Donar* identified with Roman *Iupiter*;

Lat. *dies Veneris*: Fr. *Vendredi*, It. *Venerdì*; but Eng. *Friday*, Germ. *Freitag*, from the name of the German deity *Freya* identified with Roman *Venus*;

Lat. *dies Saturni*: Eng. *Saturday*; but Fr. *Samedi*, It. *Sabato*, Germ. *Samstag* from Hebr. *Shabbos* (transliterated into Greek as *sabbatos* or *sambatos*).

The Jewish calendar marks the days of the week with numbers from one to six, according to the biblical description of the six days of Creation (*Beraishis* 1:1-2:3). The only day which has a proper name is the seventh day: *Shabbos* (שבת 'rest'). One *day* lasts from evening until evening of the next day: „...*And there was evening and there was morning, one day*” (*Beraishis* 1:5).

The Romans used a market-week of eight days: *nundinae* 'nine days', the

market held every ninth day. With the time this has been replaced by the seven days' week, originating in the biblical account of Creation and spread through *hellenistic* intermediaries. This starts with Sunday, its seventh day being Saturday / *Shabbos*. When Christianity inherits this system, they start to call the week-days *feria*, and mark them with numbers: *feria prima* 'Sunday' (more often *Dominica*), *feria secunda* 'Monday', *feria tertia* 'Tuesday', *feria quarta* 'Wednesday', *feria quinta* 'Thursday', *feria sexta* 'Friday', however instead of *feria septima*, *Sabbatum* 'Saturday'. The reason behind the renaming of the days has been the Church's aspiration to drive out the cult of the pagan deities, the planets being named after the pagan Roman deities. This new Christian system is followed by the Portuguese language: *segunda feira* 'the second day [after *Shabbat*] = 'Monday', *terça feira* 'Tuesday' etc.; but *domingo* (< *Dominica*) 'Sunday'.

In this system, the fourth day of the week (which starts on Sunday) is in the middle of the week (Sunday-Monday-Tuesday / Thursday-Friday-Saturday). Therefore, the name of Wednesday in German is *Mittwoch* 'the middle of the week'; and in the Slavonic languages it is also formed from a root *sreda* 'central, middle', whence in Hungarian > *Szerda* 'Wednesday'.

The first general council of the recently legalized Christian Church, held in 325 CE in Nikaia in Asia-Minor (today Iznik, Turkey), the so-called *Nicean Council* took position in questions related to the calendar also. Taking over the principle of the weekly rest-day from Judaism, the new Christian concept transfers it from Saturday – connected to Creation and thus to Judaism – to Sunday, the day of the „Resurrection”. This could have been motivated by the Church's general intention to express her independence of Judaism, but also by her intention to overcome the Sun-cults by absorbing them. This „new” Christian

concept is declared obligatory by emperor CONSTANTINE the Great (307-337)<sup>1</sup> with the approbation of pope SYLVESTER I (314-335),<sup>2</sup> counsellor to the emperor in the elaboration of the so-called *Edictum Mediolanense*, through which Christian religion became legalized. This „new” Christian concept is reflected in the denomination of the days of the week in the Slavonic languages and, through them, in Hungarian. Consequently, Monday is the first day of the week and Sunday the seventh.

Russian *ponedielnik* 'the begin of the week', its Hungarian calque being *hétfő*;  
 Russ. *vtornik* (Russ. *vtaroi* 'second'), its Hungarian calque being *kedd* (< ketted 'second');

Russ. *sreda* 'the middle of the week' (see above), Hung. *szerda*;

Russ. *tshetvierg* (Russ. *tshetyri* 'four'), Hung. *csütörtök*;

Russ. *piatnitsa* (or. *piati* 'five'), Hung. *péntek*;

Russ. *subbota*, Hung. *szombat*;

Russ. *voskreseniya* 'resurrection'; but Hung. *vasárnap* < vásánap 'market day'.

In the Arabic language, as in the Hebrew, the „first day” of the week corresponds with Sunday of the planetary week. The Islamic and Jewish weekdays begin at sunset, whereas the medieval Christian and planetary weekdays begin at the following midnight. Muslims gather for worship at a mosque at noon on *yaum al-jumu'a* 'gathering day' corresponding with Friday. Consequently, „gathering day” can be considered as the weekly day of rest, and

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<sup>1</sup> Historical data, concerning the years of the reign of the different kings, are those generally accepted by historiography, and are taken from John E MORBY, *A világ királyai és királynői. Az idők kezdetétől napjainkig*. [Dynasties of the World. A Chronological and Genealogical Handbook. Oxford University Press, 1989.] Budapest: Maecenas, 1991 [In Hungarian].

<sup>2</sup> Historical data, concerning the years of the reign of the different popes, are those generally accepted by historiography, and are taken from Zoltán HANGAY, *A pápák könyve. A római pápák Szent Pétertől II. János Pálig*. [The Book of the Popes. The Roman Popes from St. Peter to John Paul II] Budapest: Trezor, 1991.



the following day, Saturday, as the first day of the work week. The names of the days in the Islamic calendar are:

*yaum al-ahad* يوم الأحد (first day, Sunday),

*yaum al-ithnayn* يوم الإثنين (second day, Monday),

*yaum ath-thulaathaa'* يوم الثلاثاء (third day, Tuesday),

*yaum al-arbia`aa'* يوم الأربعاء (fourth day, Wednesday),

*yaum al-khamis* يوم الخميس (fifth day, Thursday),

*yaum al-jumu`a* يوم الجمعة (gathering day, Friday),

*yaum as-sabt* يوم السبت (Sabbath day, Saturday).

## 2. Calendar systems

**2.1.** In general terms, taking into consideration that a given calendar system follows the motion of the Sun or the Moon, or combines the two, we speak about three calendar systems.

*Lunisolar*: to solve the problem of the more than eleven days' difference between the length of the *lunar* and *solar* years, every second or third year a 13th month, called *leap-* or *intercalary*-month is inserted into the calendar: this is called *intercalation*. This procedure can be observed in the Babylonian, the Jewish, the Greek (this latter was not a homogenous system using intercalations only accidentally) and the Roman calendar systems (the latter only until the introduction of the so-called *Iulian*-calendar).

*Solar*: time-units are defined exclusively following the motion of the Sun, being anyhow more relevant from the point of view of agriculture. This was the case of the Egyptian calendar and also of the so called *Iulian*-calendar, introduced after 46 BCE, after the calendar reform by Iulius CAESAR (101/100-44 BCE). It is from the latter that most of modern calendar systems take their origin.

*Lunar*: based on pure lunar years, independently of the Sun's motion. This was the case of the Islamic calendar arranged and prescribed by Muhammad for his adepts, the latters being mainly nomadic herdsmen and sheperds pasturing their herds mainly by night.

**2.2.** *The Egyptian calendar* was a purely solar system, serving as a direct antecedent and partially even as a basis for the *Iulian* reform of the Roman calendar and, through this, of the modern calendar systems of Christian origin.

Life in Ancient Egypt was based on agriculture, and agriculture was dependent on irrigation. This was based on the yearly inundation of the Nile provoked by the thaw of the snow on the snow-fields of the Ethiopian Highlands. Even the name of the country in the ancient Egyptian language was *Kemi / Kemet* 'black', as the silt left over by the inundation of the Nile is black, contrary to the yellow sand of the desert. The word signified originally Upper Egypt, Lower Egypt being called *Desret* 'red'. At the beginning, they even counted the years from one inundation of the Nile to the next, dividing them into three periods: the seasons of inundation (*ahet*), sowing (*peret* 'sprouting') and harvest (*shemu* 'heat').

Later, the begin of the year was fixed to the *heliac* rising of the star *Sothis*, the main star of the constellation *Sirius*, called in Egyptian *Sopdet*. According to long years' observations, inundation generally started on this day, the 19th of July.

The calendar, established already since the Old Kingdom (28-27th century BCE) was divided into twelve months, each having 30 days. The remaining 5 days were declared extracalendar holidays: the so-called *epagomena*-days being the birthdays of the deities *Osiris*, *Horus*, *Set*, *Isis* and *Nephthys*. The months were divided into three „weeks” of ten days each. The names of the twelve months were: *Thout*, *Paopi*, *Hathor*, *Koiak*, *Tooba*, *Emshir*, *Paremhat*, *Paremoude*, *Pashons*, *Paoni*, *Epip*, *Mesori*.

As the 365 days' year of the Egyptian calendar was with approximately a quarter of a day shorter than the *solar* year, stellar events so to say „wandered” through the calendar. Therefore, the Egyptian year is referred to as „*Annus Vagus*” 'wandering year'. The priests used to introduce *leap*-years of 366 days. This results in about every 1460 year in a whole year's difference, *i.e.* the date of the *Sothis*' rising returns to the original in every 1460 year. This is called in the late-period *Sothis*-year:  $3 \times 365 + 1 \times 366 = 1.460$ , what means that the *Sothis*-

year harmonizes the so-called „small cycle” of four years with the so-called „celestial or big cycle”.

In order to solve this problem, PTOLEMAIOS III Euergetes (246-222 BCE), Hellenistic ruler of Egypt orders, in 238 BCE, the introduction into the calendar of an *intercalatory* day every fourth year. However, the priesthood does everything possible to disturb the execution of the royal order. It will be only in 26 BCE, when AUGUSTUS (27 BCE -14 CE) occupies Egypt, that the *leap-year* system of the *Iulian-calendar* will be introduced in Alexandria. This will later serve as the fundament for the Coptic calendar in Egypt as well as of the Christian calendar in Ethiopia (the latter have 7 CE as the starting point of their time-reckoning).

**2.3. The Jewish calendar** is a *lunisolar* one (as was the case of the Babylonian also). It is based upon a calendar-system where the *lunar* years, consisting of 12 *lunar* months, are equalized with the *solar* years in cycles of 19 years.<sup>1</sup> Despite of different claims that the ancient Jewish calendar was a *solar* one, as suggested by the Ethiopian *Book of Enoch* (72-78), *Jubilees* (6:29-30) and the Qumran *Book of the Covenant of Damascus* (p. 16), the terms *chodesh* and *yerach* indicate clearly its dependence of the Moon.<sup>2</sup>

The length of one month is 29 days 12 hours and 793 parts;<sup>3</sup> consequently, the months of the calendar are of 29 and 30 days alternatively. The former are called *defective months* (חדש חסר), and the latter *complete months* (חדש מלא).

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<sup>1</sup> RAMBAM, *Mishneh Torah*, *Hilchos Kidush haChodesh* 1:1.

<sup>2</sup> See below, p. xxviii.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 6:3. According to others (*Pirkai deRabbi Eliezer*, chapters 6-7), the length of a *lunar* month is 29 days 12 and 2/3 hours and 73 parts, in opposition to the *solar* month of 30 days and 10 and a half hours.

In the Torah, the months have no names, they are only numbered. The first month is the „spring-month” (*Aviv* = *Nissan*), because of the decisive place occupied by the *Exode* in Jewish history. However, the calendar-year begins in the seventh month (*Tishrai*), the first day of this month – the sixth day of Creation - being the day of the creation of the first human being.

Although the *TANACH*, one can find proper names for certain months: *Ziv* (זִיב; 1.*Melochim* 6:1, 37) for the second, *Bul* (בּוּל; 1.*Melochim* 6:38) for the eighth and *Essonim* (אֶתְנִים; 1.*Melochim* 8:2) for the seventh month respectively, the names of the months in use until our days were brought from the Babylonian exile by the Jews upon their return to *Eretz Yisroel*. The names are (beginning from spring-time): *Nissan* (נִיסָן), *Iyyar* (אֵייר), *Sivan* (סִיוֹן), *Tammuz* (תַּמוּז), *Av* (אב), *Elul* (אֱלוּל), *Tishrai* (תִּשְׂרִי), *Cheshvan* (חֶשְׁוֹן), *Kislaiv* (כִּסְלוֹ), *Taives* (טַבַּת), *Shvat* (שְׁבַט), *Adar* (אֲדָר).<sup>1</sup> *Nissan* is always of 30 days, *Iyyar* always 29, *Sivan* always 30, *Tammuz* always 29, *Av* always 30, *Elul* always 29, *Tishrai* always 30, *Cheshvan* 29 or 30, *Kislaiv* 29 or 30, *Taives* always 29, *Shvat* always 30, *Adar* always 29.

*Intercalation*. According to the Torah (*Devorim* 16:1), the *yom tov Pessach* is supposed to fall in the spring-month: „*Observe the month of Aviv* [spring] ...”. In order the *yom tov Pessach* should not „walk around” the calendar, instead of falling always in the spring-month, the 354 days long *lunar* year has to be harmonized with the 365 days long *solar* year.<sup>2</sup> Consequently, to prevent the 16th of the *lunar* month *Nissan* should occur before the *tekufah* of *Nissan* (*brRH* 21a) – on the presupposition that the *tekufah* of *Nissan* stands for the true and not the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the names of the months in the Babylonian calendar: *nissannu*, *airu*, *simanu*, *du'uzu*, *ubu*, *ululu*, *ululu II.*, *tashritu*, *arachshama*, *kislimu*, *tebetu*, *shabatu*, *addaru*, *addaru II.*

<sup>2</sup> *RAMBAM*, *Op. cit.* 4:1.

mean *vernal equinox* – an intercalatory thirteenth month has to be inserted, and the year to be proclaimed a *leap-year*.

In the times of the *Bais hamikdosh*, three factors were taken into consideration when proclaiming a *leap-year*:

- ▶ 1./ should the *vernal equinox* (*tekufah*, תקופה) fall after the 15th of *Nissan*, they declared *Nissan* for *Adar sheni*;
- ▶ 2./ if the fruits ripened late, or
- ▶ 3./ if spring was late, they proclaimed a *leap-year*, thus making it possible to bring the *omer*-sacrifice on the 16th of *Nissan*.<sup>1</sup>

The four seasons of the Jewish year, more exactly the (mean) beginning of the seasons is called *tekufah* ['circuit'], denoting the mean Sun at the *vernal equinoctial* point (*Nissan*), at the summer *solstitial* point (*Tammuz*), at the *autumnal equinoctial* point (*Tishrai*), and at the winter *solstitial* point (*Taives*). According to Mar SHMUEL (c. 165-254), *Rosh Yeshivah* at Nehardea, the length of each season is 91 days 7 ½ hours. As the *tekufos* move forward in the week, after 28 years, the *tekufah* of *Nissan* reverts to the same hour on the same day of the week as at the beginning. This 28 years' cycle is called the great- or *solar-cycle* (*machzor hagadol*, *machzor hachammah*).

According to Jewish astronomical tradition, the length of one day is 24 hours 59 parts and 8 seconds.<sup>2</sup> One hour (שעה) = 1080 parts (חלק), one part = 76 minutes (רגע), 1 minute = 60 seconds (שני-ה). The length of a *solar* year is 365 days and 6 hours (according to other – Jewish and non-Jewish [Greek and Persian] – opinions 365 days 5 hours 997 parts and 48 seconds). The length of a *lunar* year is 354 days 8 hours and 876 parts what means that there is a difference

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.* 4:2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 12:1.

of 10 days 21 hours and 204 parts.<sup>1</sup> In order to compensate this, every 3rd, 6th, 8th, 11th, 14th, 17th and 19th year of a 19-years' period,<sup>2</sup> called in Hebrew *machzor katan*, is made a *leap-year* (שנת העיבור, שנה מעוברת). In these years, after the 12th month (*Adar*) of 30 days, a 13th *leap-month* of 29 days is intercalated (*Adar sheni*, 'second *Adar*').<sup>3</sup> In times of the *Bais hamikdosh*, the proclamation of *leap-years* could still be occasional, depending on the necessities of agriculture. The actual system of intercalation did not become generally accepted until the tenth-eleventh centuries (see the relative controversy of R. SAADYAH *gaon* with R. Aharon ben Meir so late as in the tenth century). The length of a *leap-year* is 383 days 21 hours 589 parts. Consequently, even after the equalizing through the 19 years' cycle, there remain one hour and 485 parts.<sup>4</sup> As the Jewish holidays cannot fall, because of certain liturgical considerations (the so-called *Ad"u*-rule, see below), indifferently on every day of the week, occasionally a 30th day is added to the eighth month (*Cheshvan*), while the ninth month (*Kislaiv*) is abridged with one day, thus it will have 29 days instead of 30. Therefore, the month *Cheshvan* is called *Marcheshvan* ('Lord *Cheshvan*') also, as the length of the other months is adjusted according to its length. Accordingly, the length of the year is also modified: hence we speak about *long-* or *full-years* (שלמים), in case both months are of 30 days; and about *defective* years (חסרים), in case both are of 29 days. Finally there are also years *according to their order* (כסדרון), in case *Cheshvan* is of 29 days and *Kislaiv* of

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.* 6:4.

<sup>2</sup> For the *Metonic-cycle* see below, p. xxviii. The Babylonian calendar-system used, since 499 BCE certainly, a cycle of 235 *lunar* months in 19 years (with only three exceptions before 380 BCE), but it did not use a specified number of days. The *leap-month* was intercalated in the 2nd 5th, 8th, 10th, 13th, 16th and 19th year of the 19 years' cycle.

<sup>3</sup> *RAMBAM*, *Ibid.* 6:10.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

30. Consequently, one calendar-year can have 353, 354, 355 or 383, 384, 385 days.

The aforementioned *Ad'u*-rule means that the *yom tov Rosh hashonoh* cannot fall on the first, fourth and sixth day of the week („*lo Ad'u Rosh*”<sup>1</sup>), viz. on Sunday, Wednesday and Friday.<sup>2</sup> Should *Rosh hashonoh* fall on Wednesday or Friday, would the Fast-day of *Yom Kippur* fall on Friday or Sunday, rendering impossible the burning during the night of the remaining fat of the daily sacrifices of *Yom Kippur* or *Shabbos* respectively and, in our days, the preparations for *Shabbos* or *Yom Tov* (cooking, candle-lighting etc.). Should *Rosh hashonoh* fall on Sunday, would *Hoshanoh Rabboh* fall on *Shabbos*, making it impossible to accomplish the *mitzvoh* of the *esrog-lulav* and the *arovos*. Naturally, the *ad'u* rule entered into function only after *Matan Torah*, when the *Yomim Tovim* of the Torah became introduced: according to Rav SAADYAH gaon and Rabainu Chananael, the actual Jewish calendar system takes its origin from Mount Sinai. The sixth day of Creation, when the Eternal created the first human couple, and which is consequently the starting point of our time-reckoning, i.e. the first day of the first year (*Rosh hashonoh* of the first year) was Friday. And it follows from the *Ad'u*-rule that we have to face the same problem with the other holidays also. Consequently, *Yom Kippur* cannot fall on the first, third and sixth day of the week, viz. on Sunday, Tuesday and Friday (*Ga'u*). *Purim* cannot fall on the second, fourth and seventh day of the week, viz. on Monday, Wednesday and *Shabbos* (*Zebe'd*). The first day of *Pessach* cannot fall on the second, fourth and sixth day of the week, viz. on Monday, Wednesday and Friday (*Bad'u*). The first day of *Shovuos* and *Hoshanoh Rabboh* cannot fall on

<sup>1</sup> For a possible different reading see *Ezra* 8:17.

<sup>2</sup> RAMBAM, *Ibid.* 7:1; *Shulchan Aruch, Orech Chayyim* 428:1; cf. *mShabbos* 15:3, *mSukkah* 4:2-3.



the third, fifth and seventh day of the week, viz. on Tuesday, Thursday and *Shabbos* (*Gaha''z*). The first day of *Chanukah* cannot fall on the third day of the week, viz. on Tuesday. The Fast of Esther (the day before *Purim*) cannot fall on the first, third and sixth day of the week, viz. on Sunday, Tuesday and Friday (*Ag''u*). The 17th of *Tammuz* and *Tishoh beAv* cannot fall on the second, fourth and sixth day of the week, viz. on Monday, Wednesday and Friday (*Bad''u*).

One of the consequences of the aforementioned *Ad''u*-rule is that if the *molad* of the month *Tishrai* occurs on a Sunday, Wednesday or Friday, the first day of the *yom tov Rosh hashonoh* is postponed to the next day. This postponement is called in Hebrew *dechiyo-h*. There are altogether four kinds of *dechiyos*. The second one is used when the *molad* of the month *Tishrai* occurs at noon or after it, and the first day of the *yom tov Rosh hashonoh* is postponed to the next day. But if the next day happens to be a Sunday, Wednesday or Friday, the *yom tov* is postponed – in accordance with the *dechiyo-h* 1 - with one more day. The other two *dechiyos* serve to prevent a regular year from having more than 355 days, and a leap-year from having less than 383 days.<sup>1</sup>

*Proclamation of the New Moon.* In *Yerusholayim*, the *Sanhedrin*, following the report of two reliable witnesses concerning their observation of the (re)appearance of the thin crescent of the new Moon, proclaimed the New Moon (קדוש החדש, 'sanctification of the [new] Moon'). If the witnesses arrived to testify during the day of the 30th day of the month, the *Sanhedrin* declared that day for the first day of the next month. In case the witnesses did not arrive until sunset, they declared the next (the 31th) day for the first day of the next month, making the previous one for a *leap*-month of 30 days. However, the proclamation of the New Moon as well as the intercalation of *leap*-years is only permitted,

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<sup>1</sup> RAMBAM, *Ibid.* 7:1-8.

according to *halachah*,<sup>1</sup> when there is an ordained *Sanhedrin* in *Eretz Yisroel*. In lack of this, New Moons and *leap*-years are fixed by astronomical calculations.

Originally, they accepted the witness of everyone concerning the reappearance of the new Moon. Later, however, because of the misleading *manoeuvres* of the *tzadokim* / *sadduceans*, they only accepted the witnesses of Jews true to the Oral Law, to the rabbinic tradition (*mRH* 2:1). The population got informed about the beginning of the month by the light of beacons kindled on the Mount of Olives and thence over the entire land and in parts of the Diaspora. Later, however, as the *Kutim* began to light misleading beacons, the *Sanhedrin* despatched messengers to far-removed communities (*Ibid.* 2:2). Inhabitants of *Shomron* / Samaria (hence called Samaritans), the *Kutim*, a population of Assyrian origine from the town *Kuta* in North-Eastern Mesopotamia, were settled in *Shomron* by *Sancheriv*, observing certain prescriptions of the Jewish religion. The New Moon thus proclaimed became the first day of the next month (*Rosh Chodesh*), and made it possible to calculate the holidays which are designated by the Torah for certain days of the months (*cf. Tehilim* 104:19).

In 358 CE, after the legalization of Christianity, emperor CONSTANTIUS II (337-361), son of CONSTANTINUS I the „Great”, prohibits the proclamation of the New Moon. Consequently, Hillel *hanossi* [‘patriarch, prince’], the younger (320-365) redacts the calculated calendar, the *luach* (לוח),<sup>2</sup> in use until our days. According to tradition, quoted in the name of *Rav HAI gaon*, it was introduced in the year 670 of the *Seleucid Era*, which was the year 4119 after the Creation:

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<sup>1</sup> *RAMBAM*, *Ibid.* 5:1-2.

<sup>2</sup> *Luach*: Hebr. ‘table, tablet’; *cf. Shneh Luchos haBris* ‘the two Tablets of the Covenant’. *Cf.* Akkad. *lehu* ‘tablet of wax’, the Mesopotamian name of the tablets serving for astronomical observations.

358/59 CE. However, the *Karaite* Jews, who do not accept rabbinical tradition, still rely on actual moon observations.<sup>1</sup>

As a consequence of the redacted character of the actual Jewish calendar, an interesting feature can be observed: the so-called „ATBA”*Sh*”-rule.<sup>2</sup> The days of the *Yom Tov Pessach* correspond to the other holidays of the year, following a system paralleling the first and last letters of the Hebrew alphabet: א”ת ב”ש ג”ר ד”ק ה”צ ו”פ. Accordingly, the first day of *Pessach* (א' דפסח) always falls on the same day as *Tisho beAv* (תשעה באב). The second day of *Pessach* (ב') always falls on the same day as the first day of *Shovuos* (שבועות); the third day of *Pessach* (ג') always falls on the same day as *Rosh hashonoh* (ראש השנה). The fourth day of *Pessach* (ד') always falls on the same day as *Simchas Torah* (קריאת התורה); the fifth day of *Pessach* (ה') always falls on the same day as *Yom Kippur* (צום); the sixth day of *Pessach* (ו') always falls on the same day as the preceeding *Purim* (פורים).

To redact the Jewish calendar for a given year, one needs three basic informations:

- ▶ 1./ On which day of the week falls the first day of *Rosh hashonoh*;
- ▶ 2./ How many days have the months *Cheshvan* and *Kislaiv*, i. e. if the year is *chosser*, *sholem* or *kessidro*; and
- ▶ 3./ On which day of the week falls the first day of *Pessach*.

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<sup>1</sup> According to the *RAMBAM* 5:3, they used to proclaim the New Moon until the end of the period of the *Sages* of the *Gemara*, until the times of *ABAYE* and *ROVA*. According to the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (presumably based on the Letter of *Rav Sherira gaon*), *Abaye* lived between 278-338 CE (for an analysis of the different data related, see „*Seder haDoros*”, year 4,039). However, the *Babylonian Talmud* has been closed in 500 CE, and this year is generally considered as marking the end of the period of the *amoraim*.

<sup>2</sup> *Shulchan Aruch Orech Chayyim* 428:3.

These data can be found in Chizkiya-h ben David da SILVA's (Leghorn, 1659 - *Yerusholayim*, 1695) commentary to the *Shulchan Aruch*, named „*Pri Chadash*”,<sup>1</sup> until the year 6000 of the Jewish *World-Era*. There, for every single year, three Hebrew letters are given: using their numerical value for 1./ and 3./, and the initial of one of the three Hebrew words for 2./. According to this, the year 5765 after the Creation (2004/05 CE) was the eighth year of the 304th *machzor*, a *leap-year*, when the first day of *Rosh hashonoh* fell on Thursday, *Rosh Chodesh Nisan* and the first day of *Pessach* fell both on Sunday, and the two „problematic” months, *Cheshvan* and *Kislaiv* were both of 29 days. The calculation of the *molads*, the exact moments of every New Moon is, naturally, much more complicated.<sup>2</sup>

The calendar-system described above is the one used by rabbinical tradition. Different sources seem to indicate that there were other calendar solutions in use also. According to 1.*Melochim* 12:32-33, King YEROBOAM of Israel instituted the postposition of the High Holidays with one month, to the eighth month. Eventually, it can well be that, later, *Kutim* / *Shomronim* / Samaritans also followed his system. The *tzaddokim* and *beothusians* also deviated from the rabbinical calendar. Contradicting the traditional interpretation of the expression „*the morrow of the Shabbos*” (*Vayikroh* 23:11) which, according to the Sages, means „the second day of *Pessach*” (*bMenachos* 65b), they started the „counting of the *omer*” on Sunday after the first day of the Festival (*mMenachos* 10:3).

As attested by the *Book of the Covenant of Damascus* (p. 16) and also by the *War Scroll* (col. 2), the *Dead Sea Sect's* solar calendar divided the 364 days' year into twelve month of 30 days each and simultaneously into 52 weeks (7 x 52 =

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<sup>1</sup> # 428.

<sup>2</sup> See *ibid.* in the *Pri Chadash*.

364). Each of the four seasons consisted of 13 weeks:  $13 \times 7 = 91$  days, viz. of three months of 30 days and one day for the „sign”:  $3 \times 30 + 1 = 91$  days;  $4 \times 91 = 364$ . The four days of the „signs” are the *vernal*- and the *autumnal equinoxes* and the summer- and winter *solstices*. An „advantage” of the regularity of this calendar is that the first day of the year and all the Festivals fell always on the same day of the week. According to what attested by the *Dead Sea Scrolls*, *Rosh hashonoh* (and hence *Rosh chodesh Nissan* and of *Pessach* also) was fixed on Wednesday. According to *Beraishis* 1:14-19, The Eternal created the Sun on the fourth day, and the sect’s calendar followed the great Heavenly Luminary. Naturally, this *solar* year is 1 and  $\frac{1}{4}$  days shorter than the astronomically computed length of a *solar* year. However, the sect did not exist so long that this should have caused problems through the decalation of the Festivals in relation to the seasons.<sup>1</sup>

**2.4. Calendar-systems in ancient Greece.** The division of the 354 days’ year into four seasons and twelve *lunar* months is already present in HOMER, see e. g. the story of *Helios’* herds.<sup>2</sup> However, in the different city-states, rather different calendar systems were in use. Writing in the Greek, JOSEPHUS Flavius uses the Macedonian names of the months even in the second half of the first century CE, presumably out of respect for the – Macedonian - ALEXANDROS the Great. These names are: *Xanthikos* (March-April), *Artemisios* (April-May), *Daisios* (May-June), *Panemos* (June-July), *Loos* (July-August), *Gorpiaios* (August-September), *Hyperberetaios* (September-October), *Dios* (October-November), *Apellaios* (November-December), *Audynaios* (December-January), *Peritios*

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<sup>1</sup> VERMES, *Qumran*, p. 210.

<sup>2</sup> *Odyssey* 12:127-141.

(January-February), *Dystros* (February-March). Summerizing the earlier efforts to harmonize the different calendar-systems of the different city-states, SOLON *arkhon* (c. 640-559 BCE) introduces, in 593 BCE, a new calendar of Babylonian origin, which is based upon periods of eight years each (the so-called *oktaeris*- or *oktaetis*-cycle). In one such cycle, five years have 12 *lunar* months, while the other three 13 *lunar* months. In order to equalize the *lunar* years with the *solar* system, in every fourth year of the cycle one month is intercalated, and in the eighth two months. This gives together three intercalated months during a period of eight years. Solon's calendar was in use until 431 BCE, the begin of the first *Metonic*-cycle.

It is generally accepted that the Atticean surgeon and astronomer, METON (Leucone, 5th century BCE) was the first to recognize the fact that the phases of the Moon fall on the same day of a *tropical* year only after 19 years. This is the so-called *Metonic*-cycle (Lat. *cyclus decemnovennalis* or *lunaris*), which makes it possible to equalize the difference of the *lunar* and *solar* years through the intercalation of *leap*-months or *leap*-days. In 19 years we have 228 *lunar* months (as the length of a month is approximately 29 and a half day, we use alternatively months of 29 and 30 days). To this we have to add seven *leap*-months of 30 days each (*mensis embolismalis*), and four „*Julian*“ *leap*-days for the entire cycle. In this way, we arrive to a total amount of  $6.726 + 210 + 4 = 6.940$  days which is approximately one day more than the length of 19 *tropical* years. Consequently, at the end of each cycle, one day has to be omitted: this is called *lunar leaping* (*saltus lunae*). As the begin of the first cycle, Meton established the 16th of July 432 BCE. However, the *Metonic*-system has not been introduced officially in Athenes itself until 406 BCE, and we do not have any information about its introduction in the other Greek states.

In 342 BCE, the calendar-system based on the so-called *Metonic-cycle* is further developed by KALLIPPOS. With his calendar, based on periods of 76 years viz. on four *Metonic-cycles* ( $4 \times 19 = 76$ ), Kallippos approached with greater exactitude the length of the year according to the *Iulian*-calendar. Omitting the last days of the last years of four consecutive *Metonic-cycles*, at the end of 76 years one can reduce the difference between the *lunar* and *solar* years to a few minutes. The length of a month, according to Kallippos' reckoning, is longer than the astronomical month with only 22 seconds. From the end of the fourth century BCE, this system will replace the use of the *Metonic-cycle* in Athenes. From the 76 years of the cycle, 33 had 354 days, 15 years 353 days, while the remaining 28 years had 384 days (so-called enlarged or *embolismal* years). This means that, from the 940 months of a cycle ( $33 \times 12 + 15 \times 12 + 28 \times 13 = 940$ ), 499 months had 30 days, and 441 had 29 days.

**2.5.1. The Roman calendar.** According to tradition, the old Roman calendar had been redacted by king ROMULUS, founder of the city. The year started in spring-time, and had originally 10 months, presumably 304 days. According to certain sources, the length of the months depended on the work in the fields, thus varied between 36 days (*Martius*) and 16 days (*September*). Curiously, this system supposes two „empty” months for the winter, being out of season for agriculture. At the end of winter, when spring came, people prepared themselves with different rites of purification for the new agricultural working-year.

From the ten months of the old Roman calendar, four had their own names, the others being marked only with numbers: *Martius*, *Aprilis*, *Maius*, *Iunius*; and *Quintilis* (Lat. *quintus* 'fifth'), *Sextilis* (Lat. *sextus* 'sixth'), *September* (Lat.

*septem* 'seven'), *October* (Lat. *octo* 'eight'), *November* (Lat. *novem* 'nine'), *December* (Lat. *decem* 'ten'), respectively.

The month *Martius* received its name after the legendary father of *Romulus*, the deity *Mars* (Lat. 'brilliant') who is supposed to be originally the deity of the Sun, thus the one who decides about the begin of the spring, the begin of the agricultural year. The vernal New-Year, reckoned in relation with the *vernal equinox*, was feasted at full-Moon, on the *Ides* of *Martius*. Later, *Mars* became the patron of the soldiers who go to war in springtime. His birthday was feasted on the 1st of *Martius*, and young men were sent out to occupy new lands. In times of famine, they brought sacrifices from the first produce of the land, the plants and animals (Lat. *Ver sacrum* 'holy spring'). In the homes and on the *Forum*, fire-places were renewed, and new bread was baked for the soldiers.<sup>1</sup>

The month *Aprilis* was named after the maternal ancestor of *Romulus*, the goddess *Venus*, called in Etruscan *Apru* (cf. Greek *Aphrodite*). The Latin word *aperio* (< *ad-perio*) means 'to open', what makes allusion to a primitive fertility cult related to the renewal of nature. According to an „official” explanation of later times, the *Consuls*, entering into office on the first day of *Aprilis*, „opened” the year named consequently after them.

The month *Maius* was dedicated to the adults (Lat. *maior*, *maius* 'greater'; *maiores* 'the elders'). The name was given after the Greek goddess *Maia* ['old woman'], who begot *Hermes* from *Zeus*, and the Roman goddess *Maia* (Lat.

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<sup>1</sup> According to certain opinions, this bread, the *Martis panis* or *Panis Martialis* is at the origin of the *marzipane*. However, according to the generally accepted etymology, the name takes its origin from the Italian name of unknown origin of a Byzantine money in use during the period of the Crusades, the *marzapane*. Cf. Arab *mautaban* 'a sitting king, a Byzantine money' (the money represented *Oto Ish* sitting on a throne), Ecclesiastic Latin *matapanus* 'a Venetian money'.

The Torah says (*Shemos* 23:13) „...make no mention of the name of other gods, neither let it be heard from your mouth”. Consequently, instead of his original name, traditionally the surname *Oto Ish* ['that man'] is supposed to be used. Naturally, this became necessary only after he has been „deified” by the *Nicean Council*.



*maiestas* 'greatness, dignity'), wife of *Vulcanus*, goddess of the vernal fertility. At the same time, *Iuppiter* was also called *Deus Maius*. Later, the month has been dedicated to *Iuppiter*. On the first of May, a sow in farrow was sacrificed to *Maia*: this was called *maialis* (cf. Ital. *maiale* 'pig'). The night before the first of May (the so-called *Walpurgis*-night of the German tradition) is mythologically the fight of the Greek and Roman, the old and the young spring-goddesses; the last efforts of the winter snow-storms against the renewal of nature. After the *Ides* of the month, the *Vestal*-virgins threw puppets of straw into the Tiberis as a symbolical human sacrifice.

*Iunius* was dedicated to the youth (Lat. *iuniores* 'the youth'). The name of the month got associated to the name of *Iuno*, goddess of matrimony and childbirth: *mensis Iunonis*.<sup>1</sup> During the week which followed the ninth of the month was held the *Vestalia*, feast of *Vesta*, goddess of the hearths.

*October* was dedicated, the same as *Martius*, to *Mars*, and celebrated with military festivities.

The commemoration of the deads on the first day of *November* is of Celtic origin. The first of November was the Celtic New Year, when sacrifices were brought in honour of the deads. This has been „christianized” into the „*All-Saint's day*” („*Hallow's day*”, *Festum omnium sanctorum*; since 835) and the „*All Souls' day*” (*Dies omnium defunctorum* or *Animarum commemoratio*; since 998). The latter departed from the Benedictine monastic at Cluny, in connection with the „*World's End*”, the *Doomsday* expected for the year 1,000.

The most important series of holidays in *December* were the *Saturnalia*, dedicated to *Saturnus*, deity of agriculture (Lat. *sero* 'to sow'), on the 23rd of the month on occasion of the winter *solstice*. According to the legendary story of

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. OVIDIUS, *Fasti*.

later times, the reign of *Saturnus*, the oldest king of *Latium*, marked the original (agrarian) Golden Age.<sup>1</sup> Coming from Greece, he settled in Italy where he learned people the art of agriculture. Therefore, the real content of the feast was an expression of the citizens' longing back to the former agrarian society. Consequently, the feast – in later times already enduring for a whole week - had a social character also: with complete break of legislation and tax collecting; slaves were dressed in free men's garments and served as Lords; giving presents to each other in the frame of some kind of a feast of loveliness.

According to Roman tradition, around the year 700 BCE, NUMA POMPILIUS (715-672 BCE) reformed the calendar. He introduced the use of *lunar* years consisting of twelve *lunar* months. Therefore, he inserted into the calendar two new months. At the same time, he uniformized the length of the months, establishing months of 31 and 29 days alternatively (with the exception of *Februarius* which had 28 days), thus arriving to years of 355 days. Nevertheless, this tradition is considered by many as being only the explanation of the numbers „hidden” in the names of the different months through popular etymologies and, thus, lacking any foundation and, consequently, being unacceptable. In the „new” calendar, the first month of the year was already *Ianuarius*, followed by *Februarius*.

*Ianuarius* takes its name of *Ianus*, the double-faced deity of the begin and the end. Originally an old Italian sheperd-king: *Zan - Ian* (*Zeus pater - Iupiter*), his

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<sup>1</sup> In Roman mythology, *Saturnus*' figure became melted with that of *Kronos*, originally also an agrarian deity in Greece. The latter, son of *Uranos* and *Gaia*, the youngest among the *Titans*, king of the second generation of g-ds, being instigated by his mother, mutilates his father with a sickle, and dethronizes him. *Kronos-Saturnus* is the personified Time, which dethronizes the precedent year (*Uranos*, *Kronos*' father). He devours his children born of his own sister, *Rhea* (cf. the mother of *Romulus* and *Remus* was also called *Rhea Silvia* 'forest spring'), the months. Consequently, after having drunk the poison received from his son, *Zeus* (who was born and grown up secretly on the island of Crete), he gives them back: the year is re-born, renewed. *Zeus-Iuppiter* (in the mythology, after ten years of war waged together with his brothers) triumphantly dethronizes *Kronos* to the *Tartaros*.

two faces were the bearded and unbearded symbols of the Sun and the Moon. Later, both are bearded guards of the gates, looking forward and backward. Lat. *ianua* 'gate, *Ian*'s house'; *iani* '*Ianus*'-Arcs, gates leading to the *Forum*'. These gates were opened for the soldiers when they left for war, being kept closed in times of peace. His wife was *Dea Iana* = *Diana*, goddess of the Moon.

*Februarius* was the month of purification. Lat. *fibra* 'leather fibres'; *februo* 'a purification rite, during which women are lashed with leather fibres by naked young men who only covered their loins with goat's skin', the priests of *Faunus* (*Pan*), called *luperci*. *Lupercal* 'a cave at the foot of the Mount *Palatinus* consecrated to *Faunus* (*Pan*) where, according to tradition, *Romulus* and *Remus* were nursed by the she-wolf'. Hence, *Lupercalia* was the feast of magic purification on the 15th of the month (presumably, at the same time, a wolf-driving and men's initiation ritual also). *Februus* was the deity of the dead souls, and the feast to commemorate the dead parents was called the *Parentalia*. Later, the month of purification became the month of fertility. Originally, this was the last month of the year: *Terminalia*, the feast of boundaries on the 23rd of the month (*Terminus* was the deity of the boundaries), the end of the year, after which the calendar-correction has been intercalated. The *Lupercalia* has been „christianized” in 494, during the Council held in Rome, by pope GELASIUS (492-496) – who established the Biblical canon –, into the „*Candlemas Day*” (*Festa candelorum*) on the 2nd of February. This commemorates the purification of *Oto Ish*'s mother, according to Torah-prescriptions (*Vayikroh* 12:1-8), and the bringing of sacrifices on the 40th day after the birth, accompanied by burning candles (*Purificatio BMV*).

The first day of the *lunar* month was called *Calenda* (Lat. *calo* 'proclaim'), being at the same time the date of interest payment; thus a *calendarium* was

originally a 'debenture bond'. Besides the *Calenda*, there were two other important days in a *lunar* month: the *Ides* (Full Moon) and the *Nona* (prime of the Moon). In eight of the months, the *Ides* occurred on the 13th day, in March, May, July and October, it occurred on the 15th. The *Nona* always occurred 8 days before the *Ides*, *i.e.* on the 5th or the 7<sup>th</sup> of the month.

Until 153 BCE, the *Consuls* entered into office around the *Ides* of *Martius*, this being, consequently, the official begin of the year. Beginning from this year, *Consuls* entered into office on the 1st of *Ianuarius*, this day becoming later the begin of the year also.

*Proclamation of the New Moon.* In order to adjust the right place of the feast-days fixed to certain seasons, *viz.* to eliminate the 11 days' difference between the *lunar*- and *solar* years, the High Priests, the *Pontifex Maximus* (Lat. 'the principal bridge-builders', *i. e.* between the g-ds and humans) intercalated, every second year, a *leap-month* of 23 or 22 days alternatively (*Intercalaris*, *Mercedonius* 'additional'). The intercalatory month came after the month *Februarius* which, in this case had only 23 days. A four-years' cycle of this system has  $355 + 378 + 355 + 377 = 1.465$  days, giving a yearly average of 366,25 days, what exceeds the length of a *tropical* year with about a day.

**2.6.2. Iulius CAESAR'S calendar-reform.** To the year 47 BCE, following the repeated arbitrary *intercalations* and calendar inexactitudes, the errors raised up to 90 days, three months of difference between the begin of the seasons in relation to the calendar. Therefore, IULIUS CAESAR – in the quality of *Pontifex Maximus*, *Consul* and *Dictator* in one-man -, charges the Alexandrian astronomer, SOSIGENES, to elaborate upon a calendar reform.<sup>1</sup> In that year,

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<sup>1</sup> DIO CASSIUS 44:26.

already a *leap-year*, two additional months were intercalated between *November* and *December*. Consequently, the year, together with the 23 days of *Februarius*, had 445 days: *annus confusionis* 'the year of confusion'. At the same time, the system of *leap-months* together with the proclamation of the New Moon became abolished.

Introduced in 45 BCE, the so-called *Iulian-calendar* (*Calendarium Iulianum*), uses years of 365 days, every fourth year – originally every first year of a four years' cycle, later its fourth year – being a *leap-year* of 366 days. The *leap-day* has been intercalated between the 23th and 24th of *Februarius*. Following the Roman system of naming the days, after the 23th of *Februarius*, comes *ante diem sextum Cal. Mart.* ('the sixth day before the *Calenda* of *Martius*'). In order to avoid an alteration in the system of the days, the *leap-day* has been intercalated before this day with the same name adding only the differentiating particle *bis*: *ante diem bis sextum Cal. Mart.* ('the second sixth day before the *Calenda* of *Martius*'). Consequently, the *leap-day* was called *dies bis sextus*, and the *leap-year* (only in the Middle Ages<sup>1</sup>) *annus bis sextilis* (hence in French *année bissextile* 'leap-year'). One year consisted of four months of 30 days and of seven months of 31 days alternatively, *Februarius* being of 29 days (of 30 days in a *leap-year*). Thus a cycle of four years has  $3 \times 365 + 366 = 1,461$  days, meaning an average of 365.25 days per year, what means that one year of the *Iulian-calendar* is longer than the *tropical year* with 11 minutes and 14 seconds; resulting every *ca.* 128 years in a difference of a whole day. According to the established system of the calendar, the *vernal equinox* was supposed to fall on the 25th of *Martius*. However, because of inexact reckoning (the exactitude of astronomical measuring was within the one day), in the year of the introduction

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. ISIDORUS *Hispalensis*, *Etymologiae* VI:17.

of the calendar reform, the *vernal equinox* fell on the 23th of *Martius*. The begin of the year was also transferred from the first of *Martius* to the 1st of *Ianuarius*, the date when the *Consuls* entered into office.

After the assassination of Iulius Caesar (44 BCE), the month *Quintilis* (31 days) was renamed after him, as he was born on the 12th day of this month. As Iulius Caesar came from the clan *Iulius* (the *Gens Iulia*), the month was called henceforward *Iulius*.

As in the turbulances of the civil wars they forgot to intercalate three *leap-days*, in 8 CE emperor AUGUSTUS (C. Iulius Caesar OCTAVIANUS, 27 BCE – 14 CE) again „adjusts” calendar. He declares that year – the 761th year from the foundation of Rome according to tradition (*ab Urbe condita*, *aUc*) – and every following fourth year for a *leap-year*. In the same year, the month *Sextilis* is renamed, by a decision of the *Senate*, after the assumed name of the Emperor, *Augustus*.<sup>1</sup> It was in this month that he was named for the first time for a *Consul*; it was in this month that he conquered Egypt; and it was also in this month that, in the next year, he held three *triumphs*: to celebrate his conquests in *Yllirium*, his victory at *Actium* and his conquest of Egypt. He has been honoured with the attribute *augustus* 'holy, majestic' ('the most fortunate', < Lat. *augur*) by the *Senatus*, on the 16th of *Ianuarius* 27 BCE. From then on, his assumed name was *Imperator Caesar Augustus divi filius*. At the same time, as the month *Quintilis*, renamed *Iulius* after Iulius Caesar, had 31 days, he declares the month *Sextilis* being also of 31 days, renaming it after his own assumed name *Augustus*. Therefore, he reduces with one day the length of *Februarius*, which will thus have 28 days (29 in a *leap-year*). He also reduces the length of the month *September* – having originally 31 days in the *Iulian*-calendar – to 30 days and,

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<sup>1</sup> Suetonius, *Divus Augustus*, c. 31.

consequently, he interchanges the length of the following months, *October* becoming of 31 days, *November* of 30 and *December* of 31 days.

In medieval Europe, the use of these Latin names of the months became generally accepted: not only in the countries speaking a Romance language, but also for those speaking German and Slavonic languages.

According to EINHARD, Emperor CHARLEMAGNE (774-814) intended, without success, to introduce officially the use of the German names of the months. These names were the following: *Wintarmanoth* ('winter-month', January), *Hornung* (February), *Lentzinmanoth* ('spring-month', March), *Ostarmanoth* ('Eastern-month', April), *Winnemanoth* (May), *Brachmanoth* (June), *Heuuimanoth* ('hay-month', July), *Aranmanoth* (August), *Witumanoth* (September), *Windumemanoth* ('vintage-month', October), *Herbistmanoth* ('autumn-month', November), *Heilagmanoth* ('holy-month', December, because of Xmas).<sup>1</sup>

The *Convention* of the French Revolution introduced, with a law of October 5, 1793, the revolutionnary calendar, redacted by the mathematician Gilbert ROMME (the republican year-reckoning has been adopted already the precedent year). As the starting point of the new time-reckoning, with retroactive effect, the day of the proclamation of the Republic, September 22, 1792 has been declared. The 365 days' year was divided into 12 months of 30 days each, each month being subdivided into *decades* of ten days. At the end of the year, five extra days were added (*epagomene*):  $12 \times 30 + 5 = 365$ ; however, the system of the intercalation of *leap*-days every fourth years was taken over from the *Gregorian* calendar. The months were named after the natural phenomena characteristic of the months. Starting with autumn, the names were the following: *vendémiaire*

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<sup>1</sup> *Vita Karoli Magni* 29.

(‘vintage’, September-October), *brumaire* (‘fog’, October-November), *frimaire* (‘frosty’, November-December), *nivôse* (‘snowy’, December-January), *pluviôse* (‘rainy’, January-February), *ventôse* (‘windy’, February-March), *germinal* (‘sprouting’, March-April), *floréal* (‘blossoming’, April-May), *prairial* (‘field’, May-June), *messidor* (‘giving produce’, June-July), *thermidore* (‘giving warm’, July-August), *fructidore* (‘giving fruits’, August-September). The revolutionnary calendar does not, however, survive the Revolution: beginning with the 1st of January 1806, the French Senate returns to the use of the *Gregorian* calendar.

In Hungary, parallel to the use of the Latin names, Hungarian names were also used to designate the months.

- „*Boldogasszony hava / Tél-hó*”: ‘the month of the *BVM* or winter-month’, January, related to the cult of the *BVM*.
- „*Böjtelő / Télutó hava*”: ‘Pre-Lent or Late-winter month, February’; named after the begin of the *quadragesima*, the forty days’ (six weeks’) Lent preceeding (Christian) Easter.
- „*Böjtmás / Tavaszelő hava*”: ‘the second month of Lent or Pre-Spring month, March’; named so as it is the second month of the Lent.
- „*Szt. György hava / Tavasz-hó*”: ‘St. George’s month or Spring-month, April’; the feast of St. George is on the 24th of April.
- „*Pünkösöd / Tavaszutó hava*”: ‘Pinkster-month or Late-Spring month, May’; Pinkster, the 50th day after Easter, falls generally in this month.
- „*Szt. Iván / Nyárelő hava*”: ‘St. John’s month or Pre-Summer month, June’; the feast of the birth of St. Ivan - really St. John Baptist – is on the 24th of June.
- „*Szt. Jakab hava / Nyár-hó*”: ‘St. James’ month or Summer-month, July; the feast of St. James is on the 25th of July.
- „*Kisasszony / Nyárutó hava*”: ‘the *BVM*’s month or Late-Summer month,



August'; the feast of the „*assumption*”, *assumptio beatae Mariae virginis* is on the 15th of August. Although „*Kisasszony nap*” the birthday of the *BVM*, *nativitas Mariae* is on the 8th of September, the latter month is already „occupied” for the Archangel Michael.

► „*Szt. Mihály / Őszelő hava*”: 'St. Michael's month or Pre-Autumn month, September'; the feast of the Archangel St. Michael is on the 29th of September.

► „*Mindszent hava / Ősz-hó*”: 'All-Saints' month or Autumn month, October'; the *All-Saints' Day* is on the 1st of November, however, November is already „occupied” for the apostle St. Andrew.

► „*Szt. András / Őszutó hava*”: „St. Andrew's month or Late-Autumn month, November'; the feast of the apostle St. Andrew is on the 30th of November.

► „*Karácsony / Télelő hava*”: 'Xmas-month or Pre-Winter month, December.

In 325 CE, at the council held at Nikaia, it has been ascertained that the *vernal equinox* occurred, instead of its supposed date, the 25th of *Martius*, almost three days earlier. The reason for the three days' (more exactly 2.87 days') difference, the difference between the *Iulian*-year and the *tropical* year has however not been recognized. Consequently, the *vernal equinox* was only transferred to the 21th of *Martius*, but the problem has not been solved.

**2.5.3. Pope GREGORY XIII's calendar-reform.** As the 365.25 days' years of the so-called *Iulian*-calendar (the *stilus antiquus*), are longer than the astronomical *solar* year with 11 minutes and 14 seconds, the *vernal equinox* regresses one day in every *ca.* 128 years (exactly every 128.1899 years). Since the *Nicean Council* of 325 CE, when the calendar had allegedly been „adjusted” with three days, and until the 16th century, this difference reached already ten days. Thus, the calendar calculation was in advance as compared to the real date with ten days,

the *vernal equinox* falling on the 10th of March instead of the 21th of it. Also the reckoning of the date of Easter (based on the *Metonic-cycle*) was inaccurate: 235 *lunar* months are shorter with 1 hour 28 minutes and 30 seconds than 19 *tropical* years, provoking a difference of a whole day every *ca.* 310 years. Consequently, the vernal Full Moon calculated following the so-called *Easter-tablets* did not coincide with the effective Full Moon.

Johannes de SACRO BOSCO (c. 1230), author of „*De anni ratione seu computus ecclesiasticus*” [About the Reckoning of the Years or Ecclesiastical Computation], was the first to draw the attention to the failures of the reckoning of the date of Easter according to the cycles,<sup>1</sup> and in general of the *Ptolemaic* astronomical system. The Greek astronomer and geographer, Claudius PTOLEMAIOS (c. 100-170 CE), from the Alexandrian cultural and scientific centre of *hellenism*, was the author of a „*Mathematike Syntaxis*” [Mathematical Compendium] - later called „*Megiste*” [The Greatest] or, by its Arab name, „*Almagest*” - and of a „*Geographika*” in eight volumes. In his „*Basileioi kanones*” [Royal Canon], he enlists the Babylonian, Persian and Egyptian kings and Roman Caesars from 747 BCE up to Diocletian, together with the exact dates of their accession to the throne, and mentions astronomical events also. Ptolemaios’ *geocentric* conception of the universe has later been accepted and even dogmatized by the Church, thus determining the cosmogonical thinking of the Middle Ages until the *renaissance*. However, his reliability is widely discussed in our days. It has recently been proposed that the data published in his works are not based on his own observations, are merely the calculations of earlier Greek authors, namely HIPPARKHOS (180-125 BCE); who had a decisive influence on the formation of Ptolemaios’ conception of the world and

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<sup>1</sup> See below, pp. lviii-lxi.

HIPPARKHOS' main source, TIMOKHARIS of Alexandria (c. 300 BCE).<sup>1</sup> After Sacro Bosco, it was Roger BACON (1220-92), Franciscan monk of England, the *doctor mirabilis*, who proposed, in 1266, the revision of the calendar, in a letter to pope CLEMENT IV (1265-68).

At the beginning of the 15th century, at the Council of Constance of 1414, the problem of the necessity of an eventual revision of the calendar is again discussed. At the Council of Basle, held between 1431-49, it was Nicolaus CUSANUS (Nikolaus Krebs, 1401-64) who presented a proposal for calendar-reform. In 1475, SIXTUS IV (1471-84), the *renaissance* pontife who, in a *bull* issued in 1478, invested the „*katholic kings*” of Spain with extraordinary powers to appoint *inquisitors* in all parts of Castille, commissioned the excellent mathematician and astronom, Johannes REGIOMONTANUS (Johannes Müller, 1436-76), to prepare a draft for the calendar reform. Regiomontanus, named simultaneously bishop of Regensburg, participated earlier in the revision of the so-called *Tabulae Alphonsinae* (*Tablas Alfonsinas*), astronomical tablets elaborated under ALFONSE X the Wise, king of Castille and Leon (1252-84). In order to be able to correct the imperfections of the current Ptolemaios-translations, he goes to Italy to learn Greek from the Byzantine scientists who recently escaped from the Turks together with their manuscripts. Among his teachers, we find the theologist and statesman, inclined towards neoplatonisme like many other figures of the Italian *renaissance*, former bishop of Nikaia, later cardinal in Rome, BESSARION (c. 1395-1472), whose manuscripts formed the first collection of the St. Mark's Library in Venice, the *Biblioteca Marciana*. In 1463, Regiomontanus prepares his compendium of Ptolemaios, entitled „*Epitome*

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<sup>1</sup> See Robert R. NEWTON, *The Crime of Claudius Ptolemy*. Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1977.

in *Ptolemaei Almagestum*”. According to his dedication written to king MATTHIAS of Hungary (1458-90), the works of antique authors are to be used only when accompanied with human experiences. However, Regiomontanus dies in a pestilence before finishing his task. Finally, the general council convoked by pope PAUL III (1534-49) to Trident, in Southern Tirol (1545-63), although did not decide in calendar-issues, at least authorized the pope to the calendar reform.

In order to prepare scientifically the calendar reform, pope GREGORY XIII (1572-85) orders, in 1576, the construction of an astrodome in the Vatican. In 1578, he charges the Italian Aloysius LILLIUS (Liglio, 1510-76) *lector* at the University of Perugia and Christophorus CLAVIUS SJ (1537-1612), two outstanding astronomers, to elaborate upon a calendar reform.

The pope proclaimed the calendar reform in his *bull* beginning with the words „*Inter gravissimas...*” on February 24, 1582. In order to eliminate the accumulated differences, when introducing the so-called *Gregorian-calendar* (the *stilus novus*), October 4 of the year 1582 was followed by October 15; however, the days of the week followed regularly: Friday after Thursday. As the yearly difference of 11 minutes and 14 seconds results, in about every *ca.* 128 years, in a whole day plus and, consequently, *ca.* three days’ plus in every 400 years, in every 400 years three *leap*-days are omitted (the remaining difference amounts to a whole day only after *ca.* 3300 years). This means that from the years ending with hundred, only those will be *leap*-years which are divisible with 400. Consequently, however, the difference between the *Iulian*- and *Gregorian*-calendars grows with one day every hundred years, above the inserted 10 days: 10 days in 1582, 1600 is a *leap*-year, 11 days in 1700, 12 days in 1800, 13 days in 1900, 2000 is a *leap*-year.

In order to eliminate the differences in the cyclic reckoning of the date of

Easter,<sup>1</sup> in the first year of the 19 years' *lunar* cycle, the date of the first New Moon of January is pushed back from January 23 to January 20; more exactly – taking into consideration the intercalated ten days – pushed forward to January 30. To facilitate the reckoning of the first vernal Full Moon which is necessary for the fixing of the date of Easter, the reform-commission accepts, upon Lilius' proposal, the system of the so-called *Lilianus-epactas*. This system shows how many days „has” the Moon on the first of January of every year in the cycle. According to the above, in the first year of the cycle, New Moon falls on January 30 and, consequently, the precedent New Moon fell on December 31. This means that in the first year of the cycle, on January 1, the Moon is one day „old”, thus the *epacta* of this year is 1, and the reckoning can be continued in this way.

The so-called *Gregorian-calendar* entered into force on the same day with Rome only in a part of Italy, and Spain, Portugal, Poland and Luxemburg. It was introduced into France in December of the same year; into the Spanish-Netherlands and Switzerland in the next year; into the Catholic „Habsburg” Hungary in 1588. The protestant German states and Holland adopted the *Gregorian calendar* only in 1700; England and the colonies in 1752 (writing September 14 after September 2, pushing at the same time - after 600 years- the day of New Year back from March 25 to January 1); and Russia in January 1918, after the triumph of the socialist revolution.

In 1586, pope SIXTUS V (1585-90) ordered the erection of an obelisque in Rome in commemoration of the calendar reform, on the actual St. Peter square in the Vatican, on the same place where, according to tradition, Christian martyrs, among them the apostle Peter, were executed upon emperor NERO's (54-68) order. The obelisque came from Egypt, its weight being 320 tons, and recalled

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<sup>1</sup> See below, pp. lviii-lxi.

the antique sun-dials (Greek *gnomon* 'rod').

The great French humanist, the protestant Joseph Juste SCALIGER (1540-1609), in his works about time reckoning „*De emendatione temporum*” (1583), „*Elenchus et castigatio anni Gregorii*” (1595) and „*Thesaurus temporum*” (1606), draws the attention to the deficiencies of the *Gregorian*-calendar. Opposed to him, D. FETAVIUS SJ (1583-1652), in his „*De doctrina temporum*” (1627) and „*Uranologium*” (1629), takes the defense of the calendar reform. Their works constitute, at the same time, the foundation of modern scientific chronology.

**2.6. The Islamic calendar** is a pure *lunar* system, not equalized with the *solar* year.

The pre-Islamic Arab calendar was a *lunisolar* calendar which used *lunar* months, but was also synchronized with the seasons by the occasional intercalation of an additional month, when required. Whether the intercalary month (*nassi*) was added in the spring, like that of the Hebrew calendar, or in autumn and, consequently, the year beginning in spring or in autumn, is debated. As Arabs had four months in which fighting was forbidden (three successive: *Dhu al-Qi'dah*, *Dhu al-Hijjah* and *Muharram*; and the *Rajab of Mudar* which is between *Jumada* and *Shaban*), they used the intercalary month to manipulate the time in which these months occur. To avoid all kind of corruption in connection with the intercalation of *leap*-months, MUHAMMAD (Mekka c. 570 - Medina 632), in the ninth year after the *Hijra*, as documented in the *Qur'an*,<sup>1</sup> prohibits *intercalation*, calling (voluntary) intercalations „an addition to unbelief”. In this way, he released the calendar from the seasons, only permitting the use of pure

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<sup>1</sup> „*Quran*”, *Sura IX*:36.

*lunar*-years of 354 days viz. of twelve *lunar* months of 29 and 30 days alternatively. In the following year, during the so-called „Farewell Pilgrimage” to Mecca, he repeats the prohibition.

The names of the twelve months are: *Muharram ul Haram* (or shortened to *Muharram*) محرّم, *Safar* صفر, *Rabi’-ul-Awwal* (*Rabi’ I*) ربيع الأول, *Rabi’-ul-Akhir* (or *Rabi’ al-T’haany*; *Rabi’ II*) ربيع الآخر أو ربيع الثاني, *Jumaada-ul-Awwal* (*Jumaada I*) جمادى الأول, *Jumaada-ul-Akhir* (or *Jumaada al-Thaany*; *Jumaada II*) جمادى الآخر أو جمادى الثاني, *Rajab* رجب, *Sha’aban* شعبان, *Ramadhan* رمضان, *Shawwal* ذو القعدة, *Dhul Qadah* (or *Thou al-Qi’dah*) ذو القعدة, *Dhul Hijja* (or *Thou al-Hijjah*) ذو الحجة.

Later, however, *leap*-years are introduced: the last month of 29 days is made of 30 days, thus the calendar-year will have 355 days. In the Islamic countries, one can find two different systems of *leap*-years: the Arab and the Turkish ones. As a *lunar* year is 10 or even 11 days shorter than the *solar* one, the Turkish New Year goes through the *Gregorian* year backwards. In the Arab system, the months and holidays go through the entire length of the *solar* year during a period of 32 years. This means that every 32 years, they are with one year more behind the *Gregorian* calendar.

### 3. *Time-reckoning systems (World-Eras)*

In the Middle Ages, the word *aera* (more exactly *era*) was considered - erroneously - as the plural of Latin *aes*.<sup>1</sup> According to certain opinions, the word is of Gothic origin and is identical with the German *Jahr*,<sup>2</sup> while others pretend the word means simply 'number'.<sup>3</sup>

**3.1. *The Jewish World-Era.*** In the Antiquity, peoples did not use continuous time-reckoning. Historical records, when there were such, were always dated according to the years of the kings: in the fifth year of the given King. Jews were using different time-reckoning systems. They were thus reckoning the years from the *Exode* (as we see it in the Torah), from the construction of the first *Bais hamikdosh*, from the ascension to the throne of the kings (as in the *Sefer Melochim* and the prophetic books), from the destruction of the first *Bais hamikdosh* (*churban*), from its reconstruction and its second destruction. Beginning with the year 312 BCE, the so-called *Seleucid-Era* came to be used.<sup>4</sup> Slowly, beginning with the sixth (eventually only the eighth or even the tenth century of the Common Era, in any case after the introduction of the Christian A. d. reckoning or even parallel with it), the so-called *Creation-Era* became generally used. The actual calendar- and time-reckoning system, called *Creation Era*, and introduced by HILLEL the younger in 358/59 CE, is based on the „*Seder Olam Rabbah*” [Great World Order], redacted in the second century CE by the Tanna R. YOSSE bar Chalafta as stated by the Talmud (*bYevamos* 82b; *bNidah*

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<sup>1</sup> SZENTPÉTERY, *Kronológia...*, pp. 32-33.

<sup>2</sup> IDELER, *Handbuch...*, II. p. 430.

<sup>3</sup> F. RÜHL, *Chronologie...*, p. 207.

<sup>4</sup> See below, p. 1.



46b). This work is a chronological composition of „*biblical history*” continued until the Bar-Kochba uprising, and was redacted following the historical and time-reckoning tradition of rabbinical Judaism. According to Hillel, the year 670 of the *Seleucid-Era* (358/59 CE) was the year 4119 after the Creation. According to the *RAMBAM*,<sup>1</sup> the year 4938 after the Creation = 17th year of the 260th *machzor* [the *Metonic-cycle* of 19 years] = the year 1489 of the *shtarot* [‘contracts’] = the 1,109th year after the *churban* = the 1178th year of the Christian Era [A. d.].

The starting point of the *Jewish World-Era* is the Creation of the Universe which, according to traditional computation based on the „*Seder Olam Rabbah*”, occurred on October 6/7 3761 BCE. The starting point of calendar-reckoning is the night of the second day (*i. e.* Monday night) 11 hours and 204 parts.<sup>2</sup> According to the Talmud (*bSanhedrin* 97a, *bAZ* 9a), this world was created to exist for 6000 years, conforming to the six days of Creation: „*For a thousand years in your sight are but like yesterday*” (*Tehilim* 90:4). This will be followed, after *Moshiach*’s coming, by the *World to Come*, conforming to the seventh day, *Shabbos*.

Since the Middle Ages – more exactly since the year 5000 of the *Creation Era* which was 1240 CE – the thousands are omitted, and only the hundreds are reckoned: this is called „short reckoning” (פרט קטן פ"ק), lit. ‘small part’).

**3.2. Ancient Greek time-reckoning.** According to tradition, the Greeks for many centuries reckoned the years from the fall of Troy: 1184 BCE, according to Castor and Eratosthenes; 395 years before the first *Olympiad*, *i. e.* 1171 BCE, according

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<sup>1</sup> *RAMBAM*, *Op. cit.* 11:16

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 6:8.

to SOSIBIOS' „*Kronon anagraphe*” (3rd century BCE). Other traditions pretend, the starting point of time reckoning was the Ionian colonization (1044 BCE), or the Dorian migration (1104 BCE). In Athenes, since the *arkhon* Kreon (683 BCE), they used to reckon the years following the *arkhons* (one, three and finally nine chief officials of the state after the abolition of kingdom). In Sparta, time-reckoning followed the first *ephoros* (five officials exercising effectively the power together with the king). Several smaller city-states (eg. Rhodes, Argos, Boiotie, Epidauros) had their own time-reckoning system, while in Macedonia – conforming to Eastern tradition – years were reckoned according to the kings.

HELLANIKOS of Lesbos was the first who tried to elaborate upon a unified time-reckoning system, dating the years and arranging events according to the priestesses of *Hera* at Argos.

HIPPIAS of Elis was seemingly the first who, at the end of the 5th century BCE, established the first „complete” list of the winners of the *Olympiads*. During the *Olympiads* of 476 BCE, the participants came to the conclusion that their victory over the Persians was due in great part to the joint effort of the different Greek city-states. From them on, the „*panhellen*” idea became connected to the *Zeus*-sanctuary at Olympia. However, it looks like that Hippias took rather arbitrarily the year 776 BCE as the year of the first *Olympiad*, i. e. 300 years before the games where the idea of *panhellenism* was born and became connected to the games, these being, accordingly, 76th *Olympiads* ( $75 \times 4 = 300$ ). Today it can be considered for sure that sacral sport competition were held in Olympia as early as the 11th century BCE.<sup>1</sup> The Sicilian Greek historian, TIMAIOS (c. 356 - c. 260 BCE), chronicler of the history of the Western Greeks (in the 38 books of his

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<sup>1</sup> MILLER, Stephen. „The Date of Olympic Festivals”. In *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Athenische Abteilung*. Vol. 90 (1975), pp. 215-237.

„*Historiai*” or „*Sikelikai Historiai*”), was the first to date the years according to the *Olympiads*. In his historical work (now lost) about the winners of the *Olympiads*, he collates the data about the winners of the *Olympiads*, the Athenian *arkhons* and the *ephoros* of Sparta, and dates the enlisted events after the *Olympiads* which were respected throughout the entire Greek world, marking them with numbers. Accordingly, 776 BCE is the year of the „first” *Olympiad*: we know the name of a winner for the first time. Timaios’ younger contemporary, the Alexandrian ERATOSTHENES (c. 284 - c. 202 BCE) further develops this system: 776 BCE is the first year of the „first” *Olympiad*, and so on (the year started with the first Full Moon after the Summer solstice). Using this, he makes an effort to elaborate upon a unified chronological system which should embrace the early mythological history of the Greek world also.

**3.3.** The *Seleucid Era*’s starting point is the New Year of the twelfth year after ALEXANDER *Mokdon*’s death (336-323 BCE): the 17th of December, 312 BCE in Syrie and the 3rd of April, 311 BCE in Babylon. On this day, SELEUKOS I *Nikator* (312-281 BCE), founder of the *Seleucid* Empire, victoriously returns to Babylon, after having defeated – with the help of his associate, the Egyptian ruler, founder of the Ptolemaid dynasty, PTOLEMAIOS I *Soter* (323-281 BCE) – DEMETRIOS I *Poliorketes* (294-287 BCE) at Gaza. Thence, the *lunisolar* years are marked with numbers, dating official documents also accordingly. According to Jewish tradition, the so-called „*Era of the Contracts*” (*Minyan Shtarot*) or „*Greek Era*” (*Minyan Yevani*) starts with the year 3448 after the Creation (312 BCE), when Alexander *Mokdon* – on his way to Egypt – comes for the first time to Yerushalayim. Modern historiography pretends, Alexander the Great conquers Egypt in 332 BCE. The year 312 BCE of the traditional Jewish computation

means, naturally, that the „*Minyan Shtarot*” is identical with the *Seleucid Era*. At the same time, it also shows that tradition connected this time-reckoning system – in use for about thousand years – to the figure of Alexander *Mokdon*, behaving favorably to the Jews, instead of connecting it to the *Seleucids* whose policy toward the Jews (*cf.* ANTIOKHOS IV *Epiphanes*, 175-164 BCE) provoked later the events which led to *Chanukah*. Judaism abandons slowly, beginning with the sixth (eventually only the eighth or even tenth century of the Common Era, in any case after the introduction of the Christian *A. d.* reckoning or even parallel with it), the use of the so-called *Seleucid-Era*, introducing the general use of the *Creation-Era*. In Eastern Judaism, however, especially in Yemen, the use of the former can still be sporadically detected until the 16th century. Interesting to remark that the *Mishna* (*mYodayim* 4:8) reproaches the *tzadokim* / *sadduceans* for the use of the *minyan yevani*, *i. e.* for counting the years according to the Gentile kings and not according the Creator of the Universe.

In the calendar of the Syrian Monophysite Church, this *Era* is in use until our days.

**3.4. Roman time-reckoning.** In republican Rome, years were named after the *Consuls*. This system continued to be used in the Imperial period also (the *Caesars* being at the same time *Consuls* too). And it survived the fall of the Empire in the West with more than hundred years, being still used until the sixth century CE. The names of the *Consuls* was preserved by the list called *Fasti Capitolini*.

Beginning with the 3rd century BCE, Roman historiographers start to use the time-reckoning system which starts with the traditional foundation of the city, called *ab Urbe condita*. According to LIVY (Titus LIVIUS, 59 BCE – 17 CE),

*Decemvirs* entered into office for the first time in the 302nd year after the foundation of Rome (*aUc*; i. e. in 451 BCE). The ten *patrician* members (Lat. *decem* 'ten') of this „comitee” were elected in order to redact and put into writ laws: in the period of the kingdom and the early times of the Republic, there were no written laws. The laws born from their activities were engraved on ten (later twelve) metal tablets and called *Lex XII tabularum* ['Laws of the XII tablets'].

According to the first *annalists* (recording and relating events in the order of the years), the City was founded in 748/747 BCE (Fabius Pictor), or 729/728 BCE (Cincius Alimentus). According to the „*Origines*” of M. Porcius CATO (Cato *Censorius*, 234-143 BCE; the seven volumes of his historical work is known today only from fragments), the foundation of Rome took place in the first year of the seventh *Olympiad*, what means in 751 BCE. According to Marcus Terentius VARRO (116-27 BCE), organizer of the first public library in Rome, *Romulus* drewed the demarcating furrow, destined to protect magically the new City, in the third year of the sixth *Olympiad*, on the feast of *Parilia* (April 21, 753 BCE). *Parilia* or *Palilia*, became the Day of the foundation of Rome in honour of *Pales*, g-ddess protectrice of herds and sheperds. Varro's dating became generally accepted following the convincing argumentation of CICERO.

**3.5. Christian World Era** (*Era Vulgaris*). It is based on an *eschatologic* concept of Jewish origin, which considers the Last Judgment as the teleologic finality of human history. Accordingly, human history embraces merely six thousand years conforming to the six days of Creation: „*For a thousand years in your sight are but like yesterday*” (*Tehilim* 90:4). This will be followed by the seventh millennium, the *messianic era*, conforming to the seventh day, Saturday (*khiliasm*; Greek *khilioi* 'thousand'). This periodisation appears programatically in the title of an

11th century Latin „*World Chronicle*” by the German Benedictine monk, HERMANN *der Lahme von Reichenau* (HERMANNUS *Contractus* OSB, 1013-54): „*Chronicon de 6 aetatibus ab orbe condita usque ad annum 1054*” [Chronicle about the Six Periods from the Creation of the World until the Year 1054].

### 3.5.1. *Christian World-Eras before the introduction of the „A. d.”-reckoning.*

The first to elaborate a Christian World-Era was the Greek historian and Alexandrian *presbyter*, Sextus JULIUS AFRICANUS (Yerusholayim mid 2nd century - Rome ? c. 240), whose „*Khronographiai*” [Chronicles] or „*Pentabiblon kronologikon*” [The Five Books of Chronology. c. 220] is the first known Christian World-Chronicle. In this today lost work (known only from fragments in EUSEBIOS and in the 8th century „*Chronography*” of Georgios SYNKELLOS), he tries for the first time to give a synthesis of Biblical and universal history, dating the events beginning from Creation, and establishing the birthdate of *Oto Ish* to the middle of the sixth millennium, to the year 5500. This dating can take its origin from the antipope HIPPOLYTOS (217-235), *Origen*’s contemporary, the last church-father who wrote in Rome in the Greek language, whose „*Kata Passon Hairesseon elenkhos*” [Refutation of all Kinds of Heresies, c. 222] is the greatest treasure of antique wisdom and heresies.

The Alexandrian monk, PANODOROS redacts the so-called *Alexandrian World-Era* around the year 400, establishing its starting point to August 29, 5493 BCE (Synkellos gives almost exactly the same date).<sup>1</sup>

Byzantine chroniclers established the starting point of the so-called *Byzantine Era* (named after these chroniclers), to March 21, 5508 BCE, transferring it later

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<sup>1</sup> Curiously, Panodoros’ system differs from that of Iulius Africanus with seven years the same as the error made by Dionysius Exiguus when reckoning the year of the birth of *Oto Ish*. See below, pp. lxi-lxii.

to September 1, 5509 BCE. Presumably, this is not the date of the Creation of the World according to their computation, rather a refined version of Iulius Africanus' reckoning. Beginning with the year 691 CE, this *Era* became the official time-reckoning system of the Byzantine Empire.<sup>1</sup> This system became used over the Balcan-peninsula under Byzantine rule also, as well as in Southern-Italy during the relatively short period of Byzantine occupation. This is taken over by the Russian state of Kiev (see the so-called NESTOR-chronicle of the 12th century). It will be only in the year 1700, that the year-reckoning according to the birth-year of *Oto Ish* and beginning on the first of January is introduced by the tzar PETER I (1682-1725). The *Byzantine Era* will remain still in use for long by the Serbs and Rumanians.

Church-father EUSEBIOS (265-339; bishop of Caesarea c. 313), „the father of ecclesiastical historiography”, in his universal history entitled „*Kronographia*” [World Chronicle] or „*Khronikoi Kanones*” [Chronological Tables] and known only from an Armenian translation and the Latin version by St. Jerome, also gives a synthesis of Biblical and of universal history (the latter naturally according to the Greco-Roman tradition) from Creation until 324 CE. There, he gives the year 2016 for Avraham, and forces the date of the birth of *Oto Ish* back from the year 5500 after the Creation to 5200. Accordingly, the „*World's End*”, expected for the year 6000, was supposed to arrive in the year 800 A.d.<sup>2</sup> As a next step, presumably in the 10th century, time-reckoning is again „shifted back” with 200 years, fixing the date of the birth of *Oto Ish* to the year 5001 after

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<sup>1</sup> GINZEL, *op. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> Let us remember, that the year 800 is of primordial importance in the history of the Christian West. On December 25, 800, *i. e.* New Year of 801 (years were beginning on Xmas Day, see below, pp. 59-60) took place (according to the unique biography of EGINHARD, *Vita Caroli*) in Rome the imperial incoronation of Charlemagne.

the Creation. Consequently, the „*Doomsday*” became expected to the year 1000 A.d.

Curiously, no real historical evidence is attested of this expectation of the *Doomsday* for the year 1000. Theologically it is based on the „*Revelations of St. John*” (Apocalypse 20:7): „*When the thousand years are over, Satan gets free from his prison...*”. On the other hand, we find that the Italian Christian mystical theologian, GIOACCHINO da Fiore (Joachim de Floris; c. 1130 – c. 1210), in his commentary to the „*Book of Revelations*”, fixes the end of the „*millennial empire*” and the getting free of *Satan* for the year 1260. Gioacchino wrote his „*Expositio in Apocalipsim*” in 1186, urged by pope URBAIN III (1185-87). There, his conception of history is based on computable cyclicism, and his ideas concerning *Trinity* opposes him to the Church. Consequently, he is condemned by the Council of 1215.<sup>1</sup> In 1268, pope CLEMENT IV (1265-88) even bans the reading of his books. Actually, the mysterious number 1260 can several times be found in the „*Book of Revelations*” (11:3; 12:6), although in both cases the text speaks about 1,260 *days*.

The Latin translator and continuator of Eusebios’ work, the church-father St. JEROME (c. 340-419/20) – author of the Latin Bible-translation called „*Vulgate*”, the main source for biblical knowledge in the Middle Ages – also starts with Avraham his Latin chronicle continued until his age. At the same time, he also gives the years according to the *World-Era*. According to him, *Oto Ish* was born in the year 5199 after the Creation. The details are as follows: from *Odom horishon* to the Flood 2242 years (in the Torah 1656 years, 2262 according to JOSEPHUS<sup>2</sup>), from the Flood until Avraham 942 years (292 according to the

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<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, Dante speaks about him in Canto XII of *Paradiso*, a prop the renewal of theology. Gioacchino also wrote a pamphlet against the Jews, „*Adversus Iudaeos*” [Against the Jews].

<sup>2</sup> *Antt.* I:3.



Torah). From Avraham until the birth *Oto Ish* 2.015 years (according to the Jewish chronological tradition conserved by the „*Seder Olam Rabbah*”, 1.813 years), altogether 5.199 years. Jerome ends his „*Chronicle*” with the battle at Hadrianopoles (Drinaples, today Edirne) which marked the begin of the collapse of the Roman Empire in the West: there the Western Goths in revolt defeated the Roman army, emperor VALENS (364-378), an adept of *Arianism*, also lost his life. According to Jerome, he closed his chronicle in the year 5579 after the Creation (378 CE).

St. AUGUSTIN (Aurelius Augustinus; 354 - 430), bishop of Hippo Regius in North-Africa from 395, whose works – the „*Confessiones*” [c. 398] and the „*De civitate Dei*”, [413-426] – constitute one of the main ideological source of the Christian Middle Ages, follows Eusebios’ conception of history. He also uses the six thousands years’ periodization, followed by the seventh, *messianic era*. At the same time, he insists upon Divine providence being the final cause of human history.

In 457, VICTORIUS (Victorius) of Aquitaine, based on his calculations concerning the motion of the Moon, establishes March 25 of the year 5201 after the Creation as the date of the birth of *Oto Ish*.

The Irish prelate, James USSHER (1581-1656) established the year 4004 BCE as the date of Creation.

D. Petavius and J. Scaliger, in their aforementioned chronological works<sup>1</sup> give the years 3983 and 3949 respectively.

The starting year of the so-called *Era Diocletiana* or *Era martyrum* is the year 284 CE, the first year of emperor DIOCLETIANUS’ (284-305) reign. It was used until the sixth century in honour of the Christian martyrs killed during his reign.

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<sup>1</sup> See above p. xlv.

The tenth great wave of the persecution of Christians started with an imperial decree of February 23, 303. As Diocletian considers the Christians, firmly opposed to the Roman state-religion, as an obstacle on the way of his centralizing policy, he orders the Christian churches be destroyed, their holy books burnt, and their civil rights revoked. This will be followed by three other imperial orders which oblige Christians under death- or forced-labour penalty, to pagan sacrifices. Pope MARCELLINUS (296-304?) is also killed during these persecutions.

In 525, the Roman abbot, DIONYSIUS EXIGUUS (500-560) proposes to stop the use of this *Era*, and to use instead a time-reckoning which has for its starting point the birth of *Oto Ish*.<sup>1</sup>

The Christian countries of the Iberian-peninsula had their own time-reckoning system called *Spanish Era* (*Era Hispanica*). Its use is attested by the works of important Christian writers of the peninsula, among them the bishop IDACIUS who continued Jerome's chronicle until the year 467. Also the last Western church-father, St. ISIDOR (Isidorus *Hispalensis*, 560-636), bishop of Seville who, in his „*Etymologiarum sive originum libri viginti*” [The 20 Books of Explanations or Origins], resumes the entire knowledge of his time elaborating upon antique and Christian (partly no more extant) sources. However, great number of the tombstones which use the *Era Hispanica* are considered by modern scientists as being falsified.<sup>2</sup> The starting point of the *Era Hispanica* is the first of January 38 BCE, date given by several chronological manuals as the year when Augustus occupied (a part of) the Iberian peninsula. This notwithstanding, it can

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<sup>1</sup> See below, pp. lxi-lxii.

<sup>2</sup> Emil HÜBNER, *Inscriptiones Hispaniae Christianae, mit Supplementum*. Berlin: G. Reimer, 1871-1900; José VIVES, *Inscripciones cristianas de la España romana y visigoda*. Barcelona, 1969; Ignacio OLAGÜE, *Les Arabes n'ont jamais envahi l'Espagne*. Paris, 1969.

not be established with certainty to which event this date has to be connected. The „*Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumwissenschaft*“ of PAULY-WISSOWA also considers this data as being rather problematical: it took almost two centuries for Rome to occupy the Iberian peninsula beginning from the second Punic War (218-201 BCE) until 19 BCE. In 25 BCE, Augustus subjugates personally the Northern tribes of the peninsula, called *Astures* and *Cantabri*, founding 16 *colonies* on their territory (cf. *Cesarea Augusta* > Zaragoza). In his work about the history of the Goths, Vandals and Sueves, Isidorus utilises the *Era Hispanica*. On the other hand, according to one data of his *Historia Naturalis*, the first year of the *Era* is the year of the first census held by Augustus in Rome (7 BCE). This is, obviously, erroneous: a confusion with the begin of the A. d.-reckoning.

Surprisingly, the use of the *Era Hispanica* (beginning with the year 38 BCE) is not attested until c. 500 CE, when the Iberian peninsula was already under the rule of the Visigoths and Northern Africa under the rule of the Vandals, both people adherents to Arian Christianity. More than that, the use of the *Era Hispanica* is only attested in the Western half of the Iberian peninsula, while the Eastern half – the former *Provincia Tarraconensis* and Catalonia – continues using the year-reckoning according to the *Consuls*, i. e. according to the years of their rulers. At the same time, it is an interesting coincidence that between the year 38 BCE (the first year of the *Era Hispanica*) and 45 BCE (the year of the introduction of the *Iulian*-calendar) there are 7 years, exactly the same as the error made by Dionysius Exiguus in 525, when computing the year of the birth of *Oto Ish*. In 429, the Vandals occupy North-Africa, and in 439 Carthago, founding there – on the territory of the actual Tunis – their state which will exist until the Byzantine conquest in 533. There is an other interesting coincidence also. When

the Vandals, led by their first king, GEISERICH (439-477), sack Rome in 455, this is the year 493 of the *Era Hispanica* supposing the *Era* started in 38 BCE, but it is the year 500 of the *Era* if this started in 45 BCE (the year of the introduction of the *Iulian*-calendar). The Council held at Tarragona in 516, decides about the obligatory use of the *Era* in the countries of the Western Mediterranean, on the Iberian peninsula, Western France, North-Africa, and the islands. In Portugal, the so-called *Era Hispanica* is continued to be used until the 15th century.

The starting point of the so-called *Alexandrian-Era* (or *Augustine-Era*) is August 30, of the year 30 BCE when (presumably some days earlier) Augustus occupies Alexandria, thus remaining – after the suicide of Antonius and Cleopatra – the *de facto* only ruler over the entire Roman Empire. This *Alexandrian-Era* is not to be confounded with the similarly sounding *Era after Alexandros' death*, which starts on November 11, 324 BCE. This is an earlier – erroneous – transcription of the date of Alexander the Great's death into the Christian time-reckoning system: Actually, Alexander died on June 10, 323 BCE. As he was followed on the throne by his brother PHILIPPOS III *Arrhidaios* (323-317 BCE), this *Era* is also called *Philippine-Era*.

The starting point of the so-called *Era Mauretana* is the year 40 CE, when Mauretania is converted into a Roman *province*.

The starting point of the so-called *Armenian Era* is July 9 of the year 552 CE.

**3.5.2. The reckoning of the date of Easter.** As Christianity is based on the belief in Resurrection and the universal redemption, the most important holiday in the Christian calendar is Easter (Lat. *Pascha* from Hebr. *Pessach* 'to jump over'; „...and when I see the blood, I will jump over you...”, *Shemos* 12:13). However, its date varies from year to year being dependent on the phases of the monthly

*lunar* cycle. Consequently, the most important problem when making an ecclesiastical calendar, is the reckoning of the date of Easter, the feast of the „Resurrection” of *Oto Ish*. On the other hand, this most important Christian holiday is connected manyfoldedly with the Jewish *Pessach*. According to the *Gospel* (*Jn.* 18:28, 19:14, 31) *Oto Ish* was executed on the eve of *Pessach* (*Erev Pessach*, the 14th of the month *Nissan*) which, according to the *synoptic Gospels* (*Mt.* 27:62, 28:1; *Mk.* 15:42; *Luk.* 23:54; *Jn.* 19:31, 42) in that year fell on Friday.

However, since early times, there were differences in the fixing of the date of Easter between the Antiochean Church which followed automatically the Jewish *Pessach* (*Nissan* 15), and the Alexandrian Church which insisted on the independent fixing of the date of Easter together with the first vernal New Moon. Effectively, already from the beginning of the second century, Roman Christians feasted Easter on the anniversary of the „Resurrection”, *i. e.* on Sunday following the 15th of *Nissan*. On the other hand, they did not follow necessarily the position of the Sun, but kept instead the feast according to (the Jewish) tradition on the 21 of March (in the East), on the 24th (on the Iberian peninsula), or the 25th (in Rome), respectively. The *Nicean Council* of 325 decided among other things about the principles of the unified feasting of Easter, fixing its date to the Sunday which follows the first Full Moon after the *vernal equinox*. At the same time, the *Council* – allegedly - charged the bishop of Alexandria with the reckoning of the date of Easter and the publication of this date. As the *Council*’s resolutions are no more extant, this is generally accepted following a letter of pope St. LEON I the Great (440-461).<sup>1</sup>

In Alexandria, *Easter-tablets* were prepared already in the third century, containing all the data necessary for the reckoning of the date of Easter, and also

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. GINZEL, III. p. 217.

the date of Easter, for a cycle of a certain amount of years. More than that, once the years of the cycle are finished, the date of Easter can be fixed in the same manner following the tablets. According to our actual knowledge, the first such *Easter-tablet* was prepared by Dionysios, bishop of Alexandria, however, it is no more extant. In the fifth century, the tablet prepared by the patriarch Kyrillos (412-444) established a cycle of 95 years (the first cycle starting in the 153th year after Diocletian and ended in the 247th), which became the base of ulterior computations. From among the *Easter-tablets* prepared for Western Christians who did not follow exactly the Alexandrians, the oldest known was prepared by Hippolytus, bishop of Portus; it is, however, no more extant. In 457, Victorius (Victorius) of Aquitaine reckons the dates of Easter for a cycle of 532 years, often differing from the Alexandrians:  $28 \times 19 = 532$ ; the *solar* cycle being of 28 years, the *lunar* one of 19, what means that the Sun and the Moon arrive after 532 years to the same position on the same day of the week.

In 525, the Roman abbot, Dionysius Exiguus – referring himself erroneously to the *Nicean Council* – prepares *Easter-tablets* taking into consideration the Alexandrian principles together with the 95 years' cycle of Kyrillos. With the time, his tablets became generally accepted for the reckoning of the date of Easter.<sup>1</sup> In the Christian Middle Ages, the first year of the first cycle was fixed, following DIONYSIUS *Exiguus*, for the year when the first *lunar* month – ending in January – started on the precedent December 25th, this being the first day of the „first” ecclesiastical year, *i. e.* 1 BCE. Consequently, the *saltus lunae* was fixed for the *lunar* month of the 19th year which ends in July or, following BEDA *Venerabilis*, in November.

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<sup>1</sup> All these computations are based on PTOLEMAIOS' tablets which were preapered, as mentioned above (see p. xlii-xliii), after earlier authors.

**3.5.3. The „A. d.”-reckoning.** Considering the activity of *Oto Ish* as the starting point of a new *World-Era*, Christianity arrived naturally to insist upon the necessity of the introduction of a new – Christian - time-reckoning system. In one of the rubrics of his abovementioned *Easter-tablets* of 457, Victorius of Aquitaine enlists the years according to the crucifixion also, nevertheless, his initiative was not followed. In his remarks to his *Easter-tablets* redacted in 525, DIONYSIUS EXIGUUS refutes the use of the so-called *Era-Diocletiana* (which started with the year 284) saying, Christians should not reckon the years according to the reign of an Emperor ill-famed because of his persecutions of Christians. Instead, he proposes the year of the birth of *Oto Ish* as the starting point of the – Christian – time-reckoning. This new, Christian concept is manifested, in the Middle-Ages and, in ecclesiastical texts even in modern times, in the expressions *anno domini* [‘in the year of the Lord’], *annus domini* [‘the year of the Lord’], *annus ab incarnatio domini* [‘the year after the incarnation of the Lord’], *annus gratiae* [‘the year of grace’]. Although we do not know with certainty, how did Dionysius Exiguus establish this birthdate, and notwithstanding the fact that today his computation is generally accepted as being erroneous, still, until our days, Christian ecclesiastical (and, consequently, modern civil) time-reckoning is based on his data. According to Dionysius, the year 248 of the so-called *Era Diocletiana* is the year 532 A. d. Consequently, the year of the birth of *Oto Ish* – the first year of the *Christian World-Era* - is the year 754, after the foundation of Rome (*ab Urbe condita*), and also the 42th year of Augustus’ reign. In reality, 42 BCE is not the begin of Augustus’ reign who remained, after Antonius’ suicide, the „only” ruler over the entire Empire in 27

BCE. In the battle near Philippi, on October 23, 42 BCE the *triumvirs* defeated decisively the murderer of Caesar, Brutus and the republicans.

In the West, Dionysius' computation became widespread through the works of the British monk, later *presbyter* at Jarrow, BEDA *Venerabilis* (c. 673-735): the „*Chronica maior*” [Universal Chronicle], an appendix to his „*De temporibus liber*” [About Time-Reckoning. 725] and the „*De ratione temporum*”, also a chronological work in 71 chapters. The principal sources of Bede's chronological works are the „*Etymologiarum*” of ISIDORUS *Hispalensis*, and the „*Historia Francorum libri X*” [The Ten Books of the History of the Franks, called also „*Historia ecclesiastica*”] by St. GREGORY of Tours (Gregorius Turonensis, c. 540-594). In Chapter 30 of Book V of „*Etymologiarum*” are discussed the year, month, day, week; while in Chapter 17 of Book VI, the reckoning of the date of Easter and other problems of time-reckoning. Curiously, Bede knows about and utilises *zero*, which did not arrive to Europe from India, through Arab intermediaries, until after the year 1100. It is also very surprising that he knows about the inconstant revolt of the Moon, still unknown by Hermann of Reichenau in the middle of the 11th century.

However, the time-reckoning according the birth of *Oto Ish* starts to be generally used in the Christian West. Presumably, it was Regino, abbot of Prüm (c. 845-915) who uses for the first time consequently the „*A. d.*” dating. His chronicle, finished in 908 but extant only in later copies,<sup>1</sup> the „*Chronicon sive Annales*”, relates annalistically the world's history until the year 906 *A. d.*, but his data are often lacking reliability.<sup>2</sup> The list of the years of the popes according to

<sup>1</sup> See W. R. SCHLESINGER, *Die Überlieferungsgeschichte der Chronik des Regino von Prüm*. 1974.

<sup>2</sup> „As we are in front of an annual not written year after year but, rather, in one time, his dates cannot be considered as being reliables.” KRISTÓ Gyula ed. *A Honfoglalás korának írott forrásai*. [The Written Sources of the Period of the Magyar Occupation of and Settlement in Hungary] Szeged, 1995, p. 194.



the „A. d.”-reckoning, is first composed following an order by pope EUGENE IV (1431-47). The Eastern Church will not, however, accept Dionysius’ computation until the 18th century.

According to the *Gospel* (Mt. 2:15), *Oto Ish* was born in one of the last years before HERODE the Great’s death, during the all-imperial census ordered by emperor Augustus (Lk. 2:1). According to IOSEPHUS, Herode died in the spring of the year 750 „*ab Urbe condita*” [„*aUc.*”], while modern computations give the date of 749 *aUc.*, *i. e.* 4 BCE (the year can easily be identified through the *lunar eclipse* of March 12-13 of that year. The all-imperial census by emperor Augustus – the second one, according to his own autobiography – took place in 8/7 BCE. According to CLEMENT of Alexandria (c. 140/150 – after 215), *Oto Ish* was born in the 28th year of Augustus’ reign *i. e.* in 1 CE. In connection with his observing the *coniunction* of the Jupiter and the Saturn in 1604, Johannes KEPLER (1571-1630) came to the idea to identify this astronomical phenomenon with the so-called star of *Bethlehem*, described by the *Gospel* (Mt. 2:1-10). Accordingly, he reckoned that in 7 BCE, the two planets met three times in the constellation Pisces. To evaluate justly Kepler’s idea, we have to take into consideration the fact that the Fish was a symbol of primitive Christianity. The Greek word for fish, *ikthys* was understood as being formed from the initials of the words expressing the deity and messianic character of *Oto Ish*: „*Iessous Khristos, Theou Hyos, Soter*”, ‘*J.*, the anointed, the son of G-d, Redeptor’.

Modern historiographical data vary between 7 and 4 BCE. At the same time, we can observe that, taking away 525 years (when Dionysius is making his computations) from the 532 years of Victorius’ Easter-cycle, we arrive to 7, *i. e.* again 7 BCE.

**3.5.4. *Christmas*.** The shortest day of the year is the day of the winter solstice. Before the calendar-reform by pope Gregory XIII, this fell on the 13th of December: the day of St. Lucy (Hung. Luca, Lat. *lux* 'light').<sup>1</sup>

In 274 CE, in Rome, emperor AURELIANUS (270-275) declares for an imperial deity the Sun-g-d renewing on the shortest day of the year, the winter solstice, the *Sol Invictus* (Lat. 'undefeated Sun'), and establishes its feast on the 25th of December.<sup>2</sup> The pagan mythological cycle connected with the *Saturnalia*, the winter solstice is „transsubstantiated” by Christianity when, relatively late, in 354 CE, pope IULIUS I (337-352) establishes the feast of the birth of *Oto Ish*. Thus, the new faith, of Jewish origin, based on messianic redemption, defeats the Time, with the slogan of reestablishing the ancient state of equality and love. Naturally, this idealistical image is the one suggested by the authors of the *Gospels* more than half a century later.

The birthday of *Oto Ish* - Lat. *dies natalis* 'birthday', hence Fr. *noël*, Ital. *natale*, Sp. *Navidad*; Hung. *karácsony* is of Slavic origin, meaning originally 'solstice' - was for long feasted on the 6th of January, the day of the *Epiphany*. According to tradition, it was on this day that St. John Baptist (Yochanan the *Essene*) baptized *Oto Ish* in the Jordan river. This means that originally it was considered being more important the (re)birth of the soul, than the physical birth of the body. The name of the feast, *Epiphania*, of Greek origin means 'manifestation, appearance', and is connected to the visit of the *Three Magi* related by the *Gospel* (*Mt.* 2:1-12), hence the other Hungarian name of the feast:

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<sup>1</sup> According to her later redacted and hence not always reliable Acts, St. Lucy suffered a martyr's death during the great persecutions of Christians under Diocletian's reign, c. 304. In Hungary, there are different folk-customs connected with this day (mainly of fertility-purposes): foreigners are not allowed to enter, different kinds of sorceries, Lucia's chair (the girl who sits on it will see her future husband), placing under the pillow small pieces with the names of eventual *fiancés*, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the *dionysies* (*Dionysos* = *Diony-Zos* = the feast of the reviving *Zeus*), the feast of *Mithras*. Criticizing this, Augustine writes „Do not adore the Sun, but Him Who created the Sun”.

*Háromkirályok* 'three kings'. However, it was only after having defeated, at the *Nicean Council* of 325, *Arian* „heresy” which preached the human character of *Oto Ish*, that the Church could „permit” herself to generalize the feast of December 25, which accentuates upon the human character of *Oto Ish*, his having been born of a human mother. In Rome it is established in 354, 18 years after Arius' death in 336, and it became accepted by the Eastern Church in 378. And it was presumably following the such established birthday that they reckoned „backwards” the feast of the *conception*, fixing it on the 25th of March (*Annuntiatio BMV*).<sup>1</sup>

The so-called „*mystery-plays*” were also intended to „transsubstantiate” the Saturnalia, the pagan festivities related to the winter solstice. These „*mystery-plays*” were generally supposed to start with the first scene in the *Garden in Eden*<sup>2</sup> where the *Tree of the knowledge of good and bad* was standing. In Germany, during the winter, the only tree which remains green is the *pine-tree*: the „*Xmas-tree*”. It is mentioned for the first time in the region of Strassbourg, in 1,605: it was decorated with nuts, gold-leaves, flowers made of paper and sweets. Candles are used for it since the middle of the 18th century. According to the memories of Frederic Podmaniczky, the „*checkered baron*” (1824 - 1907), president of the Liberal Party in Hungary, it was one of his Austrian aunts who erected for the first time, in 1825, a Xmas-tree in Hungary. The corresponding

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<sup>1</sup> In the Hungarian Catholic calendar the *Lady Day* is called the feast of the „*Gyümölcsoltó Boldogasszony*” 'the Grafting *BVM*': the traditional day of grafting fruit-bearing trees. It is not to be confounded with the feast on December 8 of the so-called *Immaculata Conceptio* which, contrary to what people generally mean, is related to the conception of the mother of *Oto Ish*. The relative dogma, widely discussed by theologians until the end of the Middle Ages, was declared by pope PIUS IX [1846-78] on December 8, 1854, as a dogma based on heavenly revelation.

<sup>2</sup> Hebr. *Eden* 'luxury, pleasure'; Hung. Paradicsom < Lat. *paradisus* 'Garden of Eden' < Gr. *paradeisos* 'a park with fence, Garden of Eden' < Hebr. *pardes* (פֶּרֶדֶס), Av. *pairi-daēza*, Middlepersian *pardēz*, Kurd *pardēs*, Armenian *partēz*, Late Ass. *pardēshu* 'fence, royal hunting park'; cf. French *parvis* 'the place before the church' where the mystery-plays were represented.

Hungarian word *karácsonyfa* is a calque from the German (*Weihnachtsbaum* 'id.'), documented for the first time from the year 1846.

**3.5.5. New Year.** In Christian Middle Ages, different days were considered as the first day of the new year.

- ▶ *January 6, Epiphany*;
- ▶ *March 1*, as the vernal Full Moon on which the date of Easter depended, generally fell in this month. It was in use by the Franks during the Merovingian kings, in connection with the vernal assemblies. In Venice they used it until the abolition of the republic, the end of the 18th century;
- ▶ *March 25 (stilus annunciationis or incarnationis)* beginning with the feast of *Annunciatio Mariae*, with the earthly life of *Oto Ish*. Of Italian origin (*calculus florentinus, calculus pisanus*), it was in use in Capeting France, Germany and, between the years 1115-1752, in England also;
- ▶ *Easter (stilus paschalis)*, it was specially wide-spread in France in the 12-14th centuries, and was called *gallicus* or *gallicanus* also;
- ▶ *September 1*, the starting point of the *Byzantine Era* was the 1st of September;
- ▶ *Advent* (Lat. *adventus domini* 'the arrival of the Lord'), the fourth Sunday before Xmas, it can fall on the 27-28-29-30th of November and the 1st-2nd-3rd of December. This was traditionally the starting point of the ecclesiastical year. The first signs of its feasting can be traced back to the 5th century. Pope GREGORY VIII (1187) established it officially as a festive period;
- ▶ *December 25 (stilus nativitatis)*, it was principally used in Central- and Western-Europe. In Hungary, it was used in the 11-16th centuries, parallel, from the 13th century on, with the New Year on the 1st of January;

► *January 1*: it was only relatively late, in 1691, that pope INNOCENT XII (1691-1700) fixed the begin of the new year on the 1st of January (*stilus comunis* vagy *Circumcisionis*). Already the *Iulian*-calendar started the year on the 1st of January, and many pagan rites of ancient origin were connected to this day. Therefore, in the ecclesiastical calendar, this day – the eighth day after Xmas – was established as the feast of the circumcision of *Oto Ish*.<sup>1</sup>

**3.6. The Islamic World-Era.** Its starting point is the *Hijra*, Muhammad's flight from Mecca to the „Jewish” town Yathrib (Medina), on July 16, 622 CE, according to tradition.<sup>2</sup> After the removal of all intercalary months between the *Hijra* and Muhammad's prohibition of them nine years later, the first day (New Moon) of the first month (1 *Muharram*) of that proleptic Islamic year, correspond to this date. However, modern scientific opinions pretend, it actually took place in September of the same year.

According to Islamic tradition, Abraha, governor of Yemen, then a province of the Christian Kingdom of Aksum (Ethiopia), made an attempt to destroy the *Kaaba* with an army which included several elephants. As it was customary to name a year after a major event which occurred during it, that year became known as the *Year of the Elephant*, despite the fact that the raid was unsuccessful. This was also the year that Muhammad was born. Most Muslims equate it with the year 570 CE, there are however who equate it with 571.

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<sup>1</sup> As the 1st of January is the eighth day after Xmas (*octava*), its popular name in Hungary was *Kiskarácsony* 'Small Xmas'.

<sup>2</sup> It can be interesting to draw the attention to the fact that if we parallel the *Hijra-Era* with the *Iulian-calendar* (and, through this with the presumably real beginning of the *Era Hispanica*), we come to the conclusion that the *Hijra* occured in the 666th year of the latter, and 666 is the apocalyptic number of the wild beast mentioned in *Apocalypse* 13:18.

In 638 (AH 17), the second so-called *orthodox Caliph* ['successor'] – according to tradition the conqueror of Syrie, Persie, Egypt and Mesopotama - UMAR I (Abu Hafsa ibn al-Qattab, 634-644) began numbering the years of the Islamic calendar from the year of the *Hijra*, postdating it AH 1. The first surviving attested use of the *Hijri* calendar is on a papyrus from Egypt in AH 22.

The arrival of Muhammad at the city of Medina was the first victory for Muslims. For the first time Muslims gained the right to run a country based on Islamic teachings, led by Muhammad himself. It came naturally to the Muslims at that time, to name the year of Muhammad's arrival at Medina as the first year. This act was not forbidden by Muhammad, and they continued to count their years from the *Hijra*-year onwards.

Thus, the Islamic calendar started in the year of Muhammad's arrival at the city of Medina and, because of the *Hijra*-event, the calendar was named the *Hijra*-calendar. And it started from the month of *Muharram*, as it was already customary by the Arabs at that time to start their year with the month of *Muharram*, after the return of the pilgrims from their *Hajj*, the pilgrimage at the *Kaaba*.

The year 1424 of the Islamic calendar started on the evening of March 4, 2003.

#### 4. Comparative Jewish Chronology

In 1962, in the *Breuer Jubilee Volume*, Rabbi Simon SCHWAB published an article with the above title.<sup>1</sup> There, he analyses the discrepancies of the Jewish chronological tradition and chronology as presented by modern scientific historiography.

As mentioned above,<sup>2</sup> the outlines of Jewish chronological tradition are established in the „*Seder Olam Rabbah*” [Great World Order], redacted in the second century CE by the *Tanna* R. YOSSE bar Chalafta as stated by the Talmud (*bYevamos* 82b; *bNidah* 46b). This work is a chronological composition of „*biblical history*” continued until the Bar-Kochba uprising, and was redacted following the historical and time-reckoning tradition of rabbinical Judaism.

The main data as given by the „*Seder Olam*” are as follows.<sup>3</sup> The *Exode* took place in the year 2448 after the Creation. After 40 years’ wandering in the wilderness, the *Bnai Yisroel* crossed the Jordan river. It took 7 years for the tribes to occupy the Land, and other 7 to distribute its territory among the tribes. After *Moshe rabainu*’s death, *Judges* ruled the people until *Shaul*’s incoronation: for 394 years, between 2488-2882 (the two times 7 years are included in those of *Yehoshua*). After the reign of *Shaul* and *Dovid*, in the fourth year of his reign,

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<sup>1</sup> Rabbi Simon SCHWAB, Comparative Jewish Chronology. In: *Ateret Tsevi*. Jubilee Volume Presented in Honor of the 80th Birthday of *Yoseph Breuer*. By MARC and JACOB eds. New York: Philipp Feldheim. RSR Hirsch Publication Society, 1962, pp. 177-197. Republished in *Selected Speeches*. CIS Publishers, 1991.

<sup>2</sup> Pp. xlvii-xlviii.

<sup>3</sup> There is clear evidence that there were other chronological traditions also in circulation. This is attested first of all by the different data conserved by the *Septuagint* and also followed by JOSEPHUS. Their data will not be discussed here, as they need a separate study concerning the possible origins of the differences, which in many cases contedict textual evidence given by the Torah itself. However, the data, uncommented, will be given in footnotes in the Chronology.

480 years after the *Exode*, *Shlomoh hamelech* starts to build the *Bais hamikdosh* which will stand for 410 years, until its destruction by NEVUCHADNETZAR, king of Babylonia. After 52 years of exile, Jews are permitted to return home and rebuild the *Bais hamikdosh*. However, the works are shortly thereafter stopped for 18 more years by the Persian King, not to be retaken until the 70th year of the Babylonian Exile. The Second *Bais hamikdosh* will stand for 420 years. In the year 3828 after the Creation, Titus destroys it, and the present *diaspora* begins, be His will that it be ended still in our days, *bimhairo veyomainu omain*.

I do not intend to analyze here every detail of this chronological system. Nor do I intend to attempt some kind of harmonizing the 5769 years of *Creation Era* to the several *billions* of years of modern historiography (even if I am convinced that there is a possibility of this harmonizing). Instead, I would like to focus on what I consider being the two main problems: 1./ the duration of the Second Commonwealth period; 2./ the date of the *Exode*. Although it is evident that chronologically the *Exode* preceded the period of the Second Commonwealth, I prefer to analyze first this second issue, the duration of the latter period.

**4.1. The duration of the period of the Second Commonwealth.** Let us first summarize „Biblical chronology”. The year when *Avrohom* was born according to the *Jewish World Era / Creation Era / Era Mundi (AM)*, although not recorded explicitly in the Torah, can still easily be computed through a simple addition of the data given there for the first twenty generations (*Beraishis* 5; 11:10-26). Thus, we arrive to the year 1948 after the Creation. *Avrohom* was 100 years old when *Yitzchok* was born (*Beraishis* 21:5), and the latter 60 when *Yaakov* was born (*Beraishis* 25:26). *Yaakov*, on his turn, was 130 years old, when he descended to *Mitzrayim* (*Beraishis* 47:9). Until now, we had just to follow the *psuqim*, and we



arrived to the year 2238 after the Creation.

The first real chronological complication starts with the effective stay of the *Bnai Yisroel* in *Mitzrayim*, as its length does not figure explicitly in the Torah.

- ▶ During the *Bris bain habсорim*, the „covenant between the parts” (*Beraishis* 15), the Eternal promised *Avrohom* that „...your seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs ... **four hundred years**” (*Beraishis* 15:13);
- ▶ however, their stay in *Mitzrayim* could not have lasted 400 years. *Kehos* was still born in *Eretz Canaan* (cf. *Beraishis* 46:5-7, 11), and lived 133 years (*Shemos* 6:18); *Kehos*’ son, *Amrom* lived 137 years (*Shemos* 6:20). *Amrom*’s son, *Moshe rabainu* went to *Paroh* – almost one year before the *Exode* - at the age of 80 (*Shemos* 7:7):  $133 + 137 + 80 = 350$ ; and a part of the years necessarily belong up and down to the father and the son also, what means that in any case **less** than 400 years;
- ▶ therefore, according to the *Midrash* (*Tanchuma P. Bashalach*), we have to admit that the 400 years of *golus* promised by the Eternal start at *Yitzchok*’s birth - i.e. from the moment when *Avrohom* has finally a seed, and this seed can only be *Yitzchok* (*Beraishis* 21:12) -, in the year 2048, thirty years after the *Bris bain habсорim*;
- ▶ *Yitzchok* was 60 years old when his son, *Yaakov*, was born; and *Yaakov* went to *Mitzrayim* at the age of 130:  $60 + 130 = 190$ ;
- ▶ deducting from the 400 years promised by the Eternal for the duration of *golus*, the 190 years already elapsed until *Yaakov*’s descent to *Mitzrayim*, remain  $400 - 190 = 210$  years for the *Bnai Yisroel*’s effective stay in *Mitzrayim*;
- ▶ according to the *Midrash* (*Beraishis Rabbah* 91:2), this was alluded to by *Yaakov*, when he sent his sons to buy food in *Mitzrayim*: „...there is grain in Egypt; get down [רדיון] there...” (*Beraishis* 42:2). The *gematrioh* of the word

רד"ו is 210. And this was already alluded to by the Eternal also during the *bris bain habсорim*: „...כ"י ג"ר יהיה זרעך...” („...your seed shall be a stranger...”; *Beraishis* 15:13), the *gematrioh* of the two final letters י"ר is also 210.

► On the other hand, *Yocheved*, *Moshe rabainu*'s mother was born upon their arrival to *Mitzrayim*. She does not figure in the list of those descending to *Mitzrayim* (*Beraishis* 46:6-27). However, according, to an different place of the Torah (*Bamidbor* 26:59), she was born in *Mitzrayim*. Consequently, we must say *Yocheved* was born at the moment of their arrival to *Mitzrayim*, so to say „in the gate” of *Mitzrayim* (*Seder Olam*; *Beraishis Rabbah* 94:4, 8; *bSotah* 12; *bBB* 120, 123). This means that the number of the members of the family was 70 upon their arrival to *Mitzrayim*, but only 69 upon their departure, and three from among them (*Yossef* and his two sons) were already in *Mitzrayim*. *Yocheved* was 130 when she gave birth to *Moshe rabainu* who went to *Paroh* at the age of 80:  $130 + 80 = 210$ ; what again means that the *Bnai Yisroel* stayed in *Mitzrayim* 210 years;

► Consequently, *Yetzias Mitzrayim* took place in the year 2448.

► According to an other *Midrashic* source (*Pirkai derabbi Eliezer* 48), as *Yossef*'s two sons were born five years before the family's arrival to *Mitzrayim*, these 5 years have to be added to the 210 years. And as in the father's merit, the Eternal considers the days and the nights separately, reducing the length of the *Bnai Yisroel*'s stay:  $215 \times 2 = 430$  years, the time elapsed since the *bris bain habсорim*.

Following the order of the „*Seder Olam*”, the construction of the first *Bais hamikdosh* started 480 years after the *Exode* (1.*Melochim* 6:1), i. e. in the year 2.928 after the Creation. This 480 years can with relative simplicity be filled with the 40 years in the wilderness, the 7 years of occupying the Land, the other 7 for

the distribution of the occupied territories (possibly conceived parallel to the precedent)<sup>1</sup>, the years of the reigns of the *Judges*, *Shaul*, *Dovid* and the first four years of *Shlomoh*.

According to the „*Seder Olam*”, the first *Bais hamikdosh* stood, until its destruction by NEVUCHADNETZAR of Babylonia, for 410 years, *i. e.* until the year 3338 after the Creation. This again, can with relative simplicity be filled with the years of the subsequent kings, given in the „historical books” of the *TANACH*.

Allusions in the *TANACH* to the 410 years of the first *Bais hamikdosh*, according to the *Midrashim*:

► „*And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.*” (*Shemos* 25:8). וְשָׁכַן תִּי שָׁנִים 'that I may dwell': 'he dwelled for 410 years': the *gematriah*, the numerical value of the letters ת and י, is 410. Or we can say וְשָׁנִי תִי 'its years being 420': the *gematriah* of the letters ת and כ is 420, the traditional 420 years of the second *Bais hamikdosh* (*Baal haTurim ad loc.*).

► „*But you are holy, O you who are enthroned on the praises of Israel.*” (*Tehilim* 22:4). The *gematriah* of the letters of the word קִדּוֹ שׁ 'holy' is 410, the years of the first *Bais hamikdosh* (*Baal haTurim ibid.*).

► „*Thus [lit. In this] shall Aharon come into the holy place*” (*Vayikroh* 16:3). The *gematriah* of the letters of the word בָּזָא "ת 'in this' is 410, the years of the first *Bais hamikdosh*.

► בְּרֵאשִׁי "ת 'in the beginning', interpreted as formed from the initials of the words: אש - ראשון - תִּי שָׁנִים, *i. e.* The first *Bais [hamikdosh]* was destroyed by fire [after] 410 years.

<sup>1</sup> See the repeated discussions about the symmetries in history as a form of manifestation of Divine providence in Abraham IBN DAUD's „*Sefer haKabbalah*” (Ed. Gershon COHEN). Cf. *Beraishis Rabbah*

The length of the *Babylonian Exile* is clearly attested by a prophetic letter of *Yirmeya-h* (29:10), and also by *Daniel* (9:2): 70 years, interrupted, after 52, by the first return.

Consequently, the second return and the subsequent rebuilding of the *Bais hamikdosh*, *i. e.* the construction of the second *Bais hamikdosh* took place (started) in the year 3408 after the Creation.

According to the „*Seder Olam*” (11), the second *Bais hamikdosh* stood for 420 years, from 3408 to 3828, until its destruction (*churban*) by Titus during the Jewish war. And we find in several places of the Talmud (*bYoma* 9a, *bErachin* 12b, *bAZ* 9b, *jMegillah* 1, *cf. Vayikroh Rabbah* 21:9, *tKorbanos* 13) these data of the „*Seder Olam*”, 410 and 420 years.

Generally, the number 420 is considered being a computation of *Daniel's* prophecy about the future redemption (*Daniel* 9:24): „*Seventy weeks are decreed upon your people and upon your holy city, to finish the transgression*”, thus, it will happen after  $7 \times 70 = 490$  years. Distracting the 70 years of the Babylonian exile, we receive 420 years. The Talmud (*bBB* 3a-b) finds this to be supported by a *possuq* in *Chagai* (2:9): „*The glory of this latter house shall be greater than that of the former, says the Lord of hosts*”. The dispute of two *amoraim* concerning this *possuq* is reported in the Talmud. According to *Rav*, the measures of the two *Botai mikdosh* are meant to be compared: the second one was 100 *amos* high (*mMidos* 4:6; presumably after the reconstruction by *Hordos* / Herode); according to *Shmuel*, the years of their existence: *i. e.* the second stood longer.

The „*Seder Olam*” (and, based on it, *bAZ* 9a-10b) also gives the details of the 420 years of the Second Commonwealth. Accordingly, *Eretz Yisroel* was under

Persian rule for still 34 years. This was followed by 180 years of Greek [Egyptian and Syrian] rule [of the *Ptolemaids* and *Seleucids* respectively], thereafter the Hashmoneans reigned for 103 years, followed by the „dynasty” of HERODE for again 103 years.  $34 + 180 + 103 + 103 = 420$ .

Beginning with the reign of *Alexander Mokdon* [Alexander the Great, 336-323 BCE], although here and there slightly differing, the Jewish and the scientific chronologies can be considered being more or less parallels.

The crucial point of the differences is the „Persian period”. According to the standard Jewish chronological tradition as conserved by the „*Seder Olam Rabbah*”, the Persian Empire existed, after the conquest of Babylon and until the final defeat by Alexander Mokdon, for 52 years. Although a parallel manuscript tradition has 250 years, all the later Jewish historiographical-chronographical works emend this, conforming to the data given in the different places of the Talmud and its early commentaries, to 52 years. On the other hand, modern historiography, following the Greco-Roman tradition, based on the descriptions of HERODOTE and THUKYDIDE, extends the rule of the Persian kings – from CYRUS (559-530 BCE) to DARIUS III (336-330 BCE) - over a period of some 229 years. Accordingly, from the conquest of Babylon by the former (539) until the defeat of the latter in the battle at Gaugamela by Alexander (331), there were 208 years. This was the period of the Greco-Persian wars also, between 500-387 BCE. Nevertheless, it is important to remark, that the same number of kings can be found enlisted in the so to say „last” traditional Jewish chronology, the „*Sefer Seder haDoros*” by Yechiel HALPERIN:<sup>1</sup> 14 kings from *Koresh* to the last *Daryovesh*. It has also to be assumed that the author of the „*Seder haDoros*” or his sources, or eventually both, were well acquainted with the „Gentile”

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<sup>1</sup> Yechiel HALPERIN, *Seder haDoros*. [The Order of Generations] Bnai Berak: Sifrai Or haChaim, 2003.

historical tradition.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, in the *TANACH*, as in rabbinical sources (*Seder Olam* 30, *bRH* 3b) we find only four names for the Persian kings: *Daryovesh*, *Koresh*, *Achashverosh*, *Artachshasto*. And as the use of the four names is still not always evident, the „transposition” of the whole period results even more difficult. As Rabbi SIMONS states: „Greek historians (such as Herodotus, Ctesias, Xenophon, and others who lived after the events and collected oral histories) speak of 10 Persian kings who ruled for 208 years. By contrast, the Biblical Jewish account speaks of four kings ruling 52 years. The confusion stems from the fact that one person may have several names. For example Clinton, President, and Hillary's Husband may all be names for the same person. So too, Arta-Khsharta is a title used by all Persian kings and means literally 'Fit for the Kingdom', yet Artaxerxes is listed separately as three kings in the Greek lists.”<sup>2</sup> These problems will be examined in a following part of the present work, when enlisting the events of the Babylonian exile.<sup>3</sup>

The traditional year of the destruction (*churban*) of the first *Bais hamikdosh* is 3338 *Creation Era*. If the present year is 5769 after the Creation and 2009 CE, we have to say that the *churban* took place in 422 BCE. However, modern historiography, following the Greco-Roman tradition, gives the year 587/6 for the first *churban*. The difference is some 165 years. This difference is already too big: it cannot be simply misconsidered, pretending it as an inexactitude due to the fact that the Jewish historiographers were in reality theologians, they were interested in the presentation of the „chain of tradition”, in the defense of this

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<sup>1</sup> R. David GANZ, author of the well known Jewish chronological work of the late 16th century, the „*Sefer Tzemach David*” [Prague, 1592], actually divides the book into two separate parts: the first for the Jewish history and the second for a survey of universal history. There he even gives his sources for this second part, the „*Weltchroniks*” of Laurentius FAUSTUS, Cyriak SPANGENBERG and others.

<sup>2</sup> Rabbi SIMONS, *Jewish Calendar's Missing Years*. In:

[http://judaism.about.Com/library/3\\_Askrabbi\\_o/bl\\_simmons\\_calendarjewish.htm](http://judaism.about.Com/library/3_Askrabbi_o/bl_simmons_calendarjewish.htm)

<sup>3</sup> See below in a next volume under the year 3390 after the Creation.

(rabbinical) tradition against the sectarian attacks of Karaite Judaism so far, and not the scientific exactitude.

Shlomoh Yehudah RAPOPORT (1790-1867) suggested<sup>1</sup> that this shortening of the Persian period was due to *CHAZAL*'s intention to purposely create a chronology in which *Minyan Shtarot* began exactly 1000 years after the *Exode*.

In an article published in 1934, J. Z. LAUTERBACH proposed an interesting solution to the problem.<sup>2</sup> According to him the 34 years, assigned by the „*Seder Olam Rabbah*” to the Persian rule over *Eretz Yisroel*, has to be counted before the construction of the second *Bais hamikdosh* (לפני הבית), and not after its construction (בפני הבית, lit. 'in the [existence] of the house) as in the current printed texts. The different reading can be or a misunderstanding or simply a copyist's or printer's error. Thus, the 34 years extend from *Koresh*'s conquest of Babylon in 549 BCE, until 516 BCE, the year of the completion of the *Bais hamikdosh*. In his article entitled *Chronology*, in the *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Benny ISAACSON rejects this solution, considering it „...ingenious but unacceptable, since Babylon fell not in 549 but in 539 BCE. Although Cyrus undertook the conquest of Lydia in 547–546, and large parts of Babylonian territory were conquered, Babylon itself was not.”

In his aforementioned article, written almost half a century ago, Rabbi SCHWAB presents his approach to the problem no less ingeniously. Seeking to establish a comparative chronology which would satisfy both Orthodox Jews – faithfully trusting in rabbinical tradition – and secular historians alike, he revises some suggestions of the earlier Jewish scholars. Thereafter, he declares that: „...our traditional chronology is based on the *Seder Olam* because of the

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<sup>1</sup> *Erech Millin*, p. 74.

<sup>2</sup> J. Z. LAUTERBACH, in *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research*, 5 (1934) pp.77-84.

*authority of its author*. It is therefore quite inconceivable that any post-Talmudic teacher could possibly 'reject' those chronological calculations which have been made the subject of many a Talmudic discussions."<sup>1</sup> The solution he actually proposes is a *purposed hiding* of the problematic 165 years by the *Sages*. „It should have been possible that our Sages – for some unknown reason – had 'covered up' a certain historic period and *purposely eliminated and suppressed all records and other material pertaining thereto*."<sup>2</sup> He also suggests the reason thereto: „...a *Divine command* conveyed by an angel to Daniel to »seal the words and close the book until the time of the end«...” (*Daniel* 12:4).<sup>3</sup> The reason of this „*Divine command*” is to be found in the Talmud (*bSanhedrin* 97b): „Blasted be the bones of those who calculate the end.” Thus, what actually Rabbi Schwab proposes is, that the *Sages* had purposely hidden the 165 years in question, in order to prevent all kind of calculations concerning the (exact) date of the coming of *Moshiach*.

Rabbi Schwab's thesis would mean on the one hand that we are 165 years „nearer” to the „end of the days”, to the coming of *Moshiach*. As stated above, this world was created to stand for 6000 years. Consequently, the actual year should be instead of 5769, 5934! Only (maximum) 66 years, and *Moshiach* is surely here. On the other hand, Rabbi Schwab also proposes as a consequence of his thesis, that although we are obliged not to unveil what our *Sages* have hidden, exception made when „...*the mystery had become unveiled all by itself*”: *i. e.* by the archeological discoveries.<sup>4</sup> „We might, however, attempt to investigate how to take advantage of the already available archeological evidence which could

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<sup>1</sup> SCHWAB, *op. cit.* p. 186.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 188.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 189. It has to be remarked that R. Schwab actually interchanges the words in his traduction of the *possuq*, writing „seal the words and close the book”.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 190.



serve as a guide for the perplexed, in order to avoid an intellectual dilemma.”<sup>1</sup> At the end of his article, Rabbi Schwab fills up the gap of the hidden years, establishes the „completed” comparative chronology of the events for the whole period from Cyrus to Alexander the Great. Rabbi Schwab proposes to accept, instead of the traditional Jewish chronology as conserved by the „*Seder Olam*”, the one established by modern scientific historiography.

As mentioned above,<sup>2</sup> PTOLEMAIOS’ reliability is more than questioned today. Robert NEWTON demonstrated errors and misleading observations, viz. (often erroneous) calculations instead of effective observations. E. J. BICKERMANN goes even further, questioning the Ptolemaic authorship of the „*Royal Canon*”.<sup>3</sup> The Christian scholar, Walter R. DOLEN states<sup>4</sup> that Babylonian records of astronomical character need interpretation, as they not always clearly describe whether it was question of a real eclipse or simply some weather phenomenon (*e. g.* the reported eclipse of June 15, 763 BCE which, according to MITCHELL<sup>5</sup>, if it was effectively an eclipse, could have taken place in 791, 771, 770 BCE), and also because of often misrecordings due to poor conditions of observation. Besides, he draws the attention to the fact that dates of ancient texts also often need interpretation, because of broken texts and/or difficulties of establishing the just order of the found texts. Brad AARONSON demonstrates<sup>6</sup> that many Persian inscriptions contain only names and titles, and that the persons mentioned need interpretation. Besides, there are inscriptions which can be considered as being

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> P. 42.

<sup>3</sup> E. J. BICKERMANN, *Chronology of the Ancient World*. Cornell University Press, 1968, 1982.

<sup>4</sup> Walter E. DOLEN, *Secular Chronology*. <http://becomingone.org/cp/cp3.htm>

<sup>5</sup> Samuel Alfred MITCHELL, *Eclipses of the Sun*. 1951<sup>5</sup>, p. 26.

<sup>6</sup> Brad AARONSON, Fixing the History Books. Dr Chaim S. Heifetz’s Revision of Persian History. *Jewish Action*, Summer 1991. (Quarterly put out by the Union of Orthodox Rabbis.)

forges. Dr. Ch. Sh. HEIFETZ offers<sup>1</sup> a restructuration of the Persian history according to the chronology of the *TANACH* and the „*Seder Olam*”.

**4.2. When did Yetzias Mitzrayim take place?** To answer this question we find ourselves in front of the opposite difficulty as in the case of the duration of the period of the Second Commonwealth. There, the problem is that traditional Jewish chronology contradicts „historical evidence”. Here, the problem is that we actually lack any kind of „non-Biblical, historical evidence”. Egyptian sources are completely silent about the Jewish people’s sojourn in Egypt and the *Exode*. On the other hand, as O. EISSFELDT states „It is quite inconceivable that a people could have obstinately preserved traditions about a dishonourable bondage of its ancestors in a foreign land, and passed them on from generation to generation, unless it had actually passed through such an experience”.<sup>2</sup> Generally, this „lack of evidence” instead of being considered as evidence for fictitiousness, is explained by the fact, that the Egyptians only marked events favorable for them. Consequently, catastrophs like the Ten Plagues were omitted from national memory.

The first mention of Israel is on the *stele* of Pharaoh MERNEPTAH (1212-1202 BCE, 19th Dynasty) erected in the fifth year of his reign, somewhere towards the end of the 13th century BCE.

Earlier opinions (*e.g.* MAHLER<sup>3</sup>) identified the Pharaoh of the *Exode* with YAHMES I (Ahmose, *Amosis*, Nebpehtire; 1552-1527 BCE; 18th Theban Dynasty) who expelled the *Hyksos* and, through this, established the New

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Chaim Shlomoh HEIFETZ, in *Megadim* 14 (1991) [in Hebrew].

<sup>2</sup> Otto EISSFELDT, Palestine During the Nineteenth Dynasty. In: *The Cambridge Ancient History*. Vol. II, Part 2, History of the Middle East and the Aegean Region c. 1380-1000 B.C. I. E. S. EDWARDS, C. J. GADD, N. G. L. HAMMOND, E. SOLLBERGER eds.

<sup>3</sup> *Jüdische Chronologie*..., p. 120.

Kingdom; or with AMENMESSE MENMIRE (after 1213 - before 1186 BCE; 19th Dynasty) who defeated the Lybians. DUBNOV and others, recently John BRIGHT (referring to certain archeological evidences: there have been excavated in Palestine cities destroyed by fire in the 13th century BCE) pretend the *Exode* took place during the reign of RAMSES II (1290-1224 BCE) who fought with the Hettites for Syria and Palestine (the battle at Qadesh, repartition of the discussed territories). According to them, the construction of *Pisom* (*Taanis*) and *Ramses* mentioned in the Torah and also the latter's name is an allusion of RAMSES' constructions at Abydos, Abu-Simbel (the sanctuaries carved into the rock) and Thebai (*Ramesseum*).

According to the rendering of the traditional Jewish chronology, *Nissan* 2448 would coincide with the year 1312 BCE, during the reign of HOREMHEB Jeserheperure (1334-1306 BCE; the last Pharaoh of the 18th Dynasty who came to the power as a general of the army).

On the other hand, according to *midrashic* sources, the „*Sefer haYoshor*”, the name of the *Paroh* of *Yetzias Mitzrayim* was: *Adikom* / *Adikos*. He ruled for only four years and his Kingdom was destroyed by the Plagues, and his army drowned into the sea. His father, by the name *Molol*, reigned – also according to the „*Sefer haYoshor*” - for an extraordinary long period: 94 years!

Curiously enough, in the king-lists we can actually find a Pharaoh who ruled for such a long time: PEPI Noferkaré II effectively ruled over 90 years c. 2350-2260 BCE – according to Manetho as well to the Turin Royal Canon. The only problem on the way of identifying him as the *Paroh* of the *Exode* is that he was of the *SIXTH* Dynasty (Memphis) of the *OLD* Kingdom! But historians almost unanimously seek to fit *Yetzias Mitzrayim* somewhere into the periode of the New Kingdom. Besides, Pepi II was the next to the last king of the sixth dynasty

before the collapse of the Old Kingdom, as was *Molol* before the collapse of *Mitzrayim* due to the Ten Plagues. And he was followed by his son, who ruled for only four or five years. And the resemblance of the situation in Egypt during the collapse of the Old Kingdom as described by the so-called *Ipuwer-papyrus*, evokes the descriptions of the Ten Plagues in the Torah. Astonishing coincidence which can hardly be considered as being incidental!

Immanuel VELIKOVSKY, in his „*Ages in Chaos*” (1952), proposed for the first time to revise Egyptian chronology, and synchronize Egyptian history with that contained in the *TANACH*. More recently, Brad AARONSON proposed to identify the Ten Plagues with the events accompanying the collapse of the Old Kingdom, and to connect the date of the latter to the traditional date of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*!<sup>1</sup> This would naturally result in reducing Egyptian chronology with almost thousand years (naturally with all the difficulties being implied) and, parallel with this, in reconsidering Mesopotamian chronology also, viz. the entire chronological edifice of the history of the Ancient Middle East! Consequently, major credit will be given to Jewish tradition, instead of the far less reliable Greco-Roman descriptions.

In the letter column of the Summer 1991 issue of *Jewish Action*, Aaronson answers a rather critical letter by Rabbi Alan Yuter from Springfield, NJ. There he writes among others: „*Why assume that the rest of the world is right and that we need to adapt our traditions to the theories currently in fashion? Why not instead do as our father Abraham did and take a stand for what we know to be the truth? Emunat chachamim demands that we give Chazal this benefit of the doubt.*”

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<sup>1</sup> Brad AARONSON, The Exodus and Ancient Egyptian Records. In: *Jewish Action*, Spring 1995.

## CHAPTER ONE: THE CREATION OF THE UNIVERSE (בריאת העולם)

### 1.1. Before Creation

The Eternal creates seven things before creating the Universe ( נדרים ל"ט; פסחים )  
(נ"ד):

1./ The *Torah* (תורה). 2.000 years before Creation, He hides the Torah for the *Bnai Yisroel* (ב"ר ח, ב; תנחומא צ, י"ב; תדא"ר ל"א; פסחים נ"ד). This means 974 generations before Creation (אדר"נ ל"א, ג; חגיגה י"ג): „the word which he commanded to a thousand generations” (*Tehilim* 105:8). The Torah has been given to *Moshe rabainu* in the 27<sup>th</sup> generation after *Odom horishon*,  $1.000 - 26 = 974$  (רש"י שבת פ"ה; זבחים קט"ז).

The Torah is called „*Tushioh*” (תושיה; *Mishlai* 8:14).

As there was no parchment before the Creation of the material world, the Torah was written with black fire upon white fire (מדיה"ד).

The Eternal, so to say, consults the Torah whether to create the world or not (ב"ר ח, ב; פדר"א ג) (מדיה"ד); and creates the universe as if looking into the Torah.

The ministering angels decide not to let the Torah to come into human hands, pretending humans will definitely sin. As the Torah complains about this before the Eternal, He answers the angels, that they will *not* come out from *Mitzrayim*, they do *not* eat, etc. The same arguments will be used by *Moshe Rabainu* when the angels will try not to let him to bring down the Two Tablets of the Law (מדיה"ד).

In the Torah, the paragraphs (*parshiyos*) do not figure in the original order conceived by the Eternal, because if so, even a school-boy should be able to

perform miracles, and resurrect the dead. On the other hand, in this form it is easier to learn the Torah for its own sake (לשמה), for the only reason, that this is Hashem's will, and not in order to can perform miracles (שו"ט).

- 2./ *Teshuvoh* (תשובה): that the World could stand during the Judgement.
- 3./ *Gan Eden* (גן עדן): the reward (שכר) for the accomplishment of the *mitzvos*.
- 4./ *Gehinnom* (גיחנם): the punishment (עונש) for the sins.
- 5./ *Kissai hakovod* (כסאי הכבוד): *haShem*'s reign over the world. It is held by four human figures (*Yechezkel* 1:5), each one has four faces, four wings (*Ibid.* 1:6) and their feet are like a calf's feet (*Ibid.* 1:7). The four faces are: a human one (*Yaakov*'s face; רש"י חולין צ"א); that of a lion, a steer and an eagle (*Yechezkel* 1:10).
- 6./ The *Bais hamikdosh* (בית המקדש): the dwelling place of the *Shechinah* (שכינה, the Divine Presence).
- 7./ *Moshiach*'s Name (שמו של משיח).

Other sources (תנחומא נשא; פדר"א ג; תדא"ר ל"א) enumerate these seven things in different order: *Gehinnom*, *Gan Eden*, *Kissai hakovod*, *Bais hamikdosh*, *Teshuvoh*, *Moshiach*'s Name. Again other sources (ב"ר א, ) mention only six of them, or state that a part of these had only been conceived by the Eternal before the Creation of the Universe, but materialized only later, during the six days of Creation.

This world was created after several other worlds, which had all been destroyed (ב"ר ג, ז).

This world was created to exist for six thousand years (more exactly 6.093 years; (תהו ובהו) *Tohuvabohu* two thousand years (אתיות דר' עקיבה): two thousand years Torah, two thousand years the days [of the coming] of *Moshiach* (ימות) (סנהדרין צ"ז; ע"ז ט; המשיח).

Five periodos of the history of mankind:

- 1./ The life in this world (עולם הזה);
- 2./ *Gan Eden*, where the souls of the righteous (צדיקים) are awaiting for the resurrection of the deads (תחיית המתים);
- 3./ the days of *Moshiach*;
- 4./ the resurrection of the deads after the Day of Judgement;
- 5./ the World to Come (עולם הבא; ספר העקרים; רמב"ן).

According to others (רמב"ם) the *Gan Eden* is the World to Come, the *Olam haBo*.

According to R. Eliezer, the Universe was created in the month *Tishrai*, according to R. *Yehoshuah*, in the month *Nissan* (ר"ה י). According to others (מהר"ח"ו שער הכוונות דרישא דר"ה. vö תוס' ר"ה כ"ז;), the idea of Creation was conceived in *Tishrai*, and it has been realized in *Nissan*. According to both opinions, the Final Redemption will be in the same month.

## 1.2. The Six Days of Creation

The Universe was created with ten utterances (אבות ה, א; מגילה כ"א):

- 1./ „In the beginning...” (*Beraishis* 1:1)<sup>1</sup>: „By the word of the Lord were the heavens made...” (*Tehilim* 33:6). According to an other opinion (פדר"א ג), the first utterance is: 1./ „Behold, I have given you...” (*Beraishis* 1:29);

The letter „**N**” complains during 26 generations, finally it will be recompensed by the Eternal at Mount-Sinai with the word „**אנוכי**”, beginning with the letter „**N**” (מדיה"ד).

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<sup>1</sup> English quotations from the *TANACH*, if not signalized otherwise, are generally taken from the *ArtScroll TANACH*. Ed. R. Nossou SCHERMAN. New York: Mesorah Publications, 1996, 1998. Quotations from the *TANACH* and the Talmud, if not signalized otherwise, are generally taken from the Soncino Classic Collection, Judaic Classic Library by David KANTOROWITZ CD-ROM, Davka Corporation and Judaica Press, 1991-1996.

- 2./ „And a wind from G-d hovered...” (*Beraishis* 1:2): a separate utterance, a separate creation. According to the above other opinion (פדר"א ג), the second utterance is „It is not good that the man should be alone” (*Ibid.* 2:18);
- 3./ „Let there be light...” (*Ibid.* 1:3);
- 4./ „Let there be a firmament...” (*Ibid.* 1:6);
- 5./ „Let the waters...be gathered...” (*Ibid.* 1:9);
- 6./ „Let the earth bring forth grass...” (*Ibid.* 1:11);
- 7./ „Let there be luminaries...” (*Ibid.* 1:14);
- 8./ „Let the waters be filled...” (*Ibid.* 1:20);
- 9./ „Let the earth bring forth all kinds of living creatures...” (*Ibid.* 1:24);
- 10./ „Let us make man...” (*Ibid.* 1:26; א, ב"ר י"ז).

The Universe was created with the divine attribute of strict justice (מידת הדין). Later, the Eternal joined to it the divine attribute of mercy (מידת הרחמים), in order that Creation should survive (ב"ר י"ב, ט"ו).

*Hashem* created the Universe in six days: from the 25<sup>th</sup> of *Elul* until the 1<sup>st</sup> of *Tishrai*; acting only during daytime:  $6 \times 12 = 72$  hours, as it is written „The world is built by kindness...” (*Tehilim* 89:3). „עולם חסיד יבנה”: the *gematrioh* (גימטריא 'numerical value')<sup>1</sup> of the letters of the word חסיד 'kindness' is 72.

● **Elul 25, Sunday: the first day of Creation.**

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<sup>1</sup> *Gematrioh*: from the Greek word *geometria* 'geodesy, geometry', one of the *aggadic* hermeneutical rules for interpreting the Torah (*Baraisa* of 32 Rules, no. 29), consisting of explaining a word or group of words according to the total numerical value of the letters.



Everything was created on the first day, but the different things started functioning only on one of the following days.

Ten creatures (חגיגה י"ב):

1-2./ The Heaven and the Earth (*Beraishis* 1:1):

► „*Bais Shammai* say: Heaven was created first and afterwards the earth was created, for it is said: »*In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth*«” (*Beraishis* 1:1);

► „*Bais Hillel* say: Earth was created first and afterwards heaven, for it is said: »*In the day that the Lord God made earth and heaven*« (*Beraishis* 2:4) *first the Earth then the heaven*”; „...*you laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of your hands*” (*Tehilim* 102:26);

► „But the *Sages* say: Both were created at the same time. For it is said: »*Yea, Mine hand had laid the foundation of the earth, and My right hand had spread out the heavens: When I call unto them they stand up together.*«” (*Yeshayah* 48:13).

► „*Raish Lakish* answered: When they were created, He created heaven [first], and afterwards He created the earth; but when He stretched them forth He stretched forth the earth [first], and afterwards He stretched forth heaven.” (תמיד (ל"ב; חגיגה י"ב)

The Eternal takes a piece of the light of His „garment”, and spreads it over the Universe (פדר"א ג).

There are seven heavens (חגיגה י"ב):<sup>1</sup>

► *vilon* (וילון; 'curtain')<sup>2</sup> – „it serves no purpose except that it enters in the morning and goes forth in the evening, and renews every day the work of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Dante's *Paradise* has nine sectors.

<sup>2</sup> From Lat. *velum*.

creation, for it is said: *»That stretches out the heavens as a curtain, and spreads them out as a tent to dwell in.«* (Yeshayah 40:12)”;

► *rokiah* (רַקִּיעַ; ‘expanse, firmament’) – „is that in which sun and moon, stars and constellations are set. For it is said: *»And God set them in the firmament [Rokiah] of the heaven.«* (Beraishis 1:17);

► *shechokim* (שְׁחָקִים; ‘clouds’) – „is that in which millstones stand and grind manna for the righteous. For it is said: *»And He commanded the skies [Shechokim] above, and opened the doors of heaven; and He caused manna to rain upon them for food...«* (Tehilim 78:23-24);

► *zvul* (זְבוּל; ‘elevation, height, lofty abode’<sup>1</sup>) – „is that in which [the heavenly] Jerusalem and the Temple and the Altar are built,<sup>2</sup> and *Michoel*, the great Prince, stands and offers up thereon an offering. For it is said: *»I have surely built You a house of habitation [Zvul], a place for You to dwell in for ever.«* (1Melochim 8:13). And whence do we derive that it is called heaven? For it is written: *»Look down from heaven, and see, even from Your holy and glorious habitation.«*” (Yeshayah 63:15);

► *moon* (מַעוֹן; ‘dwelling, habitation’) – „is that in which there are companies of Ministering Angels, who utter [divine] song by night, and are silent by day for the sake of Israel’s glory [who say by day]. For it is said: *»By day the Lord does command His lovingkindness, and in the night His song is with me.«* (Tehilim 42:9). And whence do we derive that it is called heaven? For it is said: *»Look forth from Your holy habitation [moon], from heaven.«* (Devorim 26:15);

► *mochon* (מִכּוֹן; ‘fixed or established place, foundation, residence’) – „is that in which there are the stores of snow and stores of hail, and the loft of harmful

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<sup>1</sup> BDB.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *bTaanis* 5a: „The Holy One blessed be He, said: I shall not enter the Jerusalem which is above, until I enter the Jerusalem which is below.”

dews and the loft of raindrops, the chamber of the whirlwind and storm, and the cave of vapour, and their doors are of fire. For it is said: »*The Lord will open unto you His good treasure.*« (Devorim 28:12). And whence do we derive that it is called heaven? For it is written: »*Then hear You in heaven, Your dwelling place [mokon]*«.” (1Melochim 8:39);

- *arovos* (ערבות) - „is that in which there are Right and Judgment and Righteousness, the treasures of life and the treasures of peace and the treasures of blessing, the souls of the righteous and the spirits and the souls which are yet to be born, and dew wherewith the Holy One, blessed be He, will hereafter revive the dead. ... And whence do we derive that it is called heaven? From the word ‘riding’, which occurs in two Biblical passages. Here it is written: »*Extol Him that rides upon Arovos*«. (Tehilim 68:5). And elsewhere it is written: »*Who rides upon the heaven as your help*«. (Devorim 33:26)”.

Other sources give other lists. One (מדיה"ד) has the same seven as the above Talmud, but *mochon* precedes *moon*. An other (ויקר"ר כ"ט, י"א) has *shomayim* (שמים), *shemai hashomayim* (שמי השמים; Tehilim 148:4, Nechemiah 9:6), *rokiah*, *shechokim*, *zevul*, *moon*, *arovos*. Again an other list (מידרש תהילים קי"ד) has *shomayim*, *rokiah*, *shechokim*, *zvul*, *moon*, *mochon*, *arovos*.

The Eternal pours from the snow under the *Kissai hakovod* over the waters, and these crystallize and become sand: the Earth is created (פדר"א ג).

The seven parts of the Earth are:

- *eretz* (ארץ): mild weather,
- *adomoh* (אדמה; Beraishis 1:25): cold weather,
- *arko* (ארקה): hot weather, but all three are inhabited,
- *ge* (גי; Yehoshuah 15:8): low place, the sun does not reach there,

- ▶ *tzioh* (צִי-הָ; *Yeshayoh* 41:18): unbarren desert, however there is a road crossing near the inhabited place,
- ▶ *neshioh* (נְשִׁי-הָ; *Tehilim* 88:13): desert, inhabited only by wild beasts,
- ▶ *taivail* (תַּבַּל; *1Shmuel* 2:8): *Eretz Yisroel* (ויקרא"ר כ"ט, י"א).

3-4./ The Light and the Darkness (*Beraishis* 1:3-4): two separate creatures.

That Light erradiated from the Glory of the *Shechinah*, and not from the celestial bodies (ב"ר ג, ד; ז, ו; חגיגה י"ב).

5-6./ *Tohu* ['chaos'] and *Bohu* ['desolation'] (*Beraishis* 1:2).

7./ The Wind (*Beraishis* 1:2).

Four winds rule over the world: the Southern (bringing blessings: rain, dew), the Eastern (light), the Western (darkness), the Northern (snow, hail, cold-warm).

Some say (פדר"א ג) that the Eternal did not finish the northern pole of the Earth.

Thus, if someone comes and wants to make concurrence to Him, let him come and finish. That is the place where the harmful beings come to the world.

8./ The Water (*Beraishis* 1:2).

9-10./ The measure of the Day and the Night (*Beraishis* 1:5).

### ● Elul 26, Monday: the second day of Creation.

1./ The Eternal separates the waters.

2./ He consolidates the Firmament (*Beraishis* 1:6), this is the firmament above the *Kissai hakovod* (*Yechezkel* 1:22; פדר"א ד).

The heaven (שמים; *Beraishis* 1:8) is composed of fire (אש; an allusion to the severness of justice) and of water (מים; an allusion to mercifullness), being the dwelling place of the Eternal (ב"ר ד, ט; חגיגה י"ב).

The waters below complain that because of the consolidation of the firmament, they are now farther from the Creator. The Angel of the Sea (שר של ים) complains for an other reason also. A third part of the world is inhabited territory, a third part of it is desert, and again a third part is water. Now, the Torah will be given in the wilderness, the *Bais hamikdosh* will stand on inhabited territory, and which honour will there be for the water? The Eternal promises that there will always be sea-salt on the altar together with the sacrifices (*Bris melach*, *Vayikroh* 2:13), and in the *Bais hamikdosh* every year during *Sukkos*, the Jews will pour water on the altar (ניסוך המים; ילקוט יצחק, רוקח).

2./ The seven sectors of the *Gehinnom*, conforming to the seven heavens.<sup>1</sup>

3./ The five groups of the Angels: *Arailim* (ארלים), *Malochim* (מלאכים), *Ofanim* (אופנים), *Serofim* (סרפים), *Chasmalim* (חשמלים); the others on the fifth day (ב"ר ג, ה).

On this day the Eternal doesn't say „and G-d saw that it was good” („*Ki tov...*”; *Beraishis* 1:10, etc.), because of the creation of the *Gehinnom*, and the waters what were to destroy mankind one day in the flood (ב"ר ד, י: רש"י א, ו).

#### ● Elul 27, Tuesday: the third day of Creation.

1./ The Dry Lands emerge from the waters (*Beraishis* 1:9).

2./ The fruit-bearing Trees and the Herbes (*Beraishis* 1:11): originally every tree was supposed to be a fruit-tree and even itself fit to eating, but as the Earth disobeyed, the Eternal curses it together with *Odom hoRishon*.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Dante's Hell has nine sectors.

Originally – until *Odom horishon's* - the trees bear fruits the same day when planted; during the wandering of the *Bnai Yisroel* in the wilderness, it will again be so.

The herbes wait under the ground until Friday, when *Odom horishon* will pray for them. Consequently, rain will fall, and the herbes sprout. This shows that the Eternal is awaiting for the prayers of *tzaddikim* (חולין ס).

3./ The *Garden* hidden in *Eden* (*Beraishis* 2:8)<sup>1</sup>: 800.000 trees, in the middle the Tree of Life, *tzaddikim* are sitting beyond it and learning Torah.

The river coming out from *Eden* waters the Garden (*Beraishis* 2:10)<sup>2</sup>.

The river gets divided, becoming four branches (*Beraishis* 2:10).

► *Pishon* (פִּישׁוֹן; *Beraishis* 2:11): this is only an attribute of the river, its true name being *Nilus* (נִילוֹס<sup>3</sup>; רש"י; רס"ג; רש"י). ABRAVANEL identifies *Pishon* with the

<sup>1</sup> The *Garden* is present in different civilizations of the Antiquity. On the Tablet no. IX. of the *Gilgamesh Epic*, we read about the „...refreshing garden of the g-ds...”. In the Greek mitological tradition, the Garden of the g-ds is situated on top of the Olympos Mountains. However a different tradition, also conserved by Homer, places the Garden of the g-ds somewhere behind the Pillars of Hercule (the Strait of Gibraltar): modern opinions identify the place with the Gran Canaria.

<sup>2</sup> According to JOSEPHUS (I:1), it surrounds the whole earth.

<sup>3</sup> The word *Nilus* originates from a semitic root *nhl* 'river', and has been taken to the European languages through the Greek form *Neilos*. The Egyptians called it simply '*iotr*, '*io'r* 'river'; considered being the outlet of Nun, the primitive sea. In Assyrian cuneiform tablets *ja'uru* 'river', '*taru'û* 'Nile' (*BDB*). The 6.670 km long river is formed by the so called White-Nile (Ar. *Bahr el Abjad*) which starts from the big lakes of Eastern Africa, and the 1.350 km long Blue-Nile (Ar. *Bahr el Azrak*) which starts on the Ethiopian Highland, from the Lake Tana, and joins the precedent at Khartoum, Sudan. The third important affluent, the Atbara meets the Nile in Nubia near Meroe. The river formes an S-bend in the Nubian desert, going through six *cataracts*. The Delta, north of Kairo, has today only two branches reaching the Mediterranean Sea: that of Rosetta (Rasid) and that of Damietta. However, in ancient times, it had more branches: Canobos, Bolbitis-Naukratis, Sebennytos, Phatnis, Mendes, Tanis, Pelusion.

The Nile is generally mentioned in the Torah (eg. *Beraishis* 41:1-3, 17-18; *Shemos* 2:5; 4:9; 7:15) as *yeor* (יְאוֹר), meaning simply 'The River', and on one occasion (*Beraishis* 15:18) is designated as *nohor* (נְהוֹר).

On the other hand, the expression *nachal Mitzrayim* (נַחַל מִצְרַיִם; *Bamidbor* 34:5) is translated by the *Targum Yonassan* and the *Targum Yerushalmi* and also by *RASHI* (*Bamidbor* 34:3) and R. Eliyah MIZRACHI as Nile. However, IBN EZRA says, that this is not the *yeor* i. e. the Nile. *Rabainu* BACHJA considers it also erroneous to identify the *nachal Mitzrayim* with the Nile. According to the *RADBAZ* (ד"ר), the river called by the Torah *nachal*, is not the Nile, but a temporary water called in Arab *Wadi el-Arish*. This latter originates on the Sinai-peninsula, East of *Aisom*, on the other side of the Jebel el-Tih, ca. at the height of Wadi Amarah. Running Northwards, it

Ganges (cf. the *Targum Yonassan ad loc.* has *Hindeki* for *Chaviloh*, see below), and *Gichon* with the Nile, what is surprising supposing that they were for sure also acquainted with the tradition conserved by *RASHI*.<sup>1</sup>

It flows around the whole land of *Chaviloh* (חִוִּילָה, 'Hindeki, 'הִינְדִיקִי, תרגו"י, *Beraishis* 2:11), where there is fine gold and *bedolach* (בְּדֹלַח)<sup>2</sup> and the *shoham*-stone (אֶבֶן שֹׁהָם)<sup>3</sup> (*Beraishis* 2:12). However, this cannot be *Chaviloh shel Mitzrayim*, as the river flows around *Chaviloh*,<sup>4</sup> and then it flows through the whole land of *Mitzrayim*<sup>5</sup>, until it finally flows into the [Mediterranean] sea (רַמְבַּ"ן);

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reaches the Mediterranean. In ancient times, this was the border between *Eretz Yisroel* and *Erez Mitzrayim*, and this could obviously not be the Nile.

In the same way, the expression *Shichor Mitzrayim* (שִׁיחֹר, 'black', related to the black left-over of the river; *Yehoshua* 13:3; *1Divrai haYomim* 13:5) has to mean the border-river between *Eretz Yisroel* and *Eretz Mitzrayim*, notwithstanding the fact that the *Targum Rav Yossef* (נִילוֹס דְּמִצְרַיִם) and the other *meforshim* render it unanimously as Nile. However the same word presumably means effectively the Nile in *Yeshayoh* 23:3.

<sup>1</sup> JOSEPHUS (I:1) has the same: Ganges for *Pishon* and Nile for *Gichon*.

<sup>2</sup> *Bedolach*: the 'bdellium, an odoriferous transparent gum, of yellowish colour'; in the *Septuaginth* *antrax*; however 'rock crystal' in *Bamidbor* 11:7 (BDB).

<sup>3</sup> *Shoham*-stone: 'onyx' or 'chrysoprasus' or 'beryl' or 'malachite'; cf. Ass. *Sāmtu* (BDB).

<sup>4</sup> Considering the *Pishon* to be the Nile, the land of *Chaviloh* mentioned as *Cush*'s son among the descendants of *Noach* (*Beraishis* 10:7) can be Upper-Egypt (called *Mitzrayim* in the strict sense) or a part of it, as the river makes a curve on its territory. However the epitheton „rich in gold” is more valid to Nubia. JOSEPHUS (I:1:3) renders it similar to the abovementioned *Targum* as India (*Hindeki*); while the *RAMBAN* says explicitly, that this is not *Chaviloh* of *Mitzrayim*. Modern scientific identifications are looking for the Land of *Chaviloh* on the Ethiopian sea-shore, on the shores of the Arabian-Peninsula on the Persian-Gulf, on the North-Eastern edge of the Syrian desert, in the Central- or North-Eastern part of the Arabian-Peninsula, and even in India. A further difficulty is that there is a *Chaviloh* among the descendants of *Shem*: one of *Yokton*'s sons bears the same name (*Beraishis* 10:29). This latter is rendered by JOSEPHUS as *Ghetuli*, the inhabitants of Nubia (In *Daat Mikra: Numidia*).

<sup>5</sup> *Mitzrayim*: Egypt or, in the stricter sense, Lower-Egypt. Upper Egypt is called in the *TANACH* *Patros* (the use of the *dualis* could mean Upper- and Lower-Egypt together). The name of the land figures in Assyrian cuneiform texts as *Musur(u)*, *Musru*, *Misir*, on the Amarna tablets as *Misri*, in Arab it is called *Misr* (sing.). The Greek name, *Aigyptos* is derived from the name of the Memphis temple, and of the town itself in the New-Kingdom periode: *Hut-Ka-Ptah* ('the house of the spirit of the g-d *Ptah*').

Called Memphis by the Greeks, the original Egyptian name of the town was *Ineb-Hej* 'White Wall'. It was called Memphis (Egypt. *Men-Nofer-Pepi*) after the pyramide of Pepi I (c. 2400 BCE, 6th Dynasty in Memphis). The town has been founded on the West bank of the Nile, South of the Delta, by Aha-Menes (c. 3000 BCE, 1st Dynasty) of Thinis (Tjen) as his new capital, when he united Lower- and Upper-Egypt, thus creating the unified Egyptian Empire.



► *Gichon* (גִּיחֹן; *Beraishis* 2:13).<sup>1</sup>

It flows around the whole land of *Cush* (כּוּשׁ; *Beraishis* 2:13).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Gichon*: JOSEPHUS (I:1) renders it as the Nile. One can think to the Blue-Nile, which effectively has a great curve on the actual territory of Ethiopia, to South of the Land of *Cush*. However *Cush* in the broader sense means all the territories South of *Mitzrayim*, as the ancient Greeks called in general *Aithiopia* all the territories South of Egypt and Libya.

Others (Aharon MARCUS, *Keseth Sofer*) identify the *Gichon* with the Oxos (the Amu-Darya) which in the Antiquity flew into the Caspian Sea (today into the Aral Lake), or eventually with a left-side affluent of the Euphrates, the Khaboras. These latter solutions render difficult the identification of *Cush*, as in this case – contradicting tradition – we have to place the land of *Cush* on the „map” of the *TANACH* not South of *Mitzrayim* but to the East, somewhere on the territory of Iran. However, it is also true that the Greeks called the inhabitants of India also *Aithiopes*.

We have also to remember the fact that the *midroshim* (especially the „*Sefer haYoshor*”) often call the Mediterranean Sea, mentioned in the Torah generally as the „Big Sea” (יַם הַגָּדוֹל; eg. *Bamidbor* 34:6-7), the Sea of *Gichon*. However, in *Bamidbor* 34:6, the *Targum Yonassan* renders it as *Okinos* (< Greek *Okeanos* 'the river surrounding the World, the world-sea, the name of the g-d of the big primitive water').

<sup>2</sup> *Cush*: in Egyptian texts *Kosh* (Ass. *Kushu*, on the Amarna tablets *Kashi*) means the territory South of Egypt – i. e. of the first cataract, of *Sveneh* (סֻנֵּה, *Yechezkel* 29:10; today Assuan) on the right bank of the Nile, in front of the Island of Elephantine –, not the Ethiopia of today, rather the modern Sudan, the ancient Nubia, possibly with the Northern region of the actual Ethiopia. However, already JOSEPHUS renders *Cush* as Ethiopia. This region was called in Greek *Aithiopia*: Greek *aithiop* 'a man whose face is bronzed by the sun', originally the homeland of people living at the South-Eastern edge of the world, later the inhabitants of Nubia and India. Nubia takes its name from a Mahas word, *nob* 'slave', cf. Arab *nuba*.

The sovereigns of this territory beginning with Kasta (d. 747 BCE), king of *Napata* (at the fourth cataract), try successfully to extend their rule over Egypt: 25th Dynasty, 716-656 BCE, Sabaka (716-702 BCE). Their reign is overthrown by the Assyrian conquest. When PSAMMETIK II (595-589 BCE, 26th Dynasty) starts a military campaign toward the South, the royal capital moves to Meroe (today Sendi), situated between the fifth and sixth cataracts, where the Nile, the Astrapus and the Astaboras meet. According to STRABON (XVII:1.5), the town had been named by KAMBYSES II (529-522 BCE) when conquering Egypt in 525 BCE, after his sister (or wife) Meroe who died there. From the fourth century BCE, there was existing a Meroe Empire. In 270 BCE, King ERGAMENES defeats the priesthood, and creates a new empire which exists until the third century CE, its capital being *Napata*.

The *Targum* (to *2Divrai haYomim* 1:8) renders *Cush* as Arabia. According to the „*Book of Jubilees*” (9:1) *Cush* is situated to the East of *Eretz Yisroel*. It is possible that the two regions are called by a common name, Arabia because of similitudes of language, civilization and even alimentation

Modern scientific identifications propose the abovementioned alternatives: Nile (SUKENIK-CASSUTO, ALBRIGHT) versus Ganges (DILMANN) and Ethiopia (GRINTZ, *Encyclopaedia Judaica*) versus India (DILLMANN). Others (F. DELITZSCH, E. A. SPEISER, A. MARCUS), however, try to identify *Cush* (כּוּשׁ) as *Kash* (כּשׁ) = Akkadian *Kashu*, and speak about the land of the *Kashus*, a dynasty of foreign origin, bearing foreign names, who rule over Babylon for five hundred years, until 1155 BCE. Consequently, they are looking for the *Pishon* and the *Gichon* in Mesopotamia. They propose the rivers Kerche (SPEISER) or Diala (JENSEN) for the former, and the Oxos or the Khaboras (MARCUS) for the latter. Again an other idea (SAUER, *The River Runs Dry*. In: *Biblical Archeological Review*, July-August, 1996.) identifies the *Pishon* with the already extinct Kuwait-river, which originated in the Hidjaz-mountains near Medina and reached the Persian Gulf. And the ancient Mesopotamian town of *Kish*, eight miles to



- *Chidekkel* (חִדְקַל)<sup>1</sup>: to the East of *Ashur* (אַשּׁוּר)<sup>2</sup> (*Beraishis* 2:14), what is *Saliko* (סָלִיקָא / סָלִיק; יוֹמָא י; כְּתוּבוֹת י; יוֹמָא י).<sup>3</sup>
- *Pras* (פֶּרַת; *Beraishis* 2:14).<sup>4</sup>

In his commentary to the Torah (to *Beraishis* 2:11), R. ABRAHAM ibn Ezra criticizes R. SAADYA Gaon: according to him the latter „only rendered the *Pishon* as the *Nile* in his Arab translation of the Torah, that the Arabs could not say there are things in the Torah what the Jews do not understand”. And the *Pishon* can not be Egypt’s river, the Nile, „because it has its source far in the South, »on the White-Mountain«”.<sup>5</sup> Ibn Ezra draws our attention to an unresolvable geographical problem which emerges when we try to identify the *Pishon* or the *Gichon* with the Nile: the river-heads of the four rivers are located many thousands of miles distant from each other. The *Tigris* and the *Euphrates* take their sources in the Southern region of the Caucasus, somewhere on the territory of the actual Armenia, and run from Northwest to Southeast, from North-Western Mesopotamia to the Persian Gulf. On the other hand, the (two) Niles take their sources in Central-East-Africa, and run from the South to the North, to the Mediterranean Sea.<sup>6</sup> However, the Torah says explicitly that it

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the East of Babylon has also been proposed.

<sup>1</sup> *Chidekkel*: this is the Greek *Tigris* (Shumerian *Tig-ru-shu* 'running with a victorious lance'), Akkadian *Idiklat*, Shumerian *Idigina*, Old Persian *Tigra*, Arab *Dikle* or *Diyla*.

<sup>2</sup> *Ashur*: named after the towns ancient g-d, whose name means 'merciful'. Old Persian *Athura*.

<sup>3</sup> *Saliko/Salik*: Seleukeia. The town was founded by SELEUKOS I Nikator on the Tigris river, where a channel connected the two rivers. At the end of the first century CE, the town had 600.000 inhabitants. In 164 CE, the Roman Avidius Cassius – commander in chief of L. VERUS – occupied and destroyed the center of the town. However, a suburb on the other side of the river, Ktesiphon, survived and became the winter residence of the Parthian kings. In 201 CE, the Roman Emperor SEPTIMUS SEVERUS destroyed this also, the stones of the ruins serving later for the building and the decoration of Bagdad, the new capital of the caliphs.

<sup>4</sup> *Pras*: Greek Euphrates, Akkadian *Purattu* 'big river', Old Persian *Ufratu*, its Shumerian name was *Buranunna*, Arab *Firat*, *al Farat*, *al Furat*.

<sup>5</sup> The White-Mountain can be an allusion to the snow-covered mountains of the Ethiopian Highland.

<sup>6</sup> One can argue that this was JOSEPHUS’S reason when identifying the *Pishon* with the Ganges. However, in this case a new problem emerges, as it runs from the West to the East.

was the river coming out of *Eden* which was divided into four branches! How then could the four river-heads be separated by thousands of miles. Actually, the *RAMBAN* (to *Beraishis* 2:11) writes the same: „And Rabbi Abraham [ibn Ezra] contravenes what had been said, that the *Pishon* is the Nile, because it has been found that it takes its source at the 'White Mountain', and this is the reason of its summer overflow. And we know already about many rivers, which flow for long and then disappear under the earth for a stretch of several day's journey, and are divided into two branches. The two taking again their sources somewhere under two mountains being distant one from the other.”<sup>1</sup> According to the *Midrash* (מה"ג בראשית ב, ה) „*Eden* is a special place on the Earth, but no creature is allowed to know its exact [geographical] place. In the future, when *Moshiach* will come, the Eternal will unveil the way to *Eden* for the *Bnai Yisroel*.”

The surface of *Mitzrayim* is 400 x 400 *parsoh*, this is one sixtieth of the surface of *Cush*; *Cush* is one sixtieth part of the world; the world is one sixtieth part of

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<sup>1</sup> An interesting idea can be found by one of the early Eastern church-fathers, the Syriac St. Efrem (c. 306-373), who was presumably acquainted with the relative Jewish traditions. As the *Garden of Eden* is situated on top of a high mountain, the rivers taking their source from it, „...run quickly and descend ... under the earth, i. e. under the big sea [the Okeanos] reemerging later because of the big impetus of their descent, and reemerge on our globe, running forward under the sea.” EFREM, *ComGen* II:6. In: MÓZES BAR KÉPHA, *Paradicsom-kommentár*. [Commentary to Paradise] Translated by András Kövér, Ilona Lukács, Monika Pesthy. Budapest: Magyar Könyvklub, 2001. 26. o. (In Hungarian). Dante also places the terrestrial Paradise, where the first human couple has sinned, on a high mountain.

Seemingly, in order to resolve the above geographical problem, and to identify correctly the *Pishon* and the *Gichon*, the two rivers has to be looked for somewhere to the North-East of *Eretz Yisroel*, in the region where the Tigris and the Euphrate take their sources. D. ASHBEL (in: *Bet Mikra*, 40, Kislev 1970, pp. 100-104, in: *Daat Mikra*. Jerusalem: Mossad Rav Kook, 1993<sup>3</sup>. I. p. 56. note 81:3) identifies the two rivers with the Saichan and the Djichan, the two big rivers originating in the Armenian mountains in Eastern Turkey and running to the Mediterranean Sea. David ROHL (*Az elveszett testamentum. Az Éden Kertjétől a Fogságig. – A Biblia népének Ötezer éves történelme*. [The Lost Testament. From Eden to Exile: The Five-Thousand Year History of the People of the Bible] Budapest: Gold Book. S. a. p. 43. In Hungarian) gives the rivers Gayhun-Aras (Persian Djeyhun) and Kizil Uzun which also have their sources in the Armenian mountains but run towards the East and reach the Caspian Sea. The rivers which take their sources in this region reach five seas: the Mediterranean, the Black-Sea, the Caspian-Sea, the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean.

the *Garden*; the *Garden* is one sixtieth part of *Eden*; *Eden* is one sixtieth part of *Gehinom* – the whole world is like a dish-cover on a pot (פסחים צ"ד; תענית י).

● **Elul 28, Wednesday: the fourth day of Creation.**

The Celestial Bodies (*Beraishis* 1:14): all of them at the same moment, at the beginning of the night (פדר"א ז). This seems to contravene the opinion quoted above, according to which the Creation took place only during daytime.

Originally the Sun and the Moon were equal (*Beraishis* 1:16); but when the Moon complains that one crown is not enough for two kings, the Eternal diminishes the size of the Moon (חולין ט), and enlarges the Sun (פדר"א ו).

The Moon understands her sin, and makes *teshuvah* which is accepted by the Eternal. To console the Moon so ashamed, the Eternal promises that the *Bnai Yisroel* will conform their calendar to the Moon and, more than that, they will bring a special sacrifice on occasion of every New Moon (חולין ט; מדה"ג; ר' בחיי).

All the stars are subordinated to the seven stars which influence the hours. These are: *Chamoh* (חמה), *Nogah* (נגה), *Kochov* (ככב), *Levonoh* (לבנה), *Shabsay* (שבתאי), *Tzedek* (צדק), *Madim* (מאדים; פדר"א ה; כ"א; פדר"א ח).

Others (רמב"מ הלכות יסודי התורה ג) enumerate the seven stars in different order: *Yoraiach* (ירח), *Kochov*, *Nogah*, *Chamoh*, *Madim*, *Tzedek*, *Shabsay*.

These reign over the days of the week: Sunday *Kochov* and *Chamoh*, Monday *Tzedek* and *Levonoh*, Tuesday *Nogah* and *Madim*, Wednesday *Shabsay* and *Kochov*, Thursday *Chamoh* and *Tzedek*, Friday *Levonoh* and *Nogah*, *Shabbos* *Madim* and *Shabsay*.

All the stars are subordinated to the twelve *mazals* (מזל, 'zodiac') which correspond to the twelve month. They are (beginning with the *mazal* of the month *Nissan*):

- ▶ *Tole* (טלה) 'Aries' – *Nissan*,
- ▶ *Shor* (שור) 'Taurus' – *Iyyar*,
- ▶ *Teumim* (תאומים) 'Gemini' – *Sivan*,
- ▶ *Sarton* (סרטן) 'Cancer' – *Tammuz*,
- ▶ *Aryeh* (ארי-ה) 'Leo' – *Av*,
- ▶ *Bessuloh* (בתולה) 'Virgo' – *Elul*,
- ▶ *Moznayim* (מאזניים) 'Libra' – *Tishrai*,
- ▶ *Akrov* (עקרב) 'Scorpion' – *Cheshvan*,
- ▶ *Keshes* (קשת) 'Sagittarius' – *Kislaiv*,
- ▶ *Ghedi* (גדי) 'Capricorn' – *Taives*,
- ▶ *Deli* (דלי) 'Aquarius' – *Shvat*,
- ▶ *Doghim* (דגים) 'Pisces' – *Adar* (פדר"א ו).

● **Elul 29, Thursday: the fifth day of Creation.**

1./ The Animals of the waters: fish, amphibia, reptiles (*Beraishis* 1:20).

2./ The *Taninim* (תנינִים; *Beraishis* 1:21): the huge fish also called *Leviosson* (לוֹיִתָן),<sup>1</sup> the female of which is set apart by the Eternal for the World to Come, when He will prepare of it and of the *Shor habor* (שור הבור) a festive meal for the *tzaddikim* (צדיקים). The symbolic meaning of this talmudic saying is a new and higher level of Torah-learning.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. the *Livyathan* of the *Canaan* mythology, the oldest form of its name known from Ugarit texts being *Lothan*. The *Leviosson* is generally identified today with the whale.

The word *Tanin* occurs several times in the *TANACH*, and signifies different animals. Aharon's stick is converted into a *tanin* ('snake', רש"י) before *Paroh* (*Shemos* 7:9-10). There is question of huge animals which revolt against the Eternal and are consequently punished by Him (*Yesayoh* 51:9, *Tehilim* 74:13-14, *Iyov* 7:12): these are today generally identified with the crocodiles (*Crocodylus niloticus*). Again other places (*Aicho* 4:3, *Iyov* 40:25-41:26) seemingly speak about the huge fish (the whale) called also *Leviosson*. *Yechezkel* (29:3) compares *Paroh* to a crocodile (cf. *Yeshayoh* 27:1, where the *taninim* and *leviosson* are mentioned as separate animals, symbolizing the kingdoms which will one day subjugate the *Bnai Yisroel*; רש"י), while *Yirmeyoh* (51:34) compares *Nevuchadnetzar* to a crocodile.

3./ The Birds (*Beraishis* 1:20).

● **Tishrai 1, Friday: the sixth day of Creation** (ר"ה י"א).

1./ The Animals of the dry land (*Beraishis* 1:24).

The Eternal blesses the fish and the birds intended for human consumption with the blessing „be fruitful and multiply” (*Beraishis* 1:22). However the animals of the dry land (the quadrupeds, mammalia), also intended for human consumption, are not blessed with the same benediction because of the curse to be pronounced later on the snake (מזא"ג א, כ"ב).

2./ The creation of the first human being (אדם הראשון) (*Beraishis* 1:26): **the starting point of the Jewish time-reckoning, of the Jewish World-Era.**<sup>1</sup>

Man, being the aim and perfection of Creation, is created only on the sixth day (סנהדרין ל"ח). According to an other opinion (יל"ש ברא' ל"ד), the man was created

<sup>1</sup>: According to traditional reduction, the first day of the *Jewish World-Era* was October 6, 3761 BCE.

immediately at the beginning of Creation, just He did not blow a soul into him that no one could say He had an associate in Creation.

Before creating a man, the Eternal consults the Torah which protests arguing that the man will sin and thus rouse His Creator's anger. Upon this, He refers to the divine attributes of patience and mercy, and immediately starts to gather the dust of the Earth from the four corners of the world: for the blood, the organs, the bones and tendons and the body (פדר"א י"א).

The events as they took place during the twelve hours of the day (פדר"א י"א):

► *The first hour*: the Eternal gathers the dust of the Earth (*Beraishis* 2:7) to the Mount *Moriah*, to the ulterior place of the altar of the *Bais hamikdosh*: from the four corners of the world for the limbs, from *Bovel* for the body, from *Eretz Yisroel* for the head (תרגו"י ברא' כ"ב, ט; רש"י סנהדרין ל"ח).

► *The second hour*: still only a shapeless body.

► *The third hour*: the Eternal forms the limbs.

Some say (ב"ר ה, א), *Odom horishon* was created with double face: a man from before and a woman from behind. Others say (שו"ת קל"ט), two bodies in one cover.

*Odom horishon* was created circumcized.

Before his sin, *Odom horishon* was so tall, that his head reached the heaven (סנהדרין ל"ח).

► *The fourth hour*: the Eternal blows a soul into the man (*Beraishis* 2:7) - *Odom hoRishon*<sup>1</sup>.

► *The fifth hour*: *Odom horishon* puts himself on his feet.

The Eternal places *Odom horishon* into the Garden what is in *Eden* (*Beraishis* 2:8)

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<sup>1</sup> *Odom horishon*: in the Torah, the word *Odom* means simply 'man, human being or even mankind', *i. e.* it is not a person's name. According to the Torah (*Beraishis* 2:7), man was created from the earth (אדמה). Cf. Ass. *admu* 'nestling' (*BDB*).

to cultivate it and to keep it (*Beraishis* 2:16). This means, he should learn Torah, and keep the way of the „*Tree of the knowledge of good and evil*” i. e. of the Torah (פדר"א י"א).

► *The sixth hour*: he gives a name to each creature (*Beraishis* 2:20).

*Odom horishon* is praised for giving to every creature the name originally intended by the Eternal. Cf. „A man is called by three names: one which his father and mother call him, a second which other persons call him, and a third by which he is designated in the book of the generations of his creation [which he conquers for himself through his deeds].” (קהלת רבה ז, ג)

► *The seventh hour*: *Chavoh* (חווה) is created (*Beraishis* 2:22) upon *Odom horishon*’s request.

She is created of *Odom horishon*’s thirteenth rib (*Beraishis* 2:21-22). According to an other opinion (רש"י כתובות י"ח), the Eternal only separates the two figures united like “Siamese twins”.<sup>1</sup>

The Eternal prepares for them ten „nuptial canopies” (חופה), each one of the precious stones mentioned by the prophet *Yechezkel* (28:13).

The ministering Angels functioning as bridesmen conduct them under the *chupah*, and the Eternal is standing as a *chazon* and blesses them: „and G-d blessed them” (*Beraishis* 1:28; פדר"א י"ב).

► *The eighth hour*: *Odom horishon* and his wife go to their bed, and they descend seven, together with their children (ב"ר כ"ב ב).<sup>2</sup> Two brothers are born

<sup>1</sup> The 13th rib: it can be they were united at that point and, consequently, the Eternal separated them at that point.

<sup>2</sup> According to the apocryphal „*Life of Adam and Chavah*” (Greek version, I.), the first human couple lived, after their expulsion from *Eden*, for 18 years and two monthes to East of *Éden*, and it happened only then that *Chavoh* became pregnant. According to this version, the two children were born 19 years after the expulsion. This also means that they were twins (see below, and also the data of the *Pirkai deRabbi Eliezer* 21). The same apocrypha gives other names for the two boys also: *Cain* is called *Diofotos* (דיאפוטוס), and *Hevel* is called *Amiloves* (אמילובס). According to the Latin text of the same apocrypha (XXI.), they were also born after the expulsion.





„*The serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field*” (*Beraishis* 3:1). The *yaitzer horoh* (יצר הרע) renders it impure riding on its back. Consequently, the serpent wants to kill *Odom horishon* and marry *Chavoh* (סוטה י"ג).

► *The ninth hour*: the Eternal bans *Odom horishon* and *Chavoh* to eat from the fruit of „*the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil*” (*Beraishis* 2:17). The opinions vary about what this fruit actually was (ב"ר ט"ז, ז):

- grape-juice: the most precious of fruits;
- wheat: the most precious food;
- figs: cf. „*and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons*” (*Beraishis* 3:7);
- *esrog*;
- apple: a certain part of the *Garden of Eden* is called the „field of the holy apples”. Cf. *Yitzchok's* blessing (*Beraishis* 27:27; ב"ר ס"ה, כ"ב; תענית כ"ט; רש"י (סנהדרין ע

To eat of the „*Tree of life*” (אץ החיים) means (*Beraishis* 2:16) to learn Torah, to learn about the Creation of the Universe.

The Eternal commands the first six *mitzvos*:

- 1./ That there should be laws (דינים) and also judges (דיינים), charged to have the other five *mitzvos* be respected. As it is said (*Beraishis* 18:19): „*For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment*”;
- 2./ To bless *haShem* (ברכת ה'), i.e. a prohibition against blasphemy. As it is said (*Vayikroh* 24:16) „*and one who blasphems the name of the Lord, shall surely be put to death*”;
- 3./ The prohibition against idolatry (עבודה זרה). As it is said (*Shemos* 20:3): „*You shall have no other gods before Me*”;

4./ The prohibition against bloodshed (שפכת דמים). As it is said (*Beraishis* 9:6): „Whoever sheds man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed”;

5./ The prohibition against adultery (גלוי עריות). As it is said (*Yirmeyah* 3:1): „They say, If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and became another man's”;

6./ The prohibition against theft (גזל).

After the flood, the Eternal adds a seventh *mitzvah* (*Beraishis* 9:4): the prohibition against eating flesh cut from a living animal (אבר מן החי; סנהדרין נ"ו).

Other sources (ב"ר ט"ז, ט) find allusions to this seven *mitzvos* partially in different *psuqim*:

1./ The prohibition against idolatry: „he willingly walked after a command [i.e. after idolatry]” (*Hoshea* 5:11);

2./ To bless *Hashem*: see above;

3./ The authority of judges: „You shall not revile God [i.e. the judges]” (*Shemos* 22:27);

4./ The prohibition against bloodshed: see above;

5./ The prohibition against adultery: „And cleave unto his wife” (*Beraishis* 2:24), which implies, but not to his neighbour's wife, nor to a male, nor to an animal;

6./ The prohibition against theft.

As one can see, the two sources intervert the order of nos. 5./ and 6./.

Again an other source (רמב"מ ה' מלכים פ"ט ה"ד) gives once more a different order of the same *mitzvos*: the prohibition against idolatry, blasphemy, bloodshed, adultery, theft and the authority of judges.

However, all the sources find allusion to these *mitzvos* in the *possuq*: „And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden you may

וַיֹּצֵא ה' אֱלֹקִים עַל הָאָדָם לֵאמֹר מִכָּל אֶץ הָגֶן אָכֹל תֹּאכַל (*freely eat*);  
*Beraishis 2:16*)

1. *And commanded* (וַיֹּצֵא): that there should be laws (דִּינִים) and also judges (דִּינִים), charged to have the other five *mitzvos* be respected;
2. *the Lord* (ה'): to bless *haShem*;
3. *G-d* (אֱלֹקִים): prohibition against idolatry;
4. *the man* (עַל הָאָדָם): prohibition against bloodshed;
5. *saying* (לֵאמֹר): prohibition against adultery. As it is said (*Yirmeyah 3:1*): „Saying: *If a man put away his wife...*”;
6. *of every tree of the garden* (מִכָּל אֶץ הָגֶן): prohibition against theft [of every tree but not of robbery];
7. *you may freely eat* (אָכֹל תֹּאכַל): the seventh *mitzvah* added after the flood (*Beraishis 9:4*); the prohibition against eating flesh cut from a living animal [you may eat what is ready to eat, and not when the animal is still alive] (בִּרְטָל, ט"ז, ט). (ט; ל"ד, ז; שמו"ר ל, ו; שיהש"ר א, מ"ז; רמב"מ ה' מלכים פ"ט ה"ד).

According to others (פֶּדֶר"א י"א), the prohibition to eat of the „*Tree of knowledge*” preceded *Cain*’s birth, this means to interchange the events of the eighth and the ninth hours.

► *The tenth hour: Odom horishon sins.*

The serpent speaks against the Eternal:<sup>1</sup> it is forbidden to eat of the „*Tree of knowledge*” that they should not be like Him (*Beraishis 3:5*), and be also able to create worlds.

<sup>1</sup> According to the apocryphal „*Life of Adam and Chavah*” (Greek version, VII.) the *yaizer horoh* appears disguised for an angel, and addresses *Chavoh* in the very moment, when all the angels come together above, to bow to the Eternal. And at the end it is *Chavoh* who finally lets him in to the *Garden* (*ibid.* XIX.).

*Chavoh* adds to the *mitzvoh*: it is forbidden to eat and also to touch it (*Beraishis* 3:3; ג, ב"ר י"ט; פדר"א י"ג).

The serpent cheats *Chavoh*. It pushes the tree to show that – naturally – nothing happens. If it can be touched without consequences, also its fruit can be eaten without consequences (פדר"א י"ג).

*Chavoh* remarks the Angel of Death (מלאך המות), and gets frightened of dying, after what her husband could marry another woman; she eats and decides to give to her husband also: if she has to die, both of them should die, if not both should stay alive. So she eats and gives to *Odom horishon* as well (*Beraishis* 3:6), and also to all of the animals.

Were they waiting until *shabbos* they would receive of the Fruit, and this could have led to the final redemption. As they were unable to wait, and tasted the fruit too quickly, the Eternal bans the *Bnai Yisroel*, to eat of the fruits of the fruit-bearing trees in the first three years: *orloh* (ערלה; *Vayikroh* 19:27; ויקר"ר (כ"ה ב)).

Now, they come to know that they are naked (*Beraishis* 3:7): the scale-like cover which wrapped them originally falls, only the nails remain of it (פדר"א י"ד; (תרגו"י). Others say (ב"ר י"ט, ו) they are naked of their Creator's first *mitzvoh* („...you shall not eat...”; *Beraishis* 2:17).<sup>1</sup> It is for this reason also that we look at our nails at the end of *Shabbos* during the *havdolah* ceremony (הבדלה).

They sew for themselves aprons from fig-leaves (*Beraishis* 3:7)<sup>2</sup>: according to this the „*Tree of knowledge*” was a fig-tree.

► *The eleventh hour*: the Eternal pronounces the verdict.

<sup>1</sup> According to the apocryphal „*Life of Adam and Chavah*” (Greek version, XX.), they were naked of righteousness (*tzedek*).

<sup>2</sup> According to the apocryphal „*Life of Adam and Chavah*” (Greek version XX.), when *Chavoh* contravenes her Creator's *mitzvoh* and eats of the Tree, all the trees of the *Garden* let their leaves fall. When the Eternal comes into the *Garden* to judge the first human couple, the trees come again into leaf.

All three try to shift responsibility upon the others (*Beraishis* 3:12-13).

All three receive nine curses plus become mortals (פדר"א י"ד).<sup>1</sup>

The punishments of the serpent: it can no more speak, has to go upon the belly and eat dust, cast its skin every seventh year (*Beraishis* 3:14-15). Besides, it becomes white spots on the skin similar to leprosy (צרעת) and its tongue split into two: these remind the fact that the serpent was the first to speak *loshon horoh* (שמו"ר ג, י"ז).

The punishments of the woman: *niddah* (נדֹה 'menstruation'), pregnancy- and birthpangs, (when *Moshiach* will come, birth will again be without birthpangs in the same hour of the conception; (ויקר"ר י"ד, ט; ע"י), the upbringing of children. Also her head is covered as of a mourner, and is considered as immoral to discover it, her husband rules over her, therefore the piercing of the ears, symbolizing the eternal servitude, she cannot bear witness (*Beraishis* 3:15).

The punishment of the man: his height is reduced to 100 *amos* (ca. 60 meters) (ב"ר י"ט, ט"ז; שמו"ר י"ג א), his force is also diminished. He is exposed henceforward to different uncleannesses, „in the sweat of his face” he has to earn his livelihood (*Beraishis* 3:17-19; פדר"א י"ד).

They are supposed to die on the same day, but the Eternal - using heavenly measure - changes one day for thousand years: „*For a thousand years in your sight are but like yesterday...*” (*Tehilim* 90:4; א, ב"ר כ"ב);

*Odom horishon* calls her wife's name *Chavoh* (*Beraishis* 3:20).

The Eternal prepares for them coats of skin (*Beraishis* 3:21): of the casted skin of the serpent (פדר"א כ; יל"ש ל"ד). Others say (ר' בחיי), of the skin of the *tahas*,

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<sup>1</sup> According to the apocryphal „*Life of Adam and Chavah*” (Greek version VIII.), *Odom horishon* is punished with 70 punishments by the Eternal. After that (*Ibid.* XXVIII.), *Odom horishon* asks the Eternal's permission to eat of the Tree of eternal life before being expelled of the *Garden*. The Eternal rejects his demand, however He promises the resurrection of the deads.

again others say (פ' הפועלים ת"ח), of the skin of the a *leviosson*, or of rabbit-wool. Through this, the Eternal teaches mankind to dress ragged people (יל"ש ח"א (תתקס"ה).

*Odom horishon* brings sacrifices in this sacerdotal garment. When they leave the *Garden*, they will be wrapped in these coats. The coat will be inherited by *Shes* despite the fact that he is not the first-born (until the *Golden Calf*, it was the firstborns' duty to bring sacrifices). From *Shes* it goes to *Chanoch*, then to *Mesushelach*. It is inherited by *Noach*, who takes it to the ark, and later also brings sacrifices wrapped in this sacerdotal garment. *Noach* gives it to *Shem*. However *Chom* steals it, and gives it to his son, *Cush* who, on his turn, gives it to his son, *Nimrod*. The latter reaches his hunting successes because of the coat. When *Aisov* kills *Nimrod's* son (?), he takes the coat (according to a variant *Shem* > *Avrohom* > *Yitzchok* > *Aisov*), and stores it in his mother's house. This coat is taken by *Yaakov*, when he wants to obtain his father's blessing, and he finally buries it (פדר"א כ"ד; במדב"ר ד, ו; ת"צ).

As all this happened on the first day of *Tishrai*, on *Rosh hashonoh*, in every year, on the same day the Eternal judges the descendants of *Odom horishon*, however with the same mercifulness as in his case (ר"ה ט"ז).

► *The twelfth hour*: the expulsion (*Beraishis* 3:23-24; סנהדרין ל"ח).

The Eternal pronounces the verdict already on Friday afternoon. However, the expulsion takes only place after the end of *Shabbos* (ב"ר י"א ב). According to others (פדר"א י"ט), the expulsion also takes place on the same Friday afternoon.

„Ten things were created on *Shabbos* eve, at twilight. They are:

- The mouth of the Earth – which swallows *Korach*;
- The mouth of the Well – *Miryam's* well,

- ▶ The mouth of the donkey – *Bilom's* donkey;
- ▶ The rainbow – the sign of the covenant given to *Noach* that there will be no more flood (*Beraishis* 9:13);
- ▶ The *manna*;
- ▶ The staff - *Moshe rabainu's* staff;
- ▶ The *shamir* (שמיר): a small insect, used to cut stones when constructing the *Bais hamikdosh* (see 2928);
- ▶ The script;
- ▶ The inscription – on the Tablets of the Law;
- ▶ The Tablets of the Law.

Some say also the destructive spirits (מזיקין), *Moshe rabainu's* grave and the ram of our forefather *Avrohom*. And some say also tongs, which are made with tongs (אבות ה, ו; פדר"א י"ט).

All these however, enter in function only later, in the moment described in the Torah.

### 1.3. The First Shabbos

#### • Tishrai 2, *Shabbos*: the seventh day of Creation.

The Eternal creates the rest.

The sixth day is written in the Torah with a definite article (יום הששי; *Beraishis* 1:31), while the other days not: this is an allusion to a certain day, the 6<sup>th</sup> of the month *Sivan*, the day of the giving of the Torah, what will be on *Shabbos* (שבת פ"ה).

When the *Sages* translate the Torah into Greek, in order to avoid misunderstandings, on 18 places they change the words of the Torah (שמו"ר ה, ט). Here they write: „*And on the seventh day G-d [in singular] ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day*” (*Beraishis* 2:2), that no one could think there are more than one Lord over the world (ב"ר י, ט).

When *Shabbos* enters, it speaks for the defence of *Odom horishon*: during six days no one was sentenced to death, why do You begin it with me? Is this my blessing, is this my holiness? Actually, *Odom horishon* is saved from *Gehinnom* in the merit of the first *Shabbos*.

When *Shabbos* enters, *Odom horishon* starts to sing a *shiroh* (שירה, 'eulogy'): „*A Psalm Song for the Shabbos day*” (מיזמור שיר ליום השבת; *Tehilim* 92:1), and he continues together with the *Shabbos* in praise of the Eternal: „*It is a good thing to give thanks to the Lord...*” (טוב להודות ליי; *Ibid.*). This *shiroh* will be forgotten until the days of *Moshe rabainu* (פדר"א י"ט).

*The ten shiros:*

- *Odom horishon* in the *Gan Eden* (*Tehilim* 92);
- *Moshe rabainu* and the *Bnai Yisroel* by the Sea of Reeds (*Shemos* 15:1-19);



- ▶ the *Bnai Yisroel* in praise of *Miryam's Well* (*Bamidbor* 21:17);
- ▶ *Moshe rabainu*, on the day of his death, the one beginning with the word *Hazinu* (הַאֲזִינוּ; *Devorim* 32:1-43);
- ▶ *Yehosuah* fighting with the *emoris* in *Givon*, when he stoppes the Sun (*Yehosua* 10:12);
- ▶ *Deborah* and *Barak*, when they defeat *Sisroh*, the general of the *Canaanis* (*Shoftim* 5);
- ▶ *Chanah*, when her son, *Shmuel hanovi* is born (*1Shmuel* 2:1-10);
- ▶ *Dovid hamelech* before his death to the Eternal who saved him from his enemies (*2Shmuel* 22);
- ▶ *Shlomoh hamelech* composed „*Shir haShirim*” (שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים);
- ▶ the tenth will be sung by the *Bnai Yisroel* when *Moshiach* will come (תְּרִגּוֹ"י).

● **Tishrai 3, Sunday: the eighth day.**

When the *Shabbos* goes out, the Eternal hides the light which enlightened and gave warmth during the six days of Creation and the first *Shabbos*, for the *tzaddikim* to the World to come (ב"ר ג', ו'; חגיגה י"ב).

When the Eternal sees that the first human couple just expelled from *Gan Eden* is desperated in the cold and darkness, He sends a pillar of fire to enlight them and to protect them. *Odom horishon* is joyous and he pronounces a blessing over the light of the fire (בּוֹרָא מְאֹרֵי הָאֵשׁ), and praises the Eternal who separated the holiness of *Shabbos* of the weekdays (בְּרוּךְ הַמְּבַדִּיל; פֶּדֶר"א כ; פֶּדֶר"א כ). According to others (ב"ר י"א, ב; פסחים נ"ד), the Eternal made him find two flints which he struck against each other; light came forth and he uttered a blessing over it. That

is the reason why we utter a blessing over the light of the fire at the end of the *Shabbos* (ב"ר י"ב, ו; שוה"ט צ"ב).

## CHAPTER TWO: THE FIRST TEN GENERATIONS

### FROM *ODOM HORISHON* TO *NOACH*

#### 2.1. *Cain and Hevel*

*Cain* has hundred children (קה"ר).

*Cain* the ploughman gives *Hevel* to eat, while the latter gives skin and milk of his flock: it is still forbidden to eat meat (פדר"א י"ט).

● **Nissan 14:** *Cain* and *Hevel* bring sacrifices to the altar built by *Odom horishon* (פדר"א כ"א; תרגו"י).

*Cain* brings the most poorish flax seeds (*Beraishis* 4:3), while *Hevel* brings perfect, unshorn first-born sheep (*Beraishis* 4:4).

As the Eternal accepts only *Hevel's* sacrifice (*Beraishis* 4:4), *Cain* decides to kill his brother:

- ▶ at first he proposes to divide their heritage: everything movable should be yours, and the land should be mine;
- ▶ then he insists *Hevel* should get out of the land belonging to him: *i.e.* of the whole world;
- ▶ *Hevel* on his turn wants to have back *Cain's* cloths made of the wool of his flocks (סה"י).

According to others (ב"ר כ"ב, ז), the dispute breaks out because of *Hevel's* second twin-sister, *Chavoh* (!); or the controverse starts when both receive land and movable property, and they cannot decide on whose territory the future *Bais hamikdosh* should be built.

Finally *Cain* kills *Hevel* (*Beraishis* 4:8) striking him with a piece of stone (פדר"א) (כ"א).<sup>1</sup>

*Hevel* lives from *Rosh hashonoh* until *Chanuka*, or from *Pessach* until *Shavuos*: in both cases no more than fifty days (ב"ר כ"ב ד). According to others (סה"ד), he lives ninety days, or hundred years (יוסיפון). Others say (תנחומא), *Cain* is hundred years old, when he kills *Hevel*.<sup>2</sup>

*Cain's* fratricidous act is one of the reasons why the Eternal bans to wear clothes made of wool and linen mixed together, called *shaatnes* (שעטנז; *Vayikroh* 19:19, *Devorim* 22:11): their sacrifices should never be mixed together (פדר"א כ"א; ) (תנחומא ברא' ט). According to an other opinion (רמב"ם מורה ג, ל"ז), the priests of the idols were wearing such garments.

*Cain's* punishment:

- he can no more cultivate his land (*Beraishis* 4:12);
- he will be obliged to run continuously for his life (*Beraishis* 4:12).

The brand of *Cain* (*Beraishis* 4:15): leprosy, or *Hevel's* sheperd dog, or a horn, or a letter of the Eternal's Name on his front, or a letter of the Torah on his arm (פדר"א כ"א).

However, he will be killed only in the seventh generation (see below by *Lemech*; (ב"ר כ"ג, ד; מדא"ג ד, ט"ז).

*Odom horishon* and *Chavoh*, not yet acquainted with the custom of burying the dead, learn this when they see a raven burying his fellow-raven (ב"ר כ"ב, ה).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> According to the apocryph „*Life of Adam and Chavah*” (Greek version, II), *Chavoh* sees in a dream as *Cain* sheds *Hevel's* blood and drinks the blood. She tells the dream to *Odom horishon*, and they start to look for their son, but they find him dead.

<sup>2</sup> According to the apocryph „*Life of Adam and Chavah*” (Latin version, XXIII) *Odom horishon* is 130 years old, when *Cain* kills *Hevel* who at that moment is 122 years old. This means that the third boy, *Shes* is born in the same year of *Hevel's* death.

<sup>3</sup> According to the apocryph „*Life of Adam and Chavah*” (Greek version, XL), the earth was unwilling to accept *Hevel's* dead body before the body of the first human being created from the earth. Therefore *Hevel* could be buried only after *Odom horishon*.

And, as a reward, the Eternal Himself takes care of the ravens' nestlings abandoned by the parents (פדר"א כ"א).

*Odom horison* and *Chavoh* are mourning: they eat lentils (פדר"א ל"ה).<sup>1</sup>

*Odom horishon* learns from *Cain* that as he made *teshuvoh*, the Eternal diminished his punishment (ב"ר כ"ב י"ג): he may settle in the land of *Nod* (ארץ נוד 'separation or wandering'; *Beraishis* 4:16), East of *Eden*, as his father has also been exiled to East of *Eden* (רש"י).

According to others (פדר"א כ), on the eighth day *Odom horishon* enters the river *Gichon*, until the water reaches his neck. There he keeps seven days fasting, asking the Eternal to annul his punishment, so the world could learn: there is *teshuvoh* for sinners;<sup>2</sup> Again others say (ערובין י"ה), when *Odom horishon* learns from *Cain* about *teshuvoh*, he also makes *teshuvoh*: he fasts for 130 years and separates from his wife.

In the paragraph speaking about vows (נזיר; *Bamidbor* 6:13-20), there are 130 words:<sup>3</sup> the abstention prescribed is an atonement for *Odom horishon*'s sin (במדב"ר י"ד, כ"א; ת"צ). According to this, the fruit of the „*Tree of Knowledge*” was grape, and *Chavoh* gave to her husband the grape juice to drink.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 2123.

<sup>2</sup> According to the apocryph „*Life of Adam and Chavah*” (Latin version, VI) *Odom horishon* sends *Chavoh* to stand for 37 days in the river *Chidekel* (the Tigris) on a stone covered with water until her neck without saying a word, as it is improper to pray with the mouth impure of the forbidden fruit. *Odom horishon* enters the Jordan river and stays there for 40 days. However, after 18 days, the *yaitzer horoh* entices *Chavoh* to come out of the water, and leads her to *Odom horishon* (*ibid*, IX-X). Thereafter, the *yaitzer horoh* relates to *Odom horishon* why does he try again and again to harm him in every possible way. When the Eternal created the man, all the Angels had to bow before the man created on the Eternal's image. He (the *yaitzer horoh*) was however unwilling to do so pretending that he was created before man. As a punishment the Eternal exiled him from heaven together with his fellow-Angels, and sent him down on Earth (*Ibid.*, XII-XVI).

<sup>3</sup> In reality, the abovementioned verses contain altogether 131 words.

Consequently, a new son is born to *Odom horishon*: *Shes* (שֵׁשׁ; *Beraishis* 4:25). He will be the father of the righteous, the *tzaddikim*, as *Cain* will be the father of the wicked, the *reshoim* (פֶּדֶר"א כ"א-כ"ב).<sup>1</sup>

*Cain* builds a town, and names it after his firstborn son: *Chanoch* (*Beraishis* 4:17). *Cain's* descendants (*Beraishis* 4:17-18): *Chanoch* (חֲנוֹךְ) > his son *Irod* (עִירָד)<sup>2</sup> > his son *Mechiyoel* (מַחִי-יֵל)<sup>3</sup> > his son *Mesushoel* (מֶתוּש-לֵל)<sup>4</sup> > his son *Lemech* (לֶמֶךְ).

*Cain's* descendants go naked, they live in incestuous relations (פֶּדֶר"א כ"ב; cf. *Beraishis* 6:5).

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<sup>1</sup> According to the Torah (*Beraishis* 5:4), after *Shes*, *Odom horishon* fathered more sons and daughters. According to the apocryph „*Life of Adam and Chavah*” (Greek version, V), 30 sons and 30 daughters.

<sup>2</sup> *Irod*: the name can be identical with the name of the important Mesopotamian town, *Eridu*.

<sup>3</sup> *Mechiyoel*: according to modern translations, the name means 'smitten by G-d' or 'G-d makes alive' (*BDB*).

<sup>4</sup> *Mesushoel*: the Babylonian form of the name is *mutu-sa-ili* 'man of G-d' (*BDB*).

## 2.2. Ten generations from Odom horishon to Noach (Beraishis 5:3-31)<sup>1</sup>

Year	Generation	Aged	Son born	Lives more	Total	Dies
130	<i>Odom horishon</i>	130	<i>Shes</i>	800	930	930
235	<i>Shes</i>	105	<i>Enosh</i>	807	912	1042
325	<i>Enosh</i>	90	<i>Kainon</i>	815	905	1140
395	<i>Kainon</i>	70	<i>Mahalalel</i>	840	910	1235
460	<i>Mahalalel</i>	65	<i>Yered</i>	830	895	1290
622	<i>Yered</i>	162	<i>Chanoch</i>	800	962	1422
687	<i>Chanoch</i>	65	<i>Mesushelach</i>	300	365	987
874	<i>Mesushelach</i>	187	<i>Lemech</i>	782	969	1656
1056	<i>Lemech</i>	182	<i>Noach</i>	595	777	1651

**130:** *Shes* is born, like his father, circumcised.

*Odom horishon* teaches him the six *mitzvos* received from the Eternal.

He instructs him to keep aloof of *Cain*'s family.

His descendants observe this until the seventh generation, when they finally marry them: the giants (ענקים) are born. When these giants will sin, they will perish in the flood (סה"ד בשם שה"ק צ"ב). Others say (רש"י במדבר י"ג, ל"ג), the giants were descendants of the *nephylim*.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In the *Septuagint*, the data of the third column of the above table (*i. e.* in which year of the precedent generation is the next one born) differ significantly of those given by the Torah. Thus we find 230, 205, 190, 170, 165 (all of the first five are 100 more than in the Torah), 162 (this is conform to the Torah), 165 (again 100 more), 167 (20 less, however the Alexandrian *ms.* has 187 as the Tora and also as JOSEPHUS, what makes the year of the flood 2262), 188 (six more) years, arriving thus to the total of 1642 years. If we add to this *Noach*'s 600 years, the flood – according to the *Septuagint* – took place in the year 2242! JOSEPHUS (I:3:3-4) seems to follow the same tradition however, in one instance, he follows the Torah and the *Septuagint* when he gives the data of 187 for the year of *Mesushelach*'s life in which the latter begot *Lemech*! In this way, he arrives to a total of 1662 years and, consequently, has the year 2262 for the flood. See the next chapter for the data of the next ten generations.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. 1056.

**235:** *Shes'* son, *Enosh* (אנוש) is born.

His generation starts worshipping idols.

In the beginning their intention is to express their respect to the Eternal, building sanctuaries to His servants, the celestial bodies (סה"ד בשם שה"ק צ"ב; רמב"ם ע"ז א, א).  
(א).

**260:** *Enosh* starts to worship effectively idols: statues of copper, iron, wood and stone.

The waters of the *Okinos* (אוקיינוס) flood a third of the earth (ירושלמי שקלים ו, ב; ; Others say (סה"י), it is the river *Gichon* which floods.<sup>2</sup>  
(תנחומא יתרו; מכילתא; רש"י ברא' ו, ד; דברים ל"ב, ז

The waters of the *Okinos* flood twice: first they reach *Akko* (עכו) and *Yafo* (יפו), the second time *Barbaria* (ברבריא). According to others, they reach first *Barbaria* and later *Akko* and *Yafo*; again others say, the waters reach first Calabria (קלבריא), and later *Barbaria* (ב"ר כ"ג, ז);

The above inundation of the *Okinos* creates the Mediterranean Sea, called in the Torah (e.g. *Bamidbor* 34:6) „*Big Sea*” (ים הגדול): the Atlantic breaks through the Strait of Gibraltar, thus creating the Western bassin of the Mediterraneum up to Calabria. As a second step, it flows further Eastward, up to Akkon and Jaffa, thus producing the Eastern Mediterranean. Consequently, it continues towards *Barbaria* (this is the land of the „*barbarous*” peoples living behind the Caucasus, North of the Black Sea), near the Eufate (wich takes its origins on the Southern side of the Caucasus) (רשי ב"ר כ"ג, ז), thus creating the Black Sea (אלה מסעי קמ"א).

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the story first mentioned by PLATON (see below, 3300) in his dialogue named „*Kritias*” referring to an information received of an Egyptian priest, about the legendary island of Atlantis. According to the legend, somewhere in the Atlantic there existed a continent 9000 years before Solon (Athens c. 640 – c. 558 BCE) with a flourishing civilization, later inundated by the waters of the Ocean.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. 1996.



The first and the third data of the above *Midrash* are two variants of the same procedure. However the third one can only be understood if – contravening *RASHI* – one should place *Barbaria* instead of the Northern coasts of the Black Sea, somewhere to Northwest-Africa.

According to others (שמו"ר כ"ג, ד), the two gulfs called in the Torah *Yom Suf* (ים סוף, 'Sea of Reeds') also came into being when the waters of the *Okinos* inundated, and divided the desert *Kuv* (כוב) into pieces: this however signifies supposedly not the Atlantic but the Southern Ocean. This, however, can difficultly be connected to the Mediterranean.

**325:** *Enosh*'s son, *Kainon* (קנין) is born.

**365:** *Kainon* rules wisely over the people. He knows about the forthcoming flood, therefore he lets it be written upon stone tablets, which he deposits in his treasure (סה"י).

During the lifetime of *Kainon*, the waters of the *Okinos* flood once more a third part of the earth (יוסיפון).<sup>1</sup>

**395:** Three sons and two daughters are born to *Kainon*:

► *Mahalalel* (מהלל-ל)<sup>2</sup>, *Ainon* (עינן), *Mored* (מרד)<sup>3</sup>;

► *Adoh* (עדה)<sup>4</sup> and *Tzilloh* (צלה; סה"ד)<sup>5</sup>.

**460:** *Mahalalel*'s son, *Yered* (ירד) is born.

**622:** *Yered*'s son, *Chanoch* (חנך) is born.

**687:** *Chanoch*'s son, *Mesushelach* (מתושלח)<sup>6</sup> is born.

<sup>1</sup> According to the „*Sefer Tzemach Dovid*“, this happened in the year 1235, the year of *Kainon*'s death.

<sup>2</sup> *Mahalalel*: 'G-d's praise' (*BDB*).

<sup>3</sup> *Mored*: 'he who revolts'.

<sup>4</sup> *Adoh*: 'ornament' (*BDB*).

<sup>5</sup> *Tzilloh*: 'shadow' (*BDB*).

<sup>6</sup> *Mesushelach*: the name is supposed to signify 'man of lances' (*BDB*).

**744:** *Chanoch* rules over all the kings of the world, over about 130 kings, for 243 years. He teaches people to serve the Eternal (סה"י).

He ranges the people into classes: priests, kings and masses. He teaches them the *mitzvos*, according to climates and zones: sacrifices, holidays, food, purity, etc. He transmits all this to *Noach* (סה"ד).

Besides *Mesushelach*, *Chanoch* has two more sons: *Elishua* (אלישוע) and *Elimelech* (אלימלך); and two daughters: *Milkoh* (מלכה) and *Naamoh* (נעמה) (סה"י).

*Lemech*, the sixth generation of *Cain*'s descendants (and not *Mesushelach*'s son!) marries the two daughters of *Kainon* (סה"ד), *Adoh* and *Tzilloh* (*Beraishis* 4:19).

*Adoh*'s children: *Yovol* (יבל), the father of those who live in tents, and of those who have cattle (*Beraishis* 4:20) and *Yuval* (יובל), the father of all who handle the harp and pipe (*Beraishis* 4:21).

For a long time, *Tzilloh* has no children, as in this period it was common among the people to give to one of their wives to drink a certain beverage which caused barrenness, and this in order to preserve their beauty.

*Tzilloh* will have children only in her elderly years: *Tuval-Cain* (תובל קין), forger of every sharp instrument in bronze and iron and his sister *Naamoh* (נעמה; *Beraishis* 4:22; סה"י).

During a hunting, *Lemech*'s son born of *Tzilloh*, *Tuval-Cain* (the seventh generation after *Cain*) takes *Cain* for a wild beast because of the horns on his head. When he calls his father's attention upon this, the blind *Lemech* kills *Cain* with his arrow. Realising what happened, *Lemech* strikes one hand against the other, killing *Tuval-Cain* also (*Beraishis* 4:23; תנחומא ברא' י).

After this, frightened that the Eternal can kill the rest of their children, his wives are unwilling to live with him. *Lemech* – who does not consider himself being

fully guilty – proposes to ask for *Odom horishon*'s counsel. The latter answers with the commandment of „be fruitful and multiply” (*Beraishis* 1:28). To this the women reply arguing that *Odom horishon* also separated himself of his wife after their sin. Following the discussion, *Odom horishon* takes his wife back (תנחומא ברא' י; רש"י ברא" ד, כ"ד).<sup>1</sup>

According to others (רמב"ן), *Cain* lives until the flood, so he can see the destruction of his descendants.

**874:** *Mesushelach*'s sons, *Lemech* (למך) and *Elyokum* (אליקום) are born.

**930:** *Odom horishon* dies at the age of 930 years.<sup>2</sup>

He gives 70 years of his life to *Dovid hamelech*, who was supposed to live only three hours (פדר"א י"ט).

The Torah only gives the years of the „leading figure” of every generation. The others live „normal” periodes (רמב"ם מורה). Other opinions (סה"ד על פי שה"ק ו) about the surprisingly long life-times:

- ▶ the years given are *Lunar*-years (this is however only 11 days less than the *Solar*-year);
- ▶ ten years of those generations equal to one of ours (this has to be considered impossible);
- ▶ when they were eating only vegetables, and drinking only water, they lived for a long time, but when they started– after the Flood – to eat meat their lifetime became shorter.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> However this *Midrash* is very difficult to understand, as *Kainan* was born almost 200 years after *Shes*, and his daughters are born when he is 70 years old.

<sup>2</sup> According to the apocryph „*Life of Adam and Chavah*” (Greek version, XXXI), *Odom horishon* tells *Chavoh* in a prophecy that they will die together. In reality, *Chavoh* dies six days after *Odom horishon* is buried (*Ibid.* XLII).

<sup>3</sup> According to JOSEPHUS (I:3), they lived long because they were favored by the Eternal, descending directly from Him, and also they were nourishing themselves more correctly. The long life, on the other hand, gave them the possibility to exerce morality, and to perfect upon their astronomical and geometrical inventions.

There were seven *tzaddikim* whose lives comprehend the whole history of the world:

- ▶ *Odom horishon*,
- ▶ *Mesushelach*: he serves *Odom horishon* for 243 years,
- ▶ *Shem*: he serves *Mesushelach* for 98 years,
- ▶ *Yaakov*: he serves *Shem* for 50 years,
- ▶ *Amrom*: *Kehos*, *Laivi*'s son goes to *Mitzrayim* together with *Yaakov* who, on his turn, still sees *Amrom*,
- ▶ *Achiyoh hashiloni*: he comes out of *Mitzrayim*, thus he had seen *Amrom*,
- ▶ *Eliyohu hanovi*: *Achiyoh hashiloni*'s disciple, he goes to heaven alive (ב"ב (קכ"א לפי ס"ע).

The Eternal burries *Odom horishon* and *Chavoh* to the Cave of *Machpeloh* (מערת המכפלה, 'double cave', couples were buried there) situated to two days journey East of Chevron (חברון)<sup>1</sup> (סה"ד).<sup>2</sup> The other name of Chevron, *Kiryas Arba* (קרית ארבע, 'fourfold village'; *Beraishis* 23:2), is an allusion to the four giants living there and to the four couples buried in the cave (פדר"א כ; רש"י).

As *Odom horishon* is 100 *amos* tall, the Eternal can only put him in the cave „folded”.

<sup>1</sup> *Chevron*: the original meaning of the name is 'alliance, the place of the alliance', its Arab name is *El-Halil* in Southern *Yehudoh*.

<sup>2</sup> According to the apocryph „*Life of Adam and Chavah*” (Greek version, XXXVII), following the Eternal's command, the Archangel *Michoel* first buries *Odom horishon* in the *Garden*, in the third heaven. Consequently (*ibid.* XL), he buries him in the *Garden*, on the same place where the dust had been taken for his creation. At this moment is *Hevel* also buried, as the earth was unwilling to accept his body as long as the body of the first human created of it does not return to it. And the Angels will bury *Chavoh* who dies six days later, into *Hevel*'s grave (*ibid.* XLII).

Others say (סה"ד), *Shes*, *Chanoch* and *Mesushelach* bury *Odom horishon*. The two opinions are not contradictory: it is the Eternal who buries him, however *Shes*, *Chanoch* and *Mesushelach* are also present at the burial.

**974:** *Naamoh*, *Chanoch*'s daughter, *Mesushelach*'s younger sister, *Noach*'s future wife is born. Others say (סה"י), *Noach*'s wife, *Naamoh* is the younger sister of *Tuval-Cain* (see above, 744).

**987:** the Eternal takes *Chanoch* alive to *Gan Eden* (*Beraishis* 5:24).

Other *tzaddikim* who enter the *Gan Eden* alive (7, 9 or 13 names in the different sources):

► *Eliezer*, *Avrohom*'s servant: he does not sin with *Rivkoh* on their way home from *Lovon*;

► *Serach bas Osher*: he „revives” *Yaakov* with the news about *Yossef*;

► *Batya*, *Paroh*'s daughter: she converts (גיורת), and saves the infant *Moshe rabainu*:

„...who preserves one soul of Israel is considered as if he had preserved the whole world” (ב"ב י"א), this is the reason why she merits to convert. And this is also the reason why the *TANACH* (1.*Divrai haYomim* 4:18) calls her name *Bitya-h* 'the daughter of the Eternal' (פדר"א מ"ה);

► *Eliyohu hanovi*: he reaches *Odom horishon*'s holiness as it was before the sin;

► *Moshiach*: born at the destruction of the *Bais hamikdosh*, he is hidden by the Eternal;

► *Chirom*, the king of *Tzur*: he helps *Shlomoh hamelech* to build the *Bais hamikdosh*. However, after thousand years, he starts to proclaim himself g-d, and is put to the *Gehinnom*;

- *Eved Melech haKushi*: he saves the life of the prophet *Yirmeyoh*, when the latter is thrown into a pit (*Jirmeyoh* 38:6). Some say (פדר"א נ"ג), he is the prophet *Boruch ben Neriyyoh*;
- *R. Yehoshua ben Laivi*: when the *Angel of Death* shows him the *Gan Eden*, he jumps through the wall. However, because of his merits, he is allowed to stay (כתובות ע"ז). In certain sources he figures instead of *Chirom*;
- *Yaavetz*: *R. Yehudoh hanossi*'s son (כלה רבתי; יל"ש יחזק-ל שס"ז; ד"א זוטא א).

*Chanoch*'s son, *Mesushelach* rules on his father's place, following in his father's path.

Towards the end of *Mesushelach*'s life, people start to abandon the Eternal's way. *Mesushelach* tries in vain to keep them back: the Eternal punishes them first with drought and, finally, with the flood (סה"י).

**1042:** *Odom horishon*'s son, *Shes* dies at the age of 912 years.

**1055:** *Lemech* marries *Ashmua bas Elishua* (אשמוע בת אלישוע), the daughter of his father's brother, his niece (סה"י).

**1056:** *Lemech*'s son, *Noach* (נח, 'rest') is born circumcised (ב"ר).

His grandfather - *Mesushelach* – calls him *Noach*; his father - *Lemech* – calls him *Menachem* (מנחם, 'consolation'; סה"י).

In *Noach*'s merit, the Eternal withdraws the former curses of the earth: produce, agricultural labour, obedience of the animals, etc. (*Beraishis* 5:29; cf. *Beraishis* 3:17-19; תנחומא י"א).

Before *Noach*, people are born with fingers joined in growing. *Noach* is the first born with separated fingers, what facilitates work (מדרש אבכיר).

He invents the agricultural instruments (תנחומא י"א).

In the days of *Tuval-Cain*'s younger sister, *Naamah* (יומא ס"ז), two angels come down to earth as humans: *Shemchazay* (שמחזאי) and *Azael* (עז-ל), they are the *nephilim* (נפילים; 'fallen from heaven'; *Beraishis* 6:2; רש"י במדבר י"ג, ל"ג, <sup>1</sup>). According to others (תרגו"י ברא' ו, ד), the second is called *Uziel* (עוז-ל); again others say (יומא ס"ז), the first is called *Uza* (עוזא).

They want to obtain the Eternal's permission pretending that they would not sin as humans do. In reality their sins surpass those of the humans.

Therefore is the he-goat thrown down of the rock on *Yom Kippur* is called *Azazel* (עזאזל; *Vayikroh* 16:8): allusion to the fact, that it is supposed to obtain atonement for sins, for immoralities like those committed by these two (רש"י (יומא ס"ז).

They beget giants with the earthly women (*Beraishis* 6:4), the descendants of *Cain*, who go naked, behave provocatively and live an immoral life (פדר"א (כ"ב).<sup>2</sup>

Some say (ראב"ע), the Torah uses the expression '*G-d's sons*' when speaking about the descendants of *Shes*, and the expression '*the sons of men*' when speaking about the descendants of *Cain*.

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<sup>1</sup> JOSEPHUS (I:3.1) also mentions the story.

<sup>2</sup> According to the apocryph „*Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*” (4:6-7) the provocative behaviour of these women charm the Angels, and they bore giants thinking to the Angels whose height seemed to them as if they reached the heaven. According to the Talmud (*bSotah* 34b), they are called giants (*anokim*) because they touch (*manikim*) the sun with their heads.

### CHAPTER THREE: THE FLOOD (המבול)

„The generation of the flood waxed haughty only because of the good which the Holy One, blessed be He, lavished upon them” (סנהדרין ק"ח):

- ▶ women gave birth to their children on the same day of the conception; the children could immediately stand, walk and speak, and they lived always longer than their parents (ב"ר ל"ו, א);
- ▶ the giants were born extremely strong, and their force was continuously growing during their lifetime of several hundred years (ב"ר ל"ד, י"ג);
- ▶ they were born six of one birth;
- ▶ when *Noach* (נח) tried to convince them they should correct their ways, and thus avoid the Flood, they did everything to impede further multiplying;
- ▶ in their arrogance, they put all their confidence to their height, thinking that because of their height, the waters cannot reach their neck, and their soles are so big that they will be able to cover with them all the openings of the earth. Therefore the Eternal will heat the waters which consequently will burn the skin of their soles (פדר"א כ"ב);
- ▶ they were insensitive to all kind of pains and sufferings (מדה"ג ו, ד);
- ▶ they had to sow only once in 40 years, they were not exposed to meteorological changes, there were no seasons (תנחומא ברא' מ).

Despite all this, they ignore the Eternal's commands: they bow to idols, kill, and live and immoral life (ב"ר ל"ו, ו).

The animals follow the example of humans: animals which normally mate only their own species start to mix with others (*Beraishis* 6:13; סנהדרין ק"ח; ב"ר כ"ה, ה).



Had they sinned for ignorance, the Eternal would not punish them: however, as they transgress explicit commands, adding robbery to the precedents, the Eternal brings the flood upon them (סנהדרין ק"ח).

**1140:** *Noach* is 84 years old.

*Enosh* dies at the age of 905 years.

**1235:** *Noach* is 179 years old.

*Kainon* dies at the age of 910 years.

He was the king of one of the islands of the [Mediterranean] Sea (צ"ד).

**1290:** *Noach* is 234 years old.

*Mehalalel* dies at the age of 895 years.

**1422:** *Noach* is 366 years old.

*Yered* dies at the age of 962 years.

**1536:** *Noach* is 480 years old.

People true to the Eternal die, so they would not see the punishment of the wicked. Only *Noach* and *Mesushelach* stay alive (ס"י).

According to the Eternal's command, *Noach* starts to construct the Ark (תיבה, *Beraishis* 6:14).

The Eternal uses His

- ▶ small finger to show how *Noach* should build the Ark: „*And this is the fashion by which you shall make it...*” (*Beraishis* 6:15);
- ▶ third finger to punish the *mitzriim*: „...*your right hand, O Lord, has dashed in pieces the enemy*” (*Shemos* 15:6);
- ▶ second finger to write upon the Tablets: „...*two tablets of Testimony, tablets of stone, written by the finger of G-d.*” (*Shemos* 31:18);

- ▶ index to show to *Moshe Rabainu* the ransom which the *Bnai Yisroel* are supposed to pay to Him: „*This they shall give, every one who passes among those who are counted, half a shekel...*” (*Shemos* 30:13);
- ▶ and finally will use His thumb to smitter the descendants of *Aisov* when *Moshiach* will come (פדר"א מ"ה).

*Noach* builds the Ark for 120 years: this time is given to the people to repent.

The Eternal decides that, in case people do not repent during this time, this should be the time of their lives (*Beraishis* 6:3).

*Noach*'s task is to induce people to repent. He results unsuccessful because he does not pray for them (זהר ח"א ק"ו).

In reality, the preparations take 115 years, the construction itself takes place only in the last 5 years. Others say (פדר"א כ"ג), *Noach* builds the Ark for 52 years, that there should be enough time to repent.

The Ark was 300 *amos* long, 50 *amos* wide, 30 *amos* high (*Beraishis* 6:15).

The Ark was built with three floors (*Beraishis* 6:16)<sup>1</sup>: lower, second, and third floors.

- ▶ the bottom for the dung;
- ▶ the middle for the animals (only the sinless): one pair of each impure species (to preserve the species, *i.e.* the work of Creation; *Beraishis* 6:19-20), while seven-seven from the pure species (to bring sacrifices after the flood; *Beraishis* 7:2);
- ▶ the top for the humans (סנהדרין ק"ח).

According to others (פדר"א כ"ג), the bottom for the animals, the middle for the birds, worms and reptils, the top for the humans.

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<sup>1</sup> JOSEPHUS (I:3) has four floors; *cf.* the *Gilgamesh-epic* speaks about 6 floors.

The Ark was made of *gopher*-wood (גפר; *Beraishis* 6:14),<sup>1</sup> taken from the *Kadron*-mountains (קדרון; תרגו"י), i.e. of the Mountain *Arorot*<sup>2</sup> (פירוש יונתן). According to others (ר"ה כ"ג; סנהדרין ק"ח), the Ark was made of *mabligah* (מבליגא) or *golmis* (גולמיש), both are kinds of cedars. Again others say (אברבנל), it was made of deal-wood.

The Ark was enlightened by a precious stone hanged on the wall (פדרא כ"ג).

**1554:** *Noach* is 498 years old.

*Noach* marries *Chanoch*'s 580 years old daughter, *Naamoh* (נעמה; סה"י). Others say he marries *Tuvol-Cain*'s younger sister who has the same name.

They have three children: *Shem* (שם), *Chom* (חם), *Yefes* (יפת; *Beraishis* 5:32).

Although they were born in different order, the Torah mentions *Shem* at the first place, he is the greatest *tzaddik* from all three.

*Noach*'s three sons, according to the date of their respective birth (סנהדרין ט"ט):

<sup>1</sup> *Gopher*: according to modern opinions (*BDB*), this is a kind of cedar-tree (*cedrus libanotica* from the Gr. *kedros*; Gr. *kyparissos* from *kaphar/gaphar*, a loan-word from the Hebrew).

<sup>2</sup> *Arorot*: originally the name signified not only the mountain itself, but the Eastern part of ancient *Armenia* situated between the river Araxes and the lakes Van and Oromia (eventually the entire *Armenia*). Etymologically the word is related to the Assyrian name (of Caucasian origin) of the ancient kingdom of *Urartu*, situated around the Van-Lake, surrounded by mountains rich in tin, copper and iron. The „*Targum Onkelos*” renders *Arorot* as *Kardu*; while the „*Targum Yonassan*” speaks about the *Kadron* mountains: one is the *Kardanyoh* (the Kordin-mountains in Kurdistan), the other the *Arminia*, with the omonymous town on its top, on the Eastern Land. Effectively, the Ararat consists of two mountains, the Big- and the Small-Ararat. According to JOSEPHUS (I:3.5), the Armenians call the mountain Apobaterion (‘the place of landing’). He quotes BEROSSOS, according to whom the Ark is still there. He also quotes NICHOLAS DAMASCENE, according to whom (Book 96) this is the Baris-mountain, near Minyas. *Yirmeyoh* 51:27 mentions it among the peoples which will attack *Bovel*, together with *Ashkenaz* and *Mini* (מני; a part of *Armenia*, Ass. *Mannai*).

The kingdom called by the Assyrians *Urartu* – with its capital called Tuspa or Turuspa situated on the Eastern shore of the Van-Lake – was an important rival of Assyria in the 9-7th centuries BCE. Under the impact of the Indo-European conquest, they gave up their independence in 640 BCE, and became the subjects of ASSUR-BAN-APLI.

Date	Generation	Aged	His son	Lives more	Total
1556	Noach	500	Yefes	450	950
1557	Noach	501	Chom	449	950
1558	Noach	502	Shem	448	950

Others say (י, רמב"ן; סה"י), the order of their birth is *Yefes*, *Shem*, *Chom*; again others say (יובלות ד, ל"ג) *Shem*, *Chom*, *Yefes*.

*Shem* prophecies for 400 years, but no one listens to him (תדב"א).

*Shem* is identical to *Malki Tzedek*, the king of *Sholem* (מלכי צדק שלם), mentioned in the Torah (*Beraishis* 14:18; נדרים ל"ב).

He starts to construct the walls of *Yerusholayim* (ירושלם).<sup>1</sup>

*Noach* marries his three sons to his three nieces (שלישי בשני), the three daughters of his uncle *Elyokum* (אליקום), his father, *Lemech*'s brother. (סה"י).

*Yefes* is also called *Ianu* (יאנו): he is so fat that he looks like as if he had two faces (סה"ד בשם שה"ק צ"ב).<sup>2</sup>

**1651:** *Noach* is 595 years old.

*Lemech*, *Noach*'s father dies at the age of 777 years.

**1656<sup>3</sup>:** *Noach* is 600 years old (*Beraishis* 7:6).

<sup>1</sup> *Yerusholayim*: Hebr. 'home of peace' or 'property of *Shalem* (= the G-d of peace, the Eternal)'; Ass. *Urussalim*, *Ursalimmu*.

<sup>2</sup> *Ianu*: cf. *Ianus* ancient Italian g-d, son of *Saturnus* and *Entoria*; brother of *Felix*, *Faustus* and *Hymnos*. According to an other tradition, he arrived to Italy from Thessalia together with his wife, *Camasena*. Their children were already born in Italy: *Tiberius* (according to certain myths he was drown in the Tiberis, named after him) and *Pomona* (g-oddess of fruit-bearing trees.). Again an other tradition says that his wife was *Iuturna*; as a sun-g-d he designates the year; he was represented double-faced: one looking forward, the other backward, to the new and the old year, to the future and the past. G-d of the begin, the entrance: *Patulcius* 'opener', *Clusius* 'closer'. In war-time, the doors of his sanctuary were open, as he starts the Roman army, and it is also he who awaits them back, and also to can come to help for the Romans.

<sup>3</sup> According to JOSEPHUS, the flood started in the year 2262, as he has 1662 years for the first ten

- **Cheshvan 10:** *Mesushelach* dies seven days before the flood (סנהדרין ק"ח; cf. *Beraishis* 7:10), at the age of 969 years (סה"ד).<sup>1</sup>

The Eternal sends the Flood only after the seven days of his mourning are over (ב"ר ל"ב, י; מדרש אבכיר; יל"ש מ"ב).

During this seven days, the Eternal sends earth-quakes, thunders, lightnings and solistice, to draw the attention of the people to repent of their bad ways, but everything in vain (סה"י).

- **Cheshvan 17:** the Flood (מבול; *Beraishis* 7:11; תרגו"י).<sup>2</sup>

generations + the 600 years of *Noach* = 2262 years.

<sup>1</sup> In my exemplar of „*Tzemach Dovid*”, *Mesushelach* dies at the age of 960 years, what is obviously a copist's or printer's error.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the story of the Flood in the Shumerian *Gilgamesh-epic*. *Um-napishti*'s account of the Flood has been preserved on the Tablet XI of the Epic (extant in a new-Assyrian redaction). According to this, the g-ds decide to send a Flood on the earth. However, one of them tells this to *Um-napishti*, calling him to build a ship of six floors, and escape on it, together with one pair of each animal. *Um-napishti* survives the Flood, provoked by the sea lashed by the Southern Wind, on the ship together with his relatives, friends, servants, artisans and the animals. The ship grounds on the Mount Nisir. After a week, *Um-napishti* sends out the dove, which does not find dry land, and returns. The next day he sends out a young swallow, which also returns back. After two more days, he sends out the raven, which does not return. At this point they leave the ship: he lets free the animals that they should fill up again the world. He, on his turn, brings sacrifices to his g-ds. *Um-napishti*'s account of the Flood is often paralel, and sometimes even identical with the story related in the Torah.

The Flood is also present in Greek mythological tradition. Seeing the wickedness of people, *Zeus* decides to destroy them, and sends the Flood upon the Earth. However, he spares the life of an honest couple, *Deukalion* (the son of *Prometheus* and *Klymene*) and his wife, *Pyrrha*. Following *Prometheus*' counsel, they build an Ark, which takes them, after nine days spent on the sea, to the shores of Thessalia. Feeling themselves alone, and following *Themis*' counsel, they throw behind themselves the bones (the stones) of their big mother (the Earth). *Deukalion*'s stones become the men, while *Pyrrha*'s stones become women. Their children are *Hellen*, *Xuthos*, *Melantheia*, *Amphiktyon* and *Protogeneia*, their daughter. *Hellen* rules over Phthia in Thessalia, his wife is the nymph *Orseis*; his sons are: *Doros* (who gives his name to the Dorians) and *Aiolos* (*Sisyphos*' father); his grandchildren are *Aiolos* and *Boiotos*, who gave their names to *Aiolia* and *Boiothia*. The mother of these latters is made blind by the grandfather, and the children put on the top of a mountain, where they are nourished by a cow, and later saved by sheperds (cf. the story of *Romulus* and *Remus* in Roman tradition). *Xuthos* gave his name to the Greeks, while *Amphiktyon* calls his town Athens. *Protogeneia* being the wife of *Lokros* (who gave his name to Lokris), king of the *Lelex* of Asia-Minor and Greece, she conceives two sons from *Zeus*. The whole story, like that related in the Torah, speaks about how the Earth has been repeopled after the Flood.

When the British archeologist, Sir Charles Leonard WOOLEY discovered the South-Mesopotamian town of *Ur* (see the next chapter) in the 920's, he observed that the lowest sedimental strata of the excavations is situated higher than the water-level of the Euphrates. As he continued to digging, he again found, under three meters of clay, remnants of human civilization. He pretended this being remnants of a

The Torah says (*Beraishis* 7:11), in „*the second month*”, viz. following the Creation of the World: in *Cheshvan* (according to R. *Eliezer*) or in *Iyyar* (according to R. *Yehudah*; ר"ה י"א).

The constellation *Kimo* is strong in *Cheshvan*: this provokes rains (according to R. *Eliezer*). In *Iyyar* the *Kimo* is weak, however people changed the order of nature, so the Eternal also changed something in the order of nature, and it rained (R. *Yehudah*'s opinion).

*Noach* and his family – his wife, his sons and his daughters-in-law – enter the Ark (*Beraishis* 6:18).

The animals are led by the Eternal: He sends angels who deposit amounts of food, which makes the animals come together (פדר"א כ"ג).

The Eternal closes the door of the Ark (*Beraishis* 7:16).

Day and night, during the whole duration of the Flood, *Noach* and his family are busy with feeding the animals: this is considered an act of charity (חסד).

*Noach* understands the tongue of the animals.

In the Ark, marital relations are prohibited for humans and animals alike. Three transgress this prohibition: the dog, the raven and *Noach*'s son, *Chom*, whose wife gives life in the Ark to the giant *Sichon* (סיחון), later king of the *Emoris*. The real father of *Sichon* is one of the two angels fathering giants with human women.<sup>1</sup> In order to save his wife's reputation, *Chom* sleeps with her in the

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stone-age civilization destroyed by the Flood. His telegram, announcing the discovery, became world-famous: „*I've found the Flood!*”. However, scientists have serious questions about the interpretation of Wooley's discoveries.

According to an other „scientific” explanation, under the influence of the interglacial rise in temperature, the masses of ice melted, what made the sea-level to rise, and this caused the flood. They argue that this is the reason, why the flood is present in the tradition of people fully separated in time and in space: the Greeks, certain peoples of India, Tibet, Kashmir, Polynesia, Australia, or the aboriginals of America. However people cannot remember this!

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 39.

darkness of the night. Therefore, he will come out of the Ark dark-skinned, and his descendants will also be dark-skinned (סנהדרין ק"ח).

The huge animal, the *Reem* (רֵאֵם)<sup>1</sup> cannot enter the Ark, therefore *Noach* ties it on the top of the Ark.

The giant *Og* (עֹג), *Sichon*'s paternal stepbrother also remains outside (זבחים קי"ג; ). *Noach* gives them food through the window of the Ark. *Og* swears with an oath, he will be the servant of *Noach*'s descendants for ever (פדר"א כ"ג).

• **Cheshvan 17 - Kislaiv 27:** for 40 days, hot rain is falling day and night (*Beraishis* 7:12). The Eternal especially warms up every raindrop in *Gehinnom* (ב"ר כ"ה, ט).

When rain starts to fall, about 700.000 people come together around the Ark. They ask *Noach*, he should let them in too, that they could avoid death. But the cover of the Ark has already been closed by the Eternal. When they try to break through the wall of the Ark, the wild beasts – which were not taken into the Ark – drive them away, killing even many of them (סה"י).

The hot rain destroys every being on the dry land.

The generation of the Flood is excluded from the World to Come, from *Olam haBo* (סנהדרין ק"ח), they will not stand up when the deads will resurrect (פדר"א ), based on *Yishayoh* 26:14).

The water level exceeds the top of the highest mountain with 15 *amos* [ca. 9 meters] (*Beraishis* 7:20; רש"י יומא ע"ו).

The rain does not fall in *Eretz Yisroel*, however the waters inundate it from the surrounding countries (פדר"א כ"ג; רמב"ן ברא' ה, י"ג; cf. *Yechezkel* 22:24).

<sup>1</sup> *Reem*: 'wild ox', cf. Ass. *remu*; the equivalent Arab word signifies the white antelope (*antilope leucoryx*). The Greek text of the *Septuagint* has erroneously *unicorn*, just like the *Vulgate*, the latter therefore often rendering it as *rhinoceros* (*BDB*).

- **Kislaiv 27 - Sivan 1:** for 150 days, geysers break out from the earth (*Beraishis* 7:24).

When they stop, three hot wells remain from them: the gulf of Gaddor,<sup>1</sup> the hot-springs of Tiberias in Lake *Kinneres* (ים כנרת),<sup>2</sup> and the great well of Biram<sup>3</sup>.

The Eternal hides the fish under the hot water of the Flood where the water remains cold. This is their reward for abstaining from immorality, not mingling with other species (לק"ט).

After that, the waters are ebbing 1 *amoh* every four days.

- **Sivan 17** (רש"י; ב"ר; רש"י): the Ark strands on the Mount *Arorot*<sup>4</sup> (*Beraishis* 8:4). According to others (תרגו"י; רמב"ן), this happens on *Nissan* 17. The Torah only says, in the seventh month: counting from the beginning of the Flood, the seventh month is *Sivan* (רש"י; ב"ר; רש"י).<sup>5</sup> However, when counting from the anniversary of Creation, *Tishrai* 1, *Rosh hashonoh*, the seventh month is *Nissan* (תרגו"י; רמב"ן).
- **Av 1:** the peak of the mountains can already be seen (*Beraishis* 8:5; רש"י). Others say (תרגו"י; רמב"ן), this happens on the first of *Tammuz*.
- **Elul 9:** after 40 days, *Noach* opens the window of the Ark (*Beraishis* 8:6; רש"י). Others say (רש"י), on the 10th of *Tammuz*, which is 40 days from *Sivan* 1.

<sup>1</sup> *Gadar* (Gadara): was famous for its thermal springs. Authors of Antiquity, Eusebius, Jerome and others speak of its thermal waters. It is identified with Gum Kreis (NEUBAUER, *Geographie*, p. 35).

<sup>2</sup> Lake-*Kinneres*: big lake in Gallilee near the omonymous town. Its name in the *Targums* is *Ginessar*, *Gennessar* (*Bamidbor* 34:11), *Ginnossar* (*Yehoshuah* 13:27): this name will be taken over to European languages, cf. Eng. Lake-Genesareth.

<sup>3</sup> *Biram*: is identified with Baaras near the thermal spring of Callirhoe, east of the Dead Sea (NEUBAUER, *op. cit.* p. 36).

<sup>4</sup> In the *Gilgamesh-epic*, the Ark strands on the Mount Nissir, situated, according to the witnesses of Old-Babylonian cuneiform texts, between the rivers Tigris and the Lower-Zab.

<sup>5</sup> *RASHI*'s explanation – according to him we have to count the seventh month from the stop of the rain, i.e. from *Kislaiv* – is only true, when we take that year for a leap-year, i.e. that we count two *Adars*, however there is nowhere any allusion to this in the Torah.



*Noach* send out the raven, but she only flies around the Ark (*Beraishis* 8:7), therefore *Noach* is unwilling to take her back. But the Eternal commands him to let the raven back into the Ark: ravens will bring food for *Eliyohu hanovi* from king *Yoshofot*'s table (1.*Melochim* 17:6; מהרש"א סנהדרין ק"ח; ה; ב"ר ל"ג, ה; מהרש"א סנהדרין ק"ח).

- **Elul 16:** *Noach* sends out the dove (*Beraishis* 8:8).

As the dove does not find a rest-place on the waters (*Beraishis* 8:9), in the same way, the *Bnai Yisroel* will not find peace among the people. And as the dove finally returns to the Ark, so will the *Bnai Yisroel* finally return to their Land, to *Eretz Yisroel*, when *Moshiach* will come (מדא"ג ח, י"א).

- **Elul 23:** *Noach* sends out the dove for the second time (*Beraishis* 8:10).

The dove returns with an olive-branch (*Beraishis* 8:11): she brings it from *Gan Eden*, as the plants have also been destroyed on earth by the flood (ב"ר ל"ג, ט).

**1657:** *Noach* is 601 years old.

- **Tishrai 1:** *Noach* sends out the dove for the third time, and she does not return any more (*Beraishis* 8:12).<sup>1</sup> From this, *Noach* understands that the earth is already dry: he opens the cover of the Ark (*Beraishis* 8:13).

- **Cheshvan 27:** the Flood is over, the earth is dry (*Beraishis* 8:14).

The Flood lasted one year and eleven days: the *solar* year is 11 days longer than the *lunar* year (ס"ט).

One of the *evil spirits* (מזיקין) in the Ark made *Noach* sick. He is therefore taken to *Gan Eden* by an Angel, who teaches him the „*Book of Healings*” (ספר תשב"ץ), what will be hidden later (3,199) by king *Chizkiyoh* (תשב"ץ).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In the *Gilgamesh*-epic, *Um-napishti* sends first out a dove, then a young swallow and finally the raven.

<sup>2</sup> According to *Jubilees* 10:10-14, the *mazikin* have to teach *Noach* the science of healing, what he later writes down.

*Noach* comes out of the Ark, and rebuilds *Odom horishon*'s altar, destroyed by the Flood: it stands on the same place where the Eternal took the dust from to form *Odom horishon*, where *Cain* and *Hevel* brought their sacrifices, here will *Avrohom* tie *Yitzchok* up to the altar, and on the same place will stand both *Botai mikdosh* (תרגו"י ברא' כ"ב, ט).

*Noach* and his three sons bring four sacrifices to the Eternal of the pure animals and birds preserved in the Ark (*Beraishis* 8:20): ox, lamb, goat and doves (פדר"א (כ"ג).

The Eternal enters into a *Covenant* (ברית) with *Noach* and, through him, with humanity (*Beraishis* 9:9): there will be no more Flood. The Eternal promises, He will not destroy once more mankind and all the other creatures at the same time (*Beraishis* 9:11; cf. *Yishayoh* 54:9). The sign of the *Covenant* is the rainbow (קשת; *Beraishis* 9:12-17): when it appears in heaven, it reminds the Eternal of His promise to *Noach*, and reminds us to repent.

Later, the *Sages* order, we should remember the Eternal's oath sworn to *Noach*: in the prayer *Shema Yisroel* we say twice a day, „*That your days may be multiplied...*” (*Devorim* 11:21; פדר"א כ"ג).

After the Flood, people live less years then before it,<sup>1</sup> and also their lives become difficult.

The Eternal permits to eat meat (*Beraishis* 9:3), however it is forbidden to eat flesh cut from a living animal (אבר מן החי; *Beraishis* 9:4): this is the seventh *mitzvoh* of *Noach*'s descendants (the first six had already been commanded to *Odom horishon* by the Eternal).

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<sup>1</sup> According to the so-called „*Shumerian King-list*”, the kings before the Flood ruled extremely long, the shortest reign lasted 18.600 years, the longest 43.200 years. After the flood, the longest reign in *Kish* lasts 1560 years, in *Uruk* 1200 years, and *Gilgamesh* rules only for 126 years.

*Noach* plants the wine-branches which he took along into the Ark (*Beraishis* 9:20; (ב"ר ל"ו, ד). According to others (פדר"א כ"ג), he found grapes coming from the *Gan Eden*, he tasted them, found them delicious and, therefore, he planted them. On the soil destroyed by the Flood, the wine-branches bring grapes already on the same day when *Noach* planted them.

*Noach* gathers the grapes, prepares wine (must) and drinking without control, he gets drunk (*Beraishis* 9:21).

*Chom's* fourth son, *Canaan* remarks his grandfather lying drunken in his tent, and show this to his father (*Beraishis* 9:22).<sup>1</sup>

They make fun of *Noach*: they castrate him (!), that he should not have other children, with whom to share the heritage (סנהדרין ע; יל"ש נה). According to others (פדר"א כ"ג), *Canaan* acts alone. Again others say (שפתי חכמים ט, כ"ה), they commit an immoral act with him.

*Shem* and *Yefes* cover their father's nakedness going backwards (*Beraishis* 9:23): *Shem's* descendants receive as a reward the *mitzvoh* of *tzitzis* (ציצית).

*Noach* curses *Chom's* son, *Canaan* (*Beraishis* 9:25): not *Chom* himself, as the latter has already been blessed by the Eternal after the Flood, together with his parents and brothers (סנהדרין ע).

According to certain opinions (סה"ד בשם שה"ק), *Noach* is called henceforeward *Ianu* (יאנו < יין 'wine').<sup>2</sup> His wife is also mentioned by different names:

<sup>1</sup> Cf. in Greek mythological tradition *Ikarios* the Atticean invites *Dionysos* who gives him as a present wine-branches and wine, until then unknown in Hellas. *Ikarios* invites the sheperds to drink of the wine who, thinking it is some kind of poison, kill him, and hide his cadaver in the ground. With the help of her dog, his daughter discovers the corpse. They three become the *Great-Bear*, the *Virgin* and the *Dog* constellations.

<sup>2</sup> *Ianu*: cf. 1558, where *Yefes* is called *Ianu*. However, there the name is connected to the double-faced Italian deity, *Ianus*; while here it is related to the Hebrew word for wine, because of similar sounding.

*Totzioh* (טוציאה) or *Artzioh* (ארציאה)<sup>1</sup> and, after her death, *Arsi Priscoh* (ארסי פריסקה).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Artzioh*: the name is surely connected to the Hebrew word *eret* (ארץ) 'land, earth'. According to the „*Seder haDoros*”, it means 'mother of all living creatures'.

<sup>2</sup> *Arsi Priscoh*: as the name sounds Latin, it has to be related to the name *Ianu*: cf. Gr. *arkhi* 'main-' (< Gr. *arkhein* 'to command'), Lat. *priscus* 'old, severe, honorable' (cf. one of the Roman kings was called *Tarquinius Priscus*).

## CHAPTER FOUR: TEN GENERATIONS FROM *NOACH* TO *AVROHOM*

### 4.1. The seventy peoples

Seventy peoples are born from *Noach*'s three sons:  $14 + 30 + 26$  (סה"ד).<sup>1</sup>

When the Eternal will confuse the language of people as a punishment for the construction of the *Tower of Bovel*, there will be seventy languages corresponding to the seventy peoples. According to others (יל"ש), in reality the Torah mentions seventy-four peoples:  $15 + 32 + 27$ . However, as *Shem*, *Arpachshad* and *Ever* are *tzaddikim*, they are not counted together with the others.<sup>1</sup>

The seventy peoples correspond to the seventy members of *Yaakov*'s family who will descend to *Mitzrayim* (ספרי האזינו שי"א; cf. *Shemos* 1:5, *Devorim* 10:22): the *Bnai Yisroel* are as dear to the Eternal as the seventy peoples together, cf. „...he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the people of Israel” (*Devorim* 32:8; כלי יקר). However, the Talmud (ידים ד, ד; ברכות כ"ח) draws the attention to the fact, that *Sanherib*, the king of Assyria mixed up the peoples and, consequently, the people are not necessarily identical with those mentioned in the Torah.

With the Eternal's blessing, six children are born of one birth.

*Shem*'s descendants are dark-skinned and beautiful, they inherit the liveable lands; *Chom*'s descendants are black like the raven, they inherit sea-shores; *Yefes*' descendants are white and beautiful, their inheritance are deserts and fields (פדר"א כ"ד).

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<sup>1</sup> The total number conserved by the tradition of Hungarian Medieval chroniclers is 72: 15 from *Yefes*, 30 from *Chom*, 27 from *Shem*, in opposition to the numbers given by the Torah: 14, 30, 26.

After the Flood, and until the Dispersion, people live exclusively in the *Land of Shinear* (ארץ שניער), cf. „And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech.” (*Beraishis* 11:1). There they built the *Tower*, and it was from there that the Eternal dispersed them after having destroyed the *Tower* (רש"י שבת י').

According to certain opinions, *Noach* had a fourth son born after the Flood, *Yoniko* (יוניקו),<sup>2</sup> the great astrologer ('star-gazer'). When he is driven away by his brothers, he goes to *Nimrod* whom he teaches the art of war (סה"ד בשם). Some say (סה"ד בשם שה"ק), after the Flood *Noach* goes from Armenia to Italy, where he learns wisdom.

In the list below, peoples counted in the number seventy, are marked with an \* after the Hebrew names in brackets.

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<sup>1</sup> However 74 – 3 are still 71 !

<sup>2</sup> *Yoniko*: Hebr. *yanik* (יניק) 'small child'. However cf. *Enki* (see below, year 2.000) of the Shumerian mythology; also *Oannes*, mentioned by BEROSSOS, the half-human, half-fish who, emerging from the sea, brings wisdom to humanity, and whose „...name and figure is authentically Mesopotamian: originating from the traditions about the *apkallus* and, finally, from the cult in Eridu, from the mythology of Enki-Ea”. KOMORÓCZY, *Bérósos és a mezopotámiai irodalom*. [Berossos and Mesopotamian Literature] p. 139.

#### 4.1.1. The descendants of Yefes (תולדות יפת):<sup>1</sup>

14 families (*Beraishis* 10:2-4), about 460 persons (סה"י).

■ **Gomer** (גמר\*)<sup>2</sup> *Germamia* (גרממיה); in *Rabainu CHANNAEL*'s text *Germomia* (גרמומיה). However, the VILNA GAON emends it to *Germania* (גרמניה).<sup>3</sup>

After the dispersion which follows the construction and the destruction of the *Tower of Bovel*, his descendants, the *Francus* (פרנקוס)<sup>4</sup> settle in the land *Franza* (ארץ פרנצא)<sup>5</sup>, alongside the river *Sina* (סינה; סה"י).<sup>6</sup> According to others (אפריקי), they settle in *Africa* (ב"ר ל"ז, מ"ה; תרגו"י; תרגו"י דה"א א, ה).<sup>7</sup> However a different manuscript of the „*Targum Rav Yossef*” has here

<sup>1</sup> The descendants of *Yefes* are primarily the Indo-European peoples. However, later the Turkish peoples are also ranged among his descendants, see below. Modern opinions identify *Yefes* with the Greek *Iapotes*, the father of *Atlas* and *Prometheus*, one of the *Titans* whom *Zeus* throw down to the underworld.

<sup>2</sup> *Gomer*: according to JOSEPHUS, the inhabitants of *Galatia* (1:6:1), originally a part of ancient *Phrygia*, i.e. the Celts, the Galls. The Talmud's rendering can mean *Germanicia* in Commagene, or *Garamnea* near Armenia. According to modern opinions, Cappadocia, cf. Armenian *Gamir*, Ass. *gimirrai*. According to „*Jubilees*” (9:8), they live east of the river *Tina*, the Halys.

<sup>3</sup> *Germamia/Germania*: the Latin name of Celtic origin but of not clear etymology (earlier rendered as 'neighbour'), *Germani* was originally the name of tribes living on the West bank of the Rhine-river (*Germani Cisrhenani*). However, HERODOTE (I:125) mentions the *germanoi* who live in Eastern Persia. The *Targum* renders several times (*Yechezkel* 27:14, 38:6) *Togarmoh* as *Germamia*. It is also well possible that *Germania* here means *Cimmeria* (KOHUT, *Aruch haSholem*), cf. Ass. *Gimmerai*.

<sup>4</sup> *Francus*: the Franks. Their name comes from a Proto-German \**franka* 'audacious'. However, it is also possible, that here it is rather question of the ancient inhabitants of France, the Celts and not the Franks. It has also to be remembered that R. SAADYAH gaon renders *Rifas/Difas* as *Franjah*, what means that what is said in the „*Sefer haYoshor*” about *Gomer* himself, the gaon says it about his son, *Rifas/Difas*.

<sup>5</sup> *Franza*: France; Lat. *Francia* 'France, Northern-Gallia', from Lat. *Franci* 'the Franks'.

<sup>6</sup> *Sina*: the French river *Seine*, from Lat. *Sequana*, of possibly Pre-Indo-European origin.

<sup>7</sup> *Africa*: Lat. *Afer* (pl. *Afri*) 'African, Punic', originally 'member of one of the Berber tribes allied to the Punic'. *Terra Africa*: Karthago on the actual territory of Tunis. See 2.329, the Punic wars.

However, it is also possible that *Africa* here does not mean the continent, but a distorted form of the name of the ancient people, the *Phrygians*, which settle in Asia Minor on the Southern shores of the Black Sea, destroying the Hettite Empire, in connection with the apparition of the so called „peoples of the sea” (cf. Indo-European \**bhrug* 'fruit; to eat, enjoy sg'; Lat. *frux* 'fruit', *frui* 'to enjoy sg'). According to HERODOTE (VII:73), living still in Europe their name was *Brigos*. In the 8th century BCE, the Cimmerians, escaping from the Steppes of Southern Russia because of the *Scythian* invasion, push them to the Northern shores of the Black Sea (IV:11, I:6, I:103).

*Garmanayoh* (גרמניא).

Gomer's children (*Beraishis* 10:3):

□ *Ashkenaz* (אשכנז\*).<sup>1</sup>

After the dispersion, his descendants live in Asia (אסיא; א, ו, תרגור"י דהי"א א, ו).<sup>2</sup>

□ *Rifas* (ריפת) / *Difas* (דיפת; א, ו, תרגור"י דהי"א א, ו).<sup>3</sup>

After the dispersion his descendants, the *Bartons* (ברטונים)<sup>4</sup> settle in *Bartonia* (ארץ ברטניה)<sup>5</sup>, alongside the river *Lira* (לירה)<sup>6</sup> which joins the big sea, the *Okinos*, called *Gichon* (הים הגדול גיחון הוא אוקינוס). According to others (פרסווי) / *Parsaveh* (פרכוי) / *Parsaveh* (פרסווי), they settle in *Parkvi* (פרכוי) / *Parsaveh* (פרסווי).<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ashkenaz*: the prophet *Yirmeyah* (51:27) mentions him among the peoples which will destroy *Bavel*. Germany is identified with *Ashkenaz* for the first time in the *Siddur* of Rav AMROM gaon, possibly because it sounds like the German name of Saxony (*Sachsen*). The „*Sefer haYosor*” does not mention the settlement of *Ashkenaz* when speaking about the dispersion after the construction and destruction of the *Tower of Bavel*, possibly because of the abovementioned identification of *Gomer* with *Germania* (*Ashkenaz*).

The identification of *Yefes*' grandson, *Ashkenaz*, with Germany is even more interesting when we take in consideration what IBN EZRA and also the REDAK write (to *Ovadiah* 1:20), that the *Canaanis* (the descendants of *Chom*) escaping from the Jewish invasion of *Eretz Canaan*, settle in Germany, in *Alemania* (אלמנייה, Ibn Ezra) or *Ashkelonia* (אשקלוניה, REDAK). *Almania/Alemania*: from Germ. *Alamann* latinized to *Alamannus*, from the name of the German tribe living the nearest to France (see the footnote to *Elishoh*). *Ashkelonia* here can be a combination of *Köln* / *Colonia* (its Latin name meaning 'colony' given after the Roman *Colonia* established on the territory of the German tribe called *Ubius*) and of the Philistine town Ashkelon. However, R. SAADYAH gaon renders *Ashkenaz* as *Elzcalvonah*. In this case, we have to render it as Esclavonia, the land of Slavonic peoples, an allusion to Jewish slave-traders bringing mainly Slavonic slaves from Eastern Europe.

According to JOSEPHUS, *Ashkenaz* is *Reginia* what, in connection with Germany, can be an allusion to the river *Rennus* ('Rhine'); or *Rhegion* in Southern-Italy (HERODOTE I:167); or *Regnum Polemonis* South-East of the Black Sea. Modern opinions identify it with the Armenian form of the name of a *Bithynian* tribe, the *Askanios*.

<sup>2</sup> *Asia*: the name is supposed to take its origin from the *Hettite* name of *Lydia*, Hett. *assuwa* 'a land with good soil'. The *Phenicians* could connect it through popular etymology to the Assyrian word *ashu* 'West'. It is also possible, however, that the *Asia* mentioned by the *Targum* means *Amasia*.

<sup>3</sup> *Rifas*: according to JOSEPHUS, the inhabitants of *Paphlagonia*. According to modern identifications, the river *Rhebas* flowing on the European side of the Bosphoros, mentioned by PLINY (*Hist. Nat.* VI:4).

<sup>4</sup> *Bartons*: the Bretons. The name, of Celtic origin, is supposed to mean 'warrior'.

<sup>5</sup> *Bartonia*: Brittany. In 1604, King James I of England (1603-1625) takes the title King of Great-Britain. *Bartonia* in our text is presumably Small-Britain, the French *Bretagne*, where the Celtic British withdrew from England.

<sup>6</sup> *Lira*: the French river *Loire*, from Lat. *Liger* of Pre-Indo-European origin, but of unclear etymology. My exemplar of the „*Sefer haYosor*” has *Lida*: a copist's error (טעות ספרים), a ד instead of a ר.

<sup>7</sup> *Parkvi*, *Parsaveh*: possibly *Parkvi*, in Northern Ariana. One of the two forms is surely a copist's error



Again others say (ב"ר ל"ז; ירושלמי מגילה ט, א; יבמות ט"ז), in *Chadiev* (חדייב) / *Hadias* (הדיס).<sup>1</sup>

□ *Togarmoh* (תגרמה\*).<sup>2</sup>

The names of his ten children are:

- *Kuzar* (כוזר)<sup>3</sup>: he converts to Judaism,
- *Pitznak* (פיצנק),<sup>4</sup>
- *Alan* (אלן),<sup>5</sup>
- *Bulgar* (בולגר),<sup>6</sup>

through interchanging the letters כ and ט.

<sup>1</sup> *Chadiev* / *Hadias*: is thought to be Hadijv, the Assyrian province of Adiabene.

<sup>2</sup> *Togarmoh*: according to JOSEPHUS, the *Phrygians*, according to ABRABANEL, the Turkish peoples. Here ONKELOS conserves the name *Togarmoh*, while elsewhere (*Yechezkel* 38:6) he renders it as the *Land Germamia* (מדינת גרממיה), what can be simply an identification with *Gomer*, or a copist's error. The identification of the Turkish peoples living North of the Caucasus with *Togarmoh* is rather problematic if we follow the identification *Gomer-Germania*! When we render *Germamia* not as Germania but as Cimmeria, we immediately arrive to the North of the Caucasus, independently however of ethnicity. On the other hand, it is also true, however, that the Ottoman Empire is called in Medieval Hebrew *Malchus Togar* (מלכות תגר). See e. g. YOSSEF HAKOHN's book entitled *Divrai haYomim leMalchai Tzarfat uleMalchai Bait Ottoman haTogar* (Sabionetta 1554, Amsterdam 1733).

*Hettite* sources mention a town between *Charran* and *Karkemish*, called *Tagaramah* or *Takaramah*. Modern identifications place it to the South-Western part of Armenia (Fr. DELITZSCH, cf. Akk. *Til-garimmu*) or the North-Eastern part of Asia Minor (LAGARDE, cf. Gr. *Teuthrania* in Mysia). The Armenians consider themselves being the descendants of *Togarmoh*.

<sup>3</sup> *Kuzar*: the name, of supposedly Turkish origin, of the *Chazars* takes its origin from a (supposed) participial form of the verb *qaz-* 'to wander': \**qazar* 'wanderer, nomad'. The Turkish original of the words *Kazah* and *kossack* also comes from the same word. For the conversion, see below, 4730, the exchange of letters between R. CHASDAI ibn Shaprut and Yossef, the *khan* of the *Chasars*.

<sup>4</sup> *Pitznak/Partzinach* (in Samuel KOHN, *Héber kútforrások és adatok Magyarország történetéhez*. [Hebrew Sources and Data Relating to the History of Hungary] Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1990<sup>2</sup>, p. 4.): the *Pechenegs*. Their name (in Greek Πατζινάκος, in Arab *Pačanak*, KOHN, p. 7), is supposed to take its origin from an Old-Turkish person's name \**Bäčä*. They ruled over the steppe-region North of the Black Sea in the 10-11th centuries CE.

<sup>5</sup> *Alan/Alicanus*: HARKAVY, in his work about the *Khazars* (quoted by KOHN, *ibid.*), emends *Alicanus* to *Allanos*; Gr. Ἀλανός 'Alans' (KOHN p. 7). Their name comes from Old-Iranian \**aryana* 'arya'. The bellicious nomad tribal confederation belonging to the Western *Saka* (*Scythian-Sarmatha*) peoples, appears on the steppe between the Don and the Caucasus in the 1-4th centuries CE. A part of them goes toward the West together with the *Vandals* and *Visigoths*; their Eastern group settle on the outskirts of the Caucasus (their state will be annihilated by the *Mongols*, the *Ossethians* are their descendants), the third part stays, and will be dissolved.

<sup>6</sup> *Bulgar*: their name is supposed to come from an Old-Turkish word meaning 'mixture'. Originally it was the name of the Bulgarian Turks who established an autonomous state after 681 South of the lower

- *Katzbina* (כצבינא),<sup>1</sup>
- *Turk* (טורק),<sup>2</sup>
- *Kuz* (כוז),<sup>3</sup>
- *Zakuk* (זכוד),<sup>4</sup>
- *Ungar* (אונגר),<sup>5</sup>
- *Tolmatz* (טולמץ ; יוסיפון),<sup>6</sup>

Other sources (סה"י) have somewhat different names: *Kuzar*, *Partzinach*

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course of the Danube. Later, however, they got intermingled with the local Slavonic population who called themselves originally *Slovēne* 'Slavonic'.

<sup>1</sup> *Katzbinah*: unidentified. D. Flusser's edition of the „*Sefer Yosippon*” (David FLUSSER ed, *Sefer Yosippon*. Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 1979. p. 4) has here *Kanvina* (כנבינא). However, the „*Sefer haYoshor*” and also KOHN's exemplar of the „*Sefer Yosippon*” has *Ragbinah*. According to KOHN (p. 7), it is possible that the correct reading is metathetically *Barginah*, Gr. Βαράγγες 'the *Varegs*'. This tribe of Scandinavian (Viking) origin, entering Russia in the 9th century, and they soon function as the commercial intermediary between the Baltic region and the Black and Caspi Seas. They will give the body-guards of the Byzantinian emperors. They even give the name to the Russians: it is from the name of these Scandinavian peoples that the leading group of the Russian State of Kiev is called *Rus* 'Russian' ◀ 'North-German, Scandinavian'.

<sup>2</sup> *Turk/Turki*: the *Uigurs*. *Turk* was the name of a Turkish-speaking tribe and empire near China in the 6-8th centuries CE. The word is supposed to mean originally 'force'.

<sup>3</sup> *Kuz/Buz*: One of the two forms can be considered as a copist's error. According to KOHN (p. 8), they are the *Uzs* / *Oguzs*, in Byzantine sources ΟΥΖΟΙ, in the Russians *Tork*, in the Islamic ones *Guzz*. This Turkish-speaking people establishes an important empire East of the Ural between the 8-11th centuries CE. In the 10th century, they convert to Islam; a part of them moves to the South where, around the middle of the 11th century, they establish the *Seljuc*-Empire. It is also possible that they are the *Cumans*, a Turkish-speaking people of the *Kipchak*-group (together with the *Kimeks* and *Mameluks* [Arab *mamluk* 'slave', the rulers of Egypt 1250-1517]) who, in the 11th century – during the migration of peoples provoked by the westward expansion of the *Kitays* -, overthrow the *Uz-Pecheneg* rule over the steppe-region. Cf. *Beraishis* 22:21, *Yirmeyoh* 25:23, *Iyov* 32:2, 1. *Divrai haYomim* 5:14.

<sup>4</sup> *Zakuch/Zabuch*: One of the two forms is necessarily a copist's error. According to KOHN (p. 8) they are the Σαβωκοι, Σαβυκοι mentioned in Byzantine sources.

<sup>5</sup> *Ungar*: 'Hungarian'. The word takes its origins from the people's name *onog(und)ur*; *on* 'ten' (an allusion to the confederation of ten tribes), the second part of the name is not yet correctly clarified. Certain sources call with this name the Bulgarians who settle South of the Danube. For the enlisting of the *Ungars* among the Turkish peoples, cf. the Byzantine sources which mention the Hungarians as *Turkoi* or *Hunnoi* or *Ungroi*.

<sup>6</sup> *Tolmatz* or *Tilmatz*: According to KOHN (p. 8) they are the Τουλμαζοι mentioned in Byzantine sources, one of the *Pecheneg* tribes, living East of the Dnieper, in the neighbourhood of the *Khazars*. According to Gy. MORAVCSIK (*Byzantinoturcica II. Sprachreste der Türkvölker in den Byzantinischen Quellen*. Budapest, 1943. pp. 267-68), the Byzantine imperial bodyguards of Turkish origin. In chapter 37 of CONSTANTINE VII *Porphyrogenetos*' (913-959) *De Administrando Imperii* (DAI), they are called *Boro-Tolmač*. According to a modern edition of the „*Sefer Yossippon*” (Jerusalem: Oraysoh, 1999. p.

(פרצינד), *Bulgar*, *Alicanus* (אליקנוס), *Ragbinah* (רגבינא), *Turki* (טורקי), *Buz* (בוז), *Zabuch* (זבוך), *Ungar*, *Tilmaz* (טילמאץ).

The letter sent by the *Khazar khan*, Yossef, to R. CHASDAI Ibn Shaprut, court physician and diplomate of the Cordoban *Caliph*, ABD al Rachman III (912-961),<sup>1</sup> gives again a partially different list. It has: *Agiur* (אגיוור)<sup>2</sup>, *Tiros* (תירוש)<sup>3</sup>, *Avvar* (אוור)<sup>4</sup>, *Oguz* (אוגוז)<sup>5</sup>, *Bizal* (ביזל), *Tarna* (תרנא), *Khazar* (כזר), *Zagud/Zagur* (זגור), *Bulgar* (בלגר), *Savir* (סאוויר)<sup>6</sup>. The *Khan* also writes that „...we [i.e. the *Chazars*] are the descendants of *Khazar*, the seventh”.

Again an other source (סה"ד בשם "ס' קול מבשר") gives the same list somewhat differently, adding new names instead of *Avvar*, *Oguz*, *Tarna*, *Zagud* and *Bulgar*: *Agiur*, *Tiros*, *Ozar* (אוזר), *Chugon* (חוגון), *Bizal*, *Tirtzo* (תרצא),

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50), Dalmatia.

<sup>1</sup> In: SPITZER, Shlomo J. and KOMORÓCZY Géza, *Héber Kútforrások Magyarország és a magyarországi zsidóság történetéhez a kezdetektől 1686-ig*. [Hebrew Sources Relating to the History of Hungary and Hungarian Jewry in the Middle Ages. From the Beginnings until 1686] Budapest: MTA Judaisztika Kutatócsoport – Osiris 2003 pp. 95-96.

The two letters are mentioned by YUDAH ben Barzillai al-Bargeloni in his „*Sefer haIttim*” [1090-1105], where he even quotes a piece of the Kagan’s answer, and ABRAHAM ibn Daud in his „*Sefer haKabbalah*” [12th century]. The entire text of the letters has been published for the first time by Yitzchak AKRISH in his „*Kol Mevasser*” [Constantinople, 1577 or somewhat later], from a manuscript found by him presumably in Egypt. The letters came to be known by European scholars through the (defective) Latin translations published by the younger Johannes BUXTORF (1599-1664) in the preface of his edition of R. YUDAH Halevi’s *Kuzari* (*Liber Cosri*. Basiliae 1660). A modern edition has been prepared by KOKOVCOV, Pavel K., *Evreysko-kazarskaya perepiska v X veke*. Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR 1932 pp. 19-32.

<sup>2</sup> *Agiur*: the *Uigurs*. See the precedent page, footnote no. 3, *Turk/Turki*.

<sup>3</sup> *Tirosh*: one of the possibilities of identification can be the ancient *Tauris*, the Crimean Peninsula.

<sup>4</sup> *Avvar*: the *Avars*.

<sup>5</sup> *Oguz*: the *Oguzs/Uzs*. See footnote no. 4 on the precedent page: *Kuz/Buz*.

<sup>6</sup> *Savir*: the Turkish *Savirs* play an important part in the first half of the 6th century on the Northern side of the Caucasus. Around 558, they are defeated by the *Avars* coming from the East. Their name figures also as the denomination of the *Khazars*. They are also said to be related to the *Savard* Hungarians: i.e. with the first element of the expression *sabartoi asphaloi* what KONSTANTINOS VII *Porphyrogennetos* gives as the ancient name of the *Turcs*, i.e. the *Hungarians* (the second element of the expression is generally rendered as a Greek adjective meaning ‘firm, staunch’). According to the Emperor, a part of the people settled near Persia, and conserved this name there.

*Khosar, Unor* (וּנוֹר)<sup>1</sup>, *Belkar* (בִּלְקָר)<sup>2</sup>, *Savir*.

Following the dispersion, they move toward the North, settle alongside the river *Hetal* (נהר היתל), i.e. the *Altach* (אַלְטַח)<sup>3</sup> with the exception of *Ungar*, *Bulgar* and *Piznak*, who settle alongside the big river, the *Donobi* (דְּנוֹבִי)<sup>4</sup>; סה"י; 4. According to others (תרגור"י דה"א א, ו), following the dispersion, they settle in *Barberayoh* (בִּרְבֵּרִיָּה)<sup>5</sup>.

■ **Magog** (מַגּוּג) (\*מגוג): *Gumsoh* (גומתא) / *Ginsoh* (גינתא), in *Rabainu CHANNAEL'S*

<sup>1</sup> *Unor*: the *varia lectiones*, the differences between the forms given by the different sources is presumably due to copist's and/or printer's errors. Interesting is, however the totally different form given by the „*Seder haDoros*”: *Unor* instead of *Zagud* / *Zagur*. It is also interesting to remark that, according to KOHN [p. 31], HARKAVY brings an almost similar name: *Janur* [זגור/זגור - ינור/ינור]. Cf. the fictitious figure of *Hunor* - created by Hungarian Medieval chroniclers - who, together with his brother, *Magor* ('Magiar') are the children of the giant *Menroth* (at least partially from the figure of Nimrod) and his wife *Eneth* (a copist's error instead of *Enech*; cf. Turk. \**inäk*, Old-Hungarian *enev* 'hind'). *Hunor*'s legendary figure appears for the first time in the chronicle of Simon KÉZAI, court-chaplain of King Ladislas IV (1272-1290) writing between 1282-85. According to modern opinions, *Hunor* personifies the *Onogur* component of the Hungarian tribal confederation, and not the Huns. According to the chronicle, *Menroth*, a descendant of *Yafet*'s sons (!), settles, after the destruction of the *Tower of Bovel*, in the province of *Evilath*, later called Persia (cf. *Chaviloh*, the son of *Cush*).

<sup>2</sup> *Belkar*: the Bulgars. See footnote no. 1 on p. 59.

<sup>3</sup> *Hetal, Altach*: in the „*Sefer haYoshor*” על נהר היתל הוא אלטח; in the „*Sefer Yosippon*” על נהרי היתל הוא אטלאך 'alongside the river *Yetel*, the *Atloch*'. According to KOHN (pp. 8-9), the river *Yetel* is the *Etil*, the latter being the Turkish name of the Volga, and the text speaks or about its affluents or about the region named after the river. The text continues after the second name אך ונגר, and from this Kohn comes to the conclusion that the word אך had been repeated following a copist's error, and the correct text is supposed to be simply אטל 'Etil = Volga'. The same solution is offered by Flusser. The Turkish name of the Volga river, *Etil* (the etymology of its Russian name is not clarified), appears for the first time in Byzantine sources of the 7th century; certain sources call by this name the capital of the *Khazar* Empire also.

<sup>4</sup> *Donobi*: the Danube river. Its name is of Celtic origin: Celtic \**Danuvia*. In the Antiquity its lower course was called in Greek *Istros*, and the upper course *Danuvius*.

<sup>5</sup> *Barberayoh*: *Barbaria*. Originally, the Greek word *βάρβαρος* was used onomatopoeically for a foreign and thus „uncomprehensible” language. It came to the European languages through the Latin.

<sup>6</sup> *Magog*: according to JOSEPHUS (I:6:1), the *Scythians*. According to HERODOTE (IV:11), the *Scythians* (of Iranian origin) had been pushed by the *Massagets* (cf. *Meshech*) in the neighbourhood of the *Cimmerians*. Others say, the name of the *Mongols* and, through this, the denomination (Grand)*Mogul* of the Islamic rulers of Central-Asian origin of India between the years 1526-1858 comes also from the name *Magog*. The first *Mogul*, Babur (1483-1530), was a descendant of Timur Lenk (1336-1405). Arab writers call the Great Chinese Wall the wall of „*al Magog*”. According to modern identifications, it is the mountainous region between Cappadocia and Media, or some part of Armenia. According to the *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, *Gog* is *Gyges*, the king of *Lydia* (c. 680-645 BCE) who asks for the help of Assurbanipal against the *Cimmerians* (see *Rassam cylinder* 2:95). Cf. Ass. *Gagu* 'head of a tribe living

text). According to *Yechezkel's* prophecy (*Yechezkel* 38) *Gog*, the chief prince of *Meshech's* and *Tuvol's* sons from the land *Magog* will attack *Yerusholayim*, but the Eternal will take revenge of him. Thus, *Magog* can simply mean the land of *Gog*. According to the Talmud (י"מא), *Candia* (קנדיא).<sup>1</sup> Others say (ירושלמי מגילה ט, א), they are the *Goths*.

His children are: *Elichoref* (אליחרף) and *Lovov* (לבב; סה"י). According to others (סה"ד), the first two are two separate names: *Eli* (א-לי) and *Cholof* (חלף).

After the dispersion, they settle in *Narmania* (נרמניא; תרגו"י).<sup>2</sup> Others say (גתניא), in *Germania / Gitayoh* (תרגור"י דה"א א, ו).<sup>3</sup>

North of Assyria'

<sup>1</sup> *Candia*: the Arab name of Crete (Ar. *handaq* 'ditch'), taken into the European languages through the Italian. The name has originally been given to the town of Herakleion (today Megalokastron). The Greek name of the island, *Crete*, comes from its *Pelasgian* inhabitants, the \**Kaptores*, the word is supposed to mean 'hunters, fishers'. Cf. *Chom's* son *Kaftor* (see below). It has to be remembered that the word *Kandia* of Arab origin, could not figure in the original text of the *Talmud Bavli*, redacted in the year 500 CE, it has to be considered being an interpolation of a later date, or that the word of ancient and unknown origin has been taken by the Arab conquerors through popular etymology in the above sense.

The early *Minoan* civilization existed in the second half of the 3rd millennium, the middle-*Minoan* civilization is characterized by the coexistence of autonomous kingdoms - Knossos, Phaistos, Mallia, Zakro – around 2000 BCE. A Knossos-centered united kingdom is existing from 1700 BCE until the explosion of the Santorin volcano on the island Thera around 1500 BCE. Around the year 1450 Mycenaean conquest. Three types of writing had been identified: the *linear A* (of the indigenous population, originating presumably from Asia Minor), the *linear B* (of the Greek-speaking *Achaian* invaders of Crete), and the hieroglyphic writing of the plate discovered in the Phaistos palace. The Greek – *Ionic* – Abc has been taken in the 9th century BCE from the Phenicians: the forms of the letters and also their place in the Abc (this latter is already attested by a cuneiform tablet from Ugarit of the 14th century BCE).

In the Greek mythological tradition, *Kronos's* wife, *Rhea* (cf. in Roman tradition the mother of *Romulus* and *Remus* is also called *Rhea Sylvia*) gives life to her youngest son, *Zeus*, on the Mount Ida, on the island Crete. Consequently, she hides him because of her husband's anger into the cave Dikte of the Mount-Aigaion. It is into the same cave, that *Zeus* takes *Europe*, after having her kidnapped, and it is from this cave that their son, *Minos* brings forth the laws of his „heavenly” father.

<sup>2</sup> *Narmania*: the name of the North-French province here is almost certainly also a copist's error; the correct reading is supposed to be *Germania*: ג instead of נ. Besides, it seems that in the current text of the „*Targum Yonassan*” *Africa* and *Narmania/Germania* are interchanged due to a copist's error. The correct order is thus *Gomer's* dwelling place is *Narmania/Germania* = *Cimmeria*; and that of *Magog* is (North-)Africa; even if all the identifications seem to indicate some part of Asia.

<sup>3</sup> *Gitayoh*: presumably the correct form of the above *Gumta/Ginsoh*, however, we have to read with a different vocalization as it is showed by the form given in the Talmud *Yerushalmi*: *Gothia*. Thus all the *variae lectiones* of the name *Germania* can be explained by the influence of the name of the German *Goths*, who came to Europe from Eastern-Europe, from the Southern territories of actual Russia.

■ **Modai** (מדי\*): *Makedonia* (מקדוניה; יומא י<sup>1</sup> / *Media* (in *Rabainu* CHANANAEL's text).

His children are: *Achvon* (אחון), *Ziloh* (זילא), *Chonai* (חוני), *Lotai* (לוטי; סה"י). Following the dispersion, they are called *Arezlus* (ארזלוס),<sup>2</sup> and settle in the land *Kursan* (ארץ קורסן; סה"י).<sup>3</sup> According to the *Targums*, they settle in *Tamad* (תמד; תרגו"י) / *Chamad* (חמד) / *Hamad* (המד) / *Hamren* (המרן) (תרגו"י דה"א א, ו).<sup>4</sup>

■ **Yovon** (יוון\*):<sup>5</sup> *Makedonia* (מקדוניה; יומא י<sup>6</sup>); according to others (תרגו"י) (דה"א א, ו), *Ovissus* (אוביסוס).<sup>7</sup>

His children (*Beraishis* 10:4) are the Greeks living in Macedonia:

□ *Elishoh* (אלישה\*): *Elishoh-Alas* (אלישה.אלס; תרגו"י)<sup>8</sup> / *Alsutros*

<sup>1</sup> *Modai*: Media, cf. Old Persian *Mada*, Ass. *Madai*. Macedonia given by the Talmud seems to be a copist's error, although according to „*Jubilees*” (9:9), *Modai* is situated to the West of *Gomer* and *Magog*, on the sea-shore and on the islands. According to certain modern opinions (GRINTZ), it can be connected to the ancient *Mitanni* Empire also.

<sup>2</sup> *Arezlus*: according to HERODOTE (VII:62), the ancient name of the Medes was *Areios*, and they took this name from the name of the land Media.

<sup>3</sup> *Kursan*: it can be the ancient province of *Hyrkania*, South of the Caspian Sea, between Media and *Parthia*, with the ruins of the omonymous town alongside the omonymous river, in Old Persian cuneiform inscriptions it is called *Varkana*, New Persian *Gurgan* (STRABON, XI:7.1-5).

<sup>4</sup> *Tamad*, etc.: presumably all these are distorted forms of the same name due to copist's errors, because of the similarity of the letters ת, ה, ח, and ד, ר. *Chamad* is presumably the old Medean capital, Hamadan in Kurdistan.

<sup>5</sup> *Yovon*: Greece; cf. the *Ionians* (the etymology of their name is unknown, cf. Old Persian *Yauna*, Ass. *Iamanu*, Egyptian *Y<sup>e</sup>-v<sup>a</sup>n-(n)a*), one of the biggest Greek tribes, forming town-states on the Western coast of Asia Minor. In Greek mythology, *Ion* is conceived by his mother, *Kreusa* from *Apollon* still before getting married. Later, she exposes the baby on the same place in a basket. *Apollon* saves the child, and sends him to Delphoi. *Kreusa* and her husband, *Xuthos*, later adopt *Ion*, whom *Kreusa* recognizes as her son, due to the basket still preserved.

<sup>6</sup> *Makedonia*: from Greek *makednos* 'grown tall'.

<sup>7</sup> *Ovissus*: presumably *Ephesos*, a town in *Lydia*, founded by the *Ionians* c. 1050 BCE. According to „*Jubilees*” (9:10), they lived on the *Lydian* coast of Asia Minor.

<sup>8</sup> *Elishoh-Alas*: *Elishoh* is presumably the province of *Elis*, situated on the North-Western part of the Peloponnisos-peninsula; with Olympia, where the cultic games were organized every fourth year in honor of *Zeus*. *Alas*, with more correct vocalization *Elas*, is *Hellas*, cf. the story of *Deukalion* among the different Flood-stories on p. 46, footnote no. 1.

According to JOSEPHUS, they are the *Aiolos*, who live on the islands (Lesbos); according to ABRABANEL Sicily. *Alas* can also be the river Halys in Asia Minor, or the other name of Carthago: *Elisz-sah*. External (Accadian, Egyptian, Ugaritian) sources show, however, that the island Cyprus (or at least



<sup>6</sup> *Italia shel Yovon: Magna Graecia*, the Greek colonies of Southern Italy. The territory South of the rivers Silarus and Frento are named so for the first time by POLYBIOS; however not Southern Italy in general, but the Greek colonies established there from the 8th century BCE onward. STRABON calls the Greeks of Italy and Sicily Great *Hellas*.

manuscript *Achzovayoh* (אכזוויא)<sup>1</sup>. Again others say (סה"י), these are the *Romans* who live in the *Kanfania-Valley* (כנפניא),<sup>2</sup> alongside the *Tiberaiu-Sea* (ים תבראיו).<sup>3</sup> Again others (ראב"ע) identify them directly with *Yovon*.

□ *Dodanim* (דדנימ\*).<sup>4</sup>

His children are: *Ridom* (רדום),<sup>5</sup> *Chameyon* (חמיון) and *Antiuch* (אנטיוך)<sup>6</sup> (תרגור"י דה"א א, ז).

His children settle in *Dordania* (דורדניא; תרגור"י) / *Dardania* (דרדניא; תרגור"י דה"א א, ז).

According to others (סה"י), they live in the towns alongside the *Gichon-Sea*, in

<sup>1</sup> *Achazyoh/Achzovayoh*: the Greek tribe of the *Achaeans*.

<sup>2</sup> *Kanfania-Valley*: *Campania* in Central Italy.

<sup>3</sup> *Tiberaiu*: the *Tiberis*, river of Rome (today Tevere). The etymology of the name is uncertain: or from the Greek *tifos* 'swampland, humid soil', or of Pre-Indo-European, Mediterranean origin. According to one of the mythological traditions about *Ianus*, he and his wife came to Italy from Thessalia, and one of their children already born in Italy, by the name *Tiberius*, gets drowned in the river what is named after him.

<sup>4</sup> *Dodanim*: the form given by „*Targum Yonassan*” suggests that they are descendants of *Dardanos* (son of *Zeus* or *Korythos* and *Electra*, the ancestor of the Trojans and through them of the Romans; his wife is *Batieia*, daughter of the first Trojan king, *Teukros*). *Dardanos* goes to Asia Minor where, on the *Phrygian* Mount *Ida*, he founds the town named after him. After the death of his father-in-law, he names the land *Dardania*. Near to the town *Dardanos*, on the Asian bank of the strait connecting the *Egean-Sea* and the *Sea of Marmara*, is built the town named *Dardanellia* (Turkish *Çanakkale*), which gave its name to the strait: *Dardanelles* (*Hellespontos*). According to *HOMER*, the Trojan king *Priamos* was a grandson of *Dardanos*. According to *VERGILE*, *Dardanos* was born in the Etruscan town *Corythus*, or he was the founder of the town.

The tribe of the *Dardanos* (on Egyptian inscriptions *drdn*) fights in the battle of *Qadesh* - in one of the „waves” of the migration of the so-called „peoples of the sea” – together with the *Mysos* (see below) as auxiliary troops of the *Hettites*.

On the other hand, the form *Dodanim* can well be an allusion to *Dodone*, *Zeus'* oracle at *Epeiros* (*HERODOTE* I:189). According to others (סה"י; תולדות יצחק), the *Czechs* (*Bohemia* !).

<sup>5</sup> *Ridom*: according to *ABRABANEL*, the *Egean* island of *Rhodes*. The island's name is supposed to come from Greek *rodion* 'rose'. According to the mythological tradition, its oldest inhabitants, the *Telkhines* of *Phenician* origin, were rich merchants. Around 850 BCE, the island is reached by the *Doric* migration and, subsequently, the inhabitants establish colonies in *Hispania*, *Italy*, *Asia Minor*. In 223 BCE, the island is shaken by a strong earthquake, which destroys the huge statue standing at the entrance of the port, one of the seven wonders of Antiquity.

<sup>6</sup> *Antiuch*: presumably *Antioch* (*Antiocheia*). Founded in 300 BCE by the Macedonian born general of *Alexander*, *SELEUKOS I Nikator* (312-280 BCE), the latter named it after his father, *Antiochos*. It was in this town that the followers of *Oto Is* were called *khristianos* (*Acts* 11:26) for the first time.



the Land *Bardana* (ארץ ברדנא).<sup>1</sup>

■ **Tuvol** (תבל\*):<sup>2</sup> *Bais Unyaki* (בית אונייקי; יומא י).<sup>3</sup> Others say (סה"י), the *Sabins*.<sup>4</sup>

His children are: *Arifai* (אריפי) / *Arisai* (אריסי; סה"ד),<sup>5</sup> *Chesed* (כסד),<sup>6</sup> *Taroi* (סה"י; תארי).

Following the dispersion they settle in *Tushkana* (תושקנה),<sup>7</sup> in their town on the river *Pashiah* (פשיאה),<sup>8</sup> named after *Tuvol's* son *Sabinoh* (סבינה; cf.

<sup>1</sup> *Bardana*: if the word is not a copist's error through the interchanging of ב and ד, than it can be the South-Western French town, Bordeaux, called by the Romans *Burdigala*, of two Iberian (Aquitanian) radicals, *burd-* and *gala-*, both of unknown meaning. In this case the Land *Bardana* is Aquitania, possibility confirmed by the allusion to the Atlantic Ocean.

<sup>2</sup> *Tuvol*: according to JOSEPHUS, the *Iberians*; according to ABRABANEL, the *Ibers* of Hispania (*Ibers* were living on the Eastern side of the Black Sea also). Others identify them with the inhabitants of *Bithynia* East of the Bosporos. According to modern identifications (DELITZSCH), Eastern Asia Minor, possibly Cappadocia (cf. Ass. *Tabalu*, Hett. *Tapalash*).

<sup>3</sup> *Bais Unyaki*: *Bithynia*.

<sup>4</sup> *Sabins*: the tribes of the *Sabins* (*Marsi*, *Marrucini*, *Paeligni* and *Vestini*) lived between the rivers Nar and Anio, their common name was *sabelli*. The „*Sefer haYoshor*” identifies *Yefes'* son *Tuvol* with the *Sabins*, however the inhabitants of „*Tushkanah*” were the *Etruscans*! Besides, the „*Sefer haYoshor*” mentions *Tuvol's* son *Sabinoh* for the first time in *Parshas Lech lecho*, without remembering him in *Parshas Noach* in the genealogies. It is also true, however, that *Tuvol's* son *Sabinoh* does not figure in the Torah itself either.

<sup>5</sup> *Arifai* / *Arisai*: one of the two forms can be considered being a copist's error, through interchanging the letters פ and ד.

<sup>6</sup> *Chesed*: he gave his name to the *Kasdim* 'Chaldeans'.

<sup>7</sup> *Tushkana*: Lat. *Tuscia* or *Tuscania* (today *Toscana*), from Lat. *Tusci* (pl.) 'Etruscans' of uncertain etymology. It can be connected to an Etruscan *\*turs(is)* 'tower', or with Etruscan *\*eθrs*, what would connect it to the etymology of Troy. According to an Egyptian inscription from Karnak, the tribe of the *turushas* (*twrš*), generally identified with the Etruscans, however, others identify them with the inhabitants of Tarsos) also participated in the *Libu* invasion against Egypt, on the North-African sea-shore. Other participants of the campaign were the *Akhaiwasa* (*ikjwš*, Achais, *Luku* (*Lycians*), *Sardana* (*šrdn*, the inhabitants of Sardonios, Sardinia or Sardeis) and the *Sekeles* (*škrš*, Sicilians). This „wave” of the migration of the so-called „peoples of the sea” has been defeated by Merneptah (1224-1214 BCE), in the fifth year of his reign.

HERODOTE (I:94) relates that a part of the *Lydians* of Asia Minor, following a royal order, because of a hunger ravaging for eighteen years, already emigrated, under the leadership of the king's son, Tyrsenos, in search for a new homeland. After having built ships in Smyrne, and wandering for many years „...they arrived to the people called *Ombrikos* [the *Umbrians*], and they built a town, and they live there up to our days. They changed their name, nameing themselves after the king's son, thus becoming *Tyrsenos* ['Etruscans'].” VERGILE (*Eneide* VIII:479-480) also makes allusion to the tradition about the *Lydian* origin of the Etruscans.

<sup>8</sup> *Pashiah*: the antique town *Pisae* (pl.; today *Pisa*). Its river is presumably the Lat. *Arnus* (today Arno;

2,039 - 2,042). Others say (תרגו"י; תרגור"י דה"א א, ה) following the dispersion they live in *Iatinyah* (יתיניא).<sup>1</sup>

■ **Meshech** (משך):<sup>2</sup> *Musiah* (מוסיא; יומא י).<sup>3</sup>

His children are *Redon* (רדון) / *Dedon* (דהדון; דדון), *Zedon* (זדון) / *Zarzon* (זרזון; זרזון) and *Shevshoni* (שיבשני; שיהשני).<sup>4</sup>

Following the dispersion, they settle in *Asia* (Minor) (אסיא; תרגו"י). Others say (תרגור"י דה"א א, ה), in *Musiah* (מוסיא).<sup>5</sup>

■ **Tiros** (תירס):<sup>6</sup> according to the *Sages* and R. *Yossef* this is *Pras* (פרס),<sup>7</sup>

ancient Indo-European name, from an I.-E. radical *\*er- \*or-* 'to move, start'), what flows through the Northern part of the Etruscan territory. Originally, the town was situated at the mouth of the river (today about 12 kms from the sea), hence its name, of Etruscan origin, is supposed to mean 'mouth of the river'.

<sup>1</sup> *Latinia*: presumably a copist's error instead of *Latinia* = *Latium* helyett.

<sup>2</sup> *Meshech*: according to modern identifications, they are the *Moskhos* (cf. Ass. *Mushku*, *Mushki*) mentioned, together with the *Tibarens*, by HERODOTE (III:94, VII:78). They lived first in Western- or North-Western Armenia and, later – in the Persian periode –, at the South-Eastern edge of the Black Sea.

<sup>3</sup> *Musiah*: *Mysia*, the North-Western part of ancient Asia Minor, to West of Bithynia, on the shores of the Sea of Marmora, where the Greeks founded several important colonies. Their name is supposed to be connected to the name of *Mycene*. This was the *Pergamon* kingdom of the *Attalids* (3rd-2nd century BCE); the famous library of *Pergamon* disposed of 400.000 books.

The tribe of the *Mysos* (on Egyptian inscriptions *mš*, *masa*) participated – together with the *Dardanos*, in one of the „waves” of the migrations of the so called „peoples of the sea” – in the battle of Qadesh, as auxiliary troops of the *Hettites*.

According to JOSEPHUS, *Cappadocia*, with the capital *Mazaka*. According to modern identifications, the *Massaguets* (cf. HERODOTE 1:201) living East of the Aral-Lake Others connect them to the *Moskhos* mentioned above at *Meshech*.

<sup>4</sup> *Redon/Dedon etc.*: presumably all these are variants of the same name through a copist's error.

<sup>5</sup> *Asia/Musia*: although they are two different geographical units, here we have presumably to do only with a copist's error.

<sup>6</sup> *Tiros*: according to modern identifications, the *Tyrsenians* living on the Egean coast. Others connect them with the *Turushas*, one of the tribes of the „peoples of the sea” which attacked Egypt. See also, however, the Scythian river *Tyras* 'Dniester', and the river *Tearos* in *Thracia* (HERODOTE IV:89). The „*Sefer Yosippon*” has the Russians, feeling the two names sounding similar.

<sup>7</sup> *Pras*: Persia. This was the official name of the country until 1935, from the name of the South-Western province called by the Greeks *Persis*, in Old Persian *Fars/Parsa* (presumably from the name of the *Parsua* tribe), seat of the Achaemenids who ruled over the country in the 6-4th centuries BCE. The actual name, Iran is from an Old Iranian *\*arya* 'just, noble'.

According to HERODOTE (VII:61), the name of the country and of its inhabitants takes its origins after the son of *Perseus* and *Andromede*, *Perses*. Their ancient Greek name was *Kephen*, while their own name was *Artaios*. The land of *Perseus* was *Tiryns*.

according to R. Shimon, *Bais Trayki* (בית תרייקי; יומא י).<sup>1</sup>

He is the first to wear rings, and to make a fire striking two flints against each other (סה"ד).<sup>2</sup>

His children are: *Benyov* (בניוב), *Guero* (גירא), *Chizyon* (כזיון), *Loferyon* (לופריון), *Guilok* (גילק; סה"י).

Following the dispersion, they settle in *Rosas* (רושש), *Bosni* (בשני)<sup>3</sup>, *Anglis* (אנגליס).<sup>4</sup> Their towns are situated at the *Yebus-Sea* (ים יבוס), alongside the river *Kira* (נהר כירא)<sup>5</sup> which joins the river *Gurgan* (נהר גורעאן)<sup>6</sup>.<sup>6</sup> Others say (סה"י), the name of their country is *Tarkeh* (תרקי); again others say (סה"י), the name of their country is *Tarkeh* (תרקי); again others say (סה"י), the name of their country is *Tarkeh* (תרקי); again others say (סה"י), the name of their country is *Tarkeh* (תרקי).<sup>7</sup>

#### 4.1.2. The descendants of Chom (תולדות חם):

30 families (*Beraishis* 10:6-20), about 730 persons (סה"י).

■ **Cush** (כוש\*).<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Bais Trayki*: presumably the *Thracians* (Gr. *Θρακη*; cf. *Θρακσοι* pl. 'the name of a Thracian tribe') who in the Antiquity lived on the North-Eastern part of the Balcan peninsula and on the Western coast of the Black Sea. Their name can etymologically be related to the *Thracian* origin of the name of the town Troy (Greek *Τροία*): \**Trosia*.

<sup>2</sup> However, according to an above quoted *Midrash* (see p. 26), following their expulsion from the *Gan Eden*, at the outcome of the first *Shabbos*, the Eternal makes *Odom horishon* to find two flints, and He teaches him how to bring forth light striking them against each other!?

<sup>3</sup> *Bosni*: they can be the Bosnians. Bosnia takes its latinized name from its most important river, the Bosna, which on its turn presumably takes its name from the Illyrian continuation of an Indo-European \**bhog* 'river'.

<sup>4</sup> *Anglis*: from the ancient name of the North-Eastern part of Schleswig-Holstein, Angeln: *Angul* 'a cornered territory with hook-like boundaries' (Eng. *angle*, Germ. *Angle* 'hook'). The ancient territory of the Anglo-Saxons was Jutland. However, the text, when mentioning the Thracians and Bosnians, seems to make reference rather to the Greek word *angelos* 'Angel', and to a name of a tribe and/or of a town derived from it.

<sup>5</sup> *Kira*: Flusser's edition of the „*Sefer Yosippon*” has *Kiu* (כיוא) 'Kiev', the capital of the Medieval Russian state. The name presumably takes its origin from a Slavonic person's name \**Kuy* meaning 'stick, hammer'. Kiev's river is the Dnieper.

<sup>6</sup> *Gurgan-Sea*: this was the Persian name of the Caspean-Sea (FLUSSER).

<sup>7</sup> *Turkiah/Tarkeh*: it can be considered being a copist's error due to the identical consonants, *Turkiah* / *Thrakiah*.

<sup>8</sup> *Cush*: see p. 11, n. 6.

After the dispersion, they settle in *Arabia* (ערביא; תרגו"י).<sup>1</sup>

His children are (*Beraishis* 10:7-8):

□ *Sevoh* (סבא\*),<sup>2</sup>

They settle in *Sinair* (סיניר; תרגו"י) / *Sinaid* (ט; סיניד) דה"א א, ט;<sup>3</sup>

□ *Chaviloh* (חווילה\*).<sup>4</sup>

They settle in *Hindek(i)* (הנדקי; תרגו"י) / ט; הנדק א, ט; תרגו"י דה"א א;<sup>5</sup>

□ *Savtoh* (סבתה\*; *Beraishis* 10:7) / (סבתא; *1.Divrai haYomim* 1:9).<sup>6</sup>

They settle in *Smid* (סמיד; תרגו"י) / *Smod* (ט; סמד) דה"א א, ט;<sup>7</sup>

□ *Ramoh* (רעמה\*; *Beraishis* 10:7) / (רעמא; *1.Divrai haYomim* 1:9):<sup>7</sup> *Mavreyotinos* (תרגו"י דה"א א, ט; מוריאיטינוס).<sup>8</sup>

His children are:

<sup>1</sup> *Arabia*: the name of the Arabian Peninsula takes its origin from the name of one of the Arab tribes, meaning 'nomad'. It came to the European languages through the Latin. Cf. Ass. *Aribu*, *Arubu*, *Arabi*: the tribes of Northern Arabia dwelling in the desert. It is in the same sense that one can find it in *Yirmeyoh* 25:24, *2.Divrai haYomim* 9:14, etc. However, it is difficult to understand that if *Cush* means the lands South of *Mitzrayim* (Egypt), why then does the „*Targum Yonassan*” place the descendants of *Cush* to Arabia where the descendants of *Shem* (and of his grandson *Yishmoel*) are living and not the descendants of *Chom*!

<sup>2</sup> *Sevoh*: according to modern identification, this is *Saba*, a port-town on the Western shore of the Red Sea, mentioned by STRABON (XVI:4:8), or *Sabai* alongside the upper course of the Nile (*Ibid.* XVI:4:10, today Massawa?). According to JOSEPHUS, the *Sabeans* in South-Western Arabia. According to HERODOTE, *Kambyzes* gives the name Meroe to the Ethiopian *Sevoh* after his daughter.

<sup>3</sup> *Sinair* / *Sinaid*: one of the two forms is presumably a copist's error, through interchanging ט and ס.

<sup>4</sup> *Chaviloh*: according to different modern identifications, the Eastern coast of the Arabian-Peninsula, or the Ethiopian coast, eventually the Eastern coast of the Persian Gulf: India (cf. *Hindeki*). According to *Daat Mikra*, identical with the *Chaviloh* mentioned in *Beraishis* 2:11, which formed part of *Mitzrayim*.

<sup>5</sup> *Hindeki*: the „*Targum Yonassan*” renders, as in *Beraishis* 2:11 also, the Land *Chaviloh* – surrounded by the river *Pishon* (which, according to *RASHI*, is the Nile) – as *Hindeki*.

<sup>6</sup> *Savtoh*: according to modern identifications, this can be *Sabbata*, an important commercial town in Southern Arabia, mentioned by STRABON (XVI:4:2). According to JOSEPHUS, the *Astaboras*, the Ethiopian tribe living alongside and having given the name to the river *Astaboras*, the *Atbara* of today. The place-names given by the *Targums* can be related to the *Cushi* tribe of the *Sabratas* in North-Africa.

<sup>7</sup> *Ramoh*: according to *Yechezkel* 27:22, they are traders of spices, precious stones and gold. According to modern identifications, the name can be related to *Reg(a)ma* in South-Eastern Arabia, on the Persian-Gulf, mentioned by Claudius PTOLEMY (VI:7:14).

<sup>8</sup> *Mavreyotinos*: presumably Lat. *Mauretania/Mauritania*, from the Gr. people's name *Mauroi* (pl.). *Mauretania Tingitana*: the Roman province on the Western part of North-Africa, on the actual territory of Morocco, its capital being *Tingi* (today Tanger). Cf. *bYevamos* 63.

► *Shevo* (שבא\*);

► *Dedon* (דדן\*);<sup>1</sup> they settle in *Zimdegad* (זמדגד; תרגו"י) / *Zmargad* (תרגור"י דהי"א א, ט; דמרגד) / *Dmargad* (תרגור"י דהי"א א, ט; זמרגד);<sup>2</sup>

► *Mzog* (מזג; תרגו"י; תרגור"י דהי"א א, ט; מוג) / *Lub* (לוב; תרגו"י)<sup>3</sup> / *Lov* (תרגור"י דהי"א א, ט; לוב).

□ *Savtechoh* (סבתכא\*);<sup>4</sup>

They settle in *Zeng* (זינג; תרגו"י; תרגור"י דהי"א א, ט; זינג).<sup>5</sup>

*Savtoh*, *Ramoh* and *Savtechoh* are Inner- and External-Sakistan (סקיסטן גוייתא) (יזמא י; וברייטא);<sup>6</sup>

□ *Nimrod* (נמרד\*);<sup>7</sup>

■ **Mitzrayim** (מצרים\*):

<sup>1</sup> *Shevoh and Dedon*: according to modern identifications, these are South-Arabian tribes, which moved Northward, alongside the Persian-Gulf. Thus *Shevoh* and *Dedon* (sons of *Keturah*'s son, *Yokshon*) mentioned in *Beraishis* 25:13 as the descendants of *Keturah*, constituted their northern branch. However, those are the descendants of *Shem*, and here (*Beraishis* 10:7) it is question of *Chom*'s descendants. JOSEPHUS identifies the two *Shevos*, and *Dedon* with the Ethiopian *Judadeani*.

<sup>2</sup> *Zimdegad etc.*: the three names are presumably the variants of the same name due to copist's errors, through the interchanging of the letters ז and ד.

<sup>3</sup> *Lub*: Libya. The Greek name of the country, *Libyeh* preserves the name of an ancient tribe, the *Libî*; in Egyptian sources the country and the people are written *rbw* / *lbw*. With one of the „waves” of the migration of the so-called „peoples of the sea”, the Libyans (at the head of several other tribes) attack several times Egypt on the African coast. In the fifth year of his reign, Pharaoh Merneptah defeats them.

<sup>4</sup> *Savtechoh*: in Syrian texts, *Sabakatha* or *Sebekatha*.

<sup>5</sup> *Zing*: according to certain modern identifications, they can be the *Zengis* in Africa.

<sup>6</sup> *Sakistan*: the *Sakas*, a horse-riding nomad people lived, according to HERODOTE (VII:64), alongside the river *Oxos* (today the Amu-Daryah flowing into the Aral-Lake). According to STRABON (XI:8:8), they lived North of the *Iaxartes* (today Sir-Daryah), in Eastern *Scythia*. They conquered the Eastern part of Armenia, Bactria (around 165 BCE) and Drangiana (around 130 BCE), the latter called henceforward *Sakastana*. Persians called every Northern tribe by the name *Saka*. They could well be not of Iranian, but Turkish origin. The remnants of their epic poetry can be recognized in the national epic – the *Nart-epic* – of their later descendants, the *ossetes*.

To connect *Sakistan* with *Cush*, is rather difficult to understand: the *midrashim* place two of the three peoples in question into Arabia and one into Africa, while according to the Talmud, all three live in Persia.

<sup>7</sup> *Nimrod*: according to the *rishonim* – RASHI, REDAK, IBN EZRA to *Micho* 5:5 – Bovel. Modern identifications seek to connect him with different Babylonian names, as e.g. with the name of the g-d *Marduk*, or with that of one of the *Kashu* rulers, *Nazi-maruttash* (*maraddas*, 1307-1282 BCE). In Syrian texts he is called *Nebrod*. Presumably, he gave his name to the giant *Menroth* of the Hungarian medieval chronicles.

His descendants live alongside the river *Sichor* (יאור שיחור), *Mitzrayim's* river (סה"י).<sup>1</sup>

His children are (*Beraishis* 10:13-14):

- *Lud* (לוד\*)<sup>2</sup>: *Givat* (גיווט; תרגו"י) / *Nivat* (ניווט; ט, א, דה"א, תרגו"י);<sup>3</sup>
- *Enom* (ענם\*) : *Martiot* (מרטיוט; תרגו"י) / *Maryot* (מריוט; תרגום ירושלמי) / *Moryot* (מריוט; י"א, דה"א, תרגו"י);<sup>4</sup>
- *Lahav* (להב\*) : 'men with burning faces', רש"י<sup>5</sup>: *Livak* (ליווק; תרגו"י) / *Livak* (ליווק);<sup>6</sup> According to others (תרגום ירושלמי) *Pantpolet* (פנטפולט);<sup>7</sup>
- *Naftoach* (נפתח\*)<sup>8</sup> *Pantasken* (פנטסכין; תרגו"י) / *Pantsachion* (תרגום ירושלמי) *Lussat* (לוסט);

<sup>1</sup> According to JOSEPHUS, the descendants of *Mitzrayim* can not be identified. For the identification of *Mitzrayim's* river, see above, pp. 9-10, in footnote.

<sup>2</sup> *Lud*: these *Lyds* living in North-Eastern Africa are naturally not the same with the *Lyds* living in Asia Minor and mentioned (*Beraishis* 10:22) among *Shem's* descendants. According to R. SAADYAH *gaon*, they lived in Tunis.

<sup>3</sup> *Givat/Nivat*: presumably variants of the same name due to copist's error through interchanging the letters ג and נ. According to „*Daat Mikra*“, the name is an allusion to the *Sebennitos*-branch of the delta of the Nile. A possible relation with the Gr. *Aigypotos* 'Egyptian' has also to be taken into consideration.

<sup>4</sup> *Martiot/Maryot*: presumably variants of the same name due to copist's error. They can be the inhabitants of *Mareotis*, the Lower-Egyptian *Marea*. R. SAADYAH *gaon* renders it as Alexandria. According to certain modern opinions (GRINTZ), the early inhabitants of the Egean islands.

<sup>5</sup> *Lahav*: according to JOSEPHUS, the *Libyans*. R. SAADYAH *gaon* renders it as *Albahanasin*, what is thought to be Benghazi in Tunis. According to certain modern identifications, the *Lubim* (לובים) mentioned in *Nochum* 3:9, the inhabitants of Libya being the *Libus*.

<sup>6</sup> *Livak*: according to modern opinions, the *nomos Libokos* of Egypt, in Libya of today.

<sup>7</sup> *Pantpolet*: presumably, *Pentapolis*, the Lower-Egyptian *nomos* called also *Cyrenaica*. According to R. SAADYAH *gaon*, Said at the upper course of the Nile. Presumably identical with the names *Pantapulyot* given for *Patros* and *Pantapulot* given for *Kasluach*.

<sup>8</sup> *Naftoach*: according to R. SAADYAH *gaon*, *El Paramah* on the ancient site of *Pelusion*. According to modern opinions, *Sachini*, near the Mount *Cassius* (according to some opinions, the *Baal Tzephon* mentioned in *Shemos* 14:9 ?), at the North-Eastern part of the delta, or one of the five towns of the Lower-Egyptian *nomos*, *Pentaskoinos*, called later *Dodekaskoinos*, cf. Egyptian *p3t3hi* 'the Northern land, Lower-Egypt'. Presumably, the names *Pantasken* / *Pantsachion* and *Penatsachen*, given for *Casluach* are also variants of the same *Pentaskoinos*. It is also possible that the name should be related to „*Mai Naftoach*“ mentioned in *Yehoshuah* 15:9, 18:15 and in *Zecharyah* 13:1.



□ *Patros* (פתרוס):<sup>1</sup> *Nisiot* (נסיוט; תרגו"י).<sup>2</sup>

According to others (תרגום ירושלמי), *Pilos* (פילוס).<sup>3</sup> Again others say (תרגו"י) (פנטפוליט), *Pantapulyot* (דה"א א, י"ב);

□ *Casluach* (כסלח):<sup>4</sup> *Pantapulot* (פנטפולוט; תרגו"י). According to others (תרגום) (תרגו"י דה"א א, י"ב), *Nisiot* (נסיוט). *Penatsachen* (פנטסכן), (ירושלמי).

His descendants are the *Pelishtim* (פלישתים, 'Philistines');<sup>5</sup>

□ *Caftor* (כפתר):<sup>6</sup> *Kapudok* (קפודק; תרגום ירושלמי) / *Caputoc* (תרגו"י); תרגום ירושלמי

<sup>1</sup> *Patros*: according to modern identification, Upper-Egypt, cf. Egyptian *p(ē)-tē-res* 'the main Land', according to *Yechezkel* (29:14), it was the „original land” of the Egyptians: the unification of Lower- and Upper Egypt took place starting from the latter. Ass. *Paturisi*, ASSAR-HADDON writes that he conquered *Mitzrayim*, *Patros* and *Cush*. Cf. *Yeshayoh* 11:11, *Yirmeyoh* 44:1, 44:15, *Yechezkel* 29:14, 30:14. It has to be noticed, that the *Targum* to *Divrai haYomim* interverts the identification of *Patrusim* and *Kasluchim*.

<sup>2</sup> *Nisiot*: according to modern identification, *Casiotis*, the region situated East of Pelusion, around the Mount *Casius*.

<sup>3</sup> *Pilos*: *Pelusion* at the Eastern branch of the delta of the Nile river.

<sup>4</sup> *Casluach*: the name does not occur in other places of the *TANACH*, and is also unknown from external (Accadian or Egyptian etc.) sources. According to certain modern opinions, it can be that they were living originally in *Colchis*, on the Eastern shores of the Black Sea, or on the coast of the Sea of Marmora.

<sup>5</sup> *Pelishtim*: the *Philistines*. This people of Indo-European origin (their name can be related to the Greek name of the *Pelasgians*) settle on the Mediterranean coast of *Caanan* during the migration of the so-called „peoples of the sea”, around the year 1200 BCE. Egyptian sources mention their name together with the peoples attacking Egypt from the sea. According to the pictures and inscriptions of his sanctuary at Medinet-habu, RAMSES III (1184-1153 BCE) defeated – in the eighth year of his reign – the tribes of the *Paleshet* (*pršt*, 'Philistines'), *tjakar* (*tkr*, *Trojans*?), *Shekelesh*, *Danuna* (*dnn*, *Danaos*), *Weses* (*wšš*, *Oassos* in Caria or *Oaxos* on Crete) in a naval battle. The Lat. name *Palaestina* takes its origin from their name; cf. Ass. *Palastu*, *Pilistu*.

However, in the Torah, the *Pelishtim* are the descendants of *Chom*'s son *Mitzrayim* and not of *Yefes*. There is a further chronological difficulty also: *Avrohom* spends 26 years in *Gherar* in the land of the *Pelishtim*, more than 400 years before the *Exode* of the *Bnai Yisroel* from Egypt, what means that at least in the 17th century BCE. A possible solution of the contradiction could be, that one of the groups of the so-called „peoples of the sea” (of Indo-European origin) settles on the land of the *Pelishtim*, becomes integrated to the local population, taking their name and giving them their (Indo-European) language (such changement of languages can be seen in the history of different peoples).

<sup>6</sup> *Caftor*: according to *Yirmeyoh* 47:4, they live on one of the Mediterranean islands. Cf. the *Pelasgian* aborigins of Crete were called *\*Captors*, what again relates them to the so-called „peoples of the sea”. For chronological difficulties, see the precedent footnote. According to R. SAADYA *gaon*, *Damietta* on the Eastern part of the delta of the Nile river. According to *Devorim* 2:23, they expelled the people called *Avvim* from their settlements around *Aza*.

<sup>1</sup>. (תרגור"י דה"א א, י"ב; קפוטק)

The descendants of the *Casluchim* and *Patrusim* are the *Pelishtim*, *Grarim* (גררים),<sup>2</sup> *Azatim* (עזתים),<sup>3</sup> *Gitim* (גתים),<sup>4</sup> *Ekronim* (עקרונים; סה"י).<sup>5</sup>

According to others (רש"י ברא' י, י"ב), the people descending from the *Casluchim* and the *Patrusim* – who changed the wives between them – came out of the land *Caftor* and settled in the land called *Peleshes* (פלשת), and they are called *Pelishtim* after the name of the land (רמב"ן; cf. *Devorim* 2:23);

■ **Put** (פוט\*).<sup>6</sup>

His children are: *Gevol* (גבל), *Chadon* (חדן), *Chaneh* (כנה), *Eden* (עדן; סה"י).

After the dispersion, they settle in *Alichroc* (אליחרוק; תרגו"י / *Aliachrac* (תרגור"י דה"א א, ח; אלייחרק);<sup>7</sup>

■ **Canaan** (כנען\*).<sup>8</sup>

His children are (*Beraishis* 10:15-18):

□ *Tzidon* (צידון)\*:<sup>9</sup> the first-born, often called simply *Canaan*.

<sup>1</sup> *Capudoc/Caputoc*: Cappadocia in Asia Minor. The oldest known form of the name is that of *Katpatuka*, in Old-Persian inscriptions. The name is generally rendered as the 'land of the *ducha* or *tucha* people'.

<sup>2</sup> *Gherar*: the town, situated South of Ghaza, generally identified with today's *Umm Jerar*.

<sup>3</sup> *Aza*: one of the *Philistine* towns, in Ass. *Hazzatu*, on the Amarna Tablets *Hazati*, *Azzati*, Egy. *Gadatu*. Herodote (II:159, III:5) calls its name *Kadytis*. Today Ghaza.

<sup>4</sup> *Gat*: *Philistine* town, its name meaning 'wine-press', its location is still unidentified.

<sup>5</sup> *Ecron*: one of the *Philistine* towns, Ass. *Amkarruna*, today *Akir*.

<sup>6</sup> *Put*: according to „*Jubilees*” (9:1), the land is situated East of *Eretz Yisroel*. According to the generally accepted modern opinion, it is presumably identical with the land *Punt* mentioned in Egyptian texts, what is thought to be Somalia of today. However, as Coptic texts call Libya by the name *Phiait*, other modern opinions identify them with the Libyans, or with one of their tribes. According to Krupnik-Silbermann's „*Milon Shimushi*”, this is the land *Alichrok*, mentioned in the *Targum* (see next footnote). In this case, however, we have to identify Arabia mentioned there with *Cush* what seems to be more problematic.

<sup>7</sup> *Alichrok/Aliachrak*: it can be Heracleotes in Egypt.

<sup>8</sup> *Canaan*: the name, of *Canaanian* origin, means 'purple-land'; homeland of wool-dyeing with the a paint obtained from the purple, and also of the trade with this paint. Cf. Egyptian *Ka-n-'-na*, *Kinahna*, *Kinahhi* on the Amarna-tablets.

<sup>9</sup> *Tzidon*: the Greek *Σιδων*, Roman *Sidon* (today Saida), fortified port on the Phenician coast between *Berytus* (Ar. Bairut; presumably from a Semitic radical meaning 'well', cf. Hebr. *beer*, *beerot* 'well') and *Tyros/Tirus/Tzor*. The name, of supposedly Phenician origin (Phen. *Tzidhon*), means 'a place for



He is *Cosniom* (כותניאם) / *Bosniom* (בותניאם; י"ג, א, דהי"א א, י"ג)<sup>1</sup> who builds *Tzidon*;

□ *Chet* (חת\*);<sup>2</sup>

□ *Yebus* (יבוס\*);<sup>3</sup> *Yerusholayim* (*Shoftim* 19:10, 1.*Divrai haYomim* 11:4);

□ *Emori* (אמרי\*);<sup>4</sup>

□ *Girgoshi* (גרגשי\*). They leave *Eretz Canaan* when the *Bnai Yisroel* start to

fishing'. Cf. Ass. *Sidun(n)u*, on the Amarna Tablets *Siduna*, Egy. *Di-(d)u-na*. Between 1600-1100 BCE, the town is at the head of the Phenician towns, they found several colonies, later however *Tyros* becomes the leading force. From the end of the 8th century BCE, the town is under foreign rule until, in 677 BCE, its final destruction by ASSUR-AH-IDDINA.

<sup>1</sup> *Cosniom* / *Bosniom*: one of the two names is presumably a copist's error through the interchanging of the letters כ and ב.

<sup>2</sup> *Chet*: the *Hettites*; cf. Egy. *H-ta*, *Heta*, Ass. *Hatti*, on the Amarna Tablets *Hatti*, *Hatta*. This people, of Indo-European origin, breaks in into Asia Minor around 2000 BCE. They called themselves *nasili* or *nesumnili* 'from the town Nesa'. They do not subjugate the aborigines called *hatti* or *protohatti*, rather absorb them, what on the other hand makes it necessary to wage continuously wars to acquire slaves. Around 1650 BCE, they establish a strong and aggressive empire (Old-Empire, later the New-Empire 1430-1200 BCE), which conquers the greatest part of Asia Minor and Syria. Their military supremacy was due in great part to their using of iron-made weapons and war-chariots (three soldiers on each) organized into great fighting units.

Written documents have been found so far only in the capital, *Hattushash* (today Boghaz-Köy). However, the tablets found there – apart of the *Shumerian* and *Akkadian* texts to be found everywhere in the ancient Middle-East – contain texts in five languages: the Indo-European *Hettite*, *Luwi* and *Palai*, and two more languages what cannot be related to others and to each other either: the *Hatti* or *Protohatti* and the *Hurri*. Their civilization is suddenly destroyed around the year 1200 BCE, because of the invasion of the so called „peoples of the sea”: the *Phrygians* entering Asia Minor annihilate the *Hettite* Empire. At this moment, instead of the cuneiform *Hettite* writing, the so-called hieroglyphic *Hettite* writing used by the Aramaic peoples of Syria appears. Through the intermediaries of Northern-Syria, Phenicia and Western Asia Minor, their civilization influences the later civilizations of the ancient Middle East. The Assyrians get into contact with them during the reign of TUKULTI-APIL-ESHARRA I (1104-1076 BCE), while Egypt under THOTMES III (Tuthmosis, 1504-1450 BCE) in Northern *Canaan*.

As in the case of the *Pelishtim*, the changing of the *Hittis* of *Canaanian* origin into *Hettites* speaking an Indo-European language, can also be explained with the changing of name and idiom as a result of the intermingling with the aborigines: the conquerors speaking an Indo-European language take the name of the aborigines and give them their language.

<sup>3</sup> *Yebus*: *Canaanian* people living on the mountains of *Yehudoh* (*Bamidbor* 13:29).

<sup>4</sup> *Emori*: they can be the nomads mentioned in *Akkadian* texts as the *Amurru*. Their name can be related to the collective name *mardu* 'Western', used in *Shumerian* cuneiform texts to designate peoples living West of the Euphrates; according to others, the word means 'mountaineer'. They form one of the oldest branches of the *Canaanian* group of peoples. The *Amurru*s enter Mesopotamia when their meadows start to dry out and thus turning into desert; their principal base is the town *Kasallu* in Northern Mesopotamia. They play a decisive part in the annihilation of the state of the third Dynasty of Ur, beside the *Elamis*' attacks and the centrifugal tendencies disrupting the frames of the Empire. Cf. also the East-Persian

conquer it (ירושלמי שביעית ו, א);<sup>1</sup>

□ *Chivi* (חוי\*):<sup>2</sup> he is *Chori* (חרי)<sup>3</sup> who occupies *Seir* (שעיר), and from whom later *Aisov* takes the mountain-region (רמב"ן על פי ברא' ל"ו, ב ול"ו, כ). According to others (סה"י), *Seir* is the son of *Chur ben Chivi ben Canaan* (חור בן חוי בן);

□ *Arki* (ערקי\*):<sup>4</sup> *Arco dLivnon* (ב"ר ל"ז, ו; ארקא דליבנן)

□ *Sinni* (סיני\*):<sup>5</sup> *Antos* (אנטוס; תרגו"י; תרגור"י דה"א א, ט"ו; אנטוס) / *Artosia* (ארתוסיה);<sup>6</sup>

□ *Arvadi* (ארודי\*):<sup>7</sup> *Lotos* (לוטס; תרגו"י; תרגור"י דה"א א, ט"ז; לוטס)

□ *Tzemori* (צמרי\*):<sup>8</sup> *Chometz* (חומץ; תרגו"י; תרגור"י דה"א א, ט"ז; חומץ). Hebr. צמר

people by the name *mardoi* mentioned by HERODOTE.

<sup>1</sup> *Girgoshi*: unidentified *Canaan* people.

<sup>2</sup> *Chivi*: unidentified *Canaan* people, their name is supposed to mean 'village people'.

<sup>3</sup> *Chori*: the name presumably means 'cave-dwellers', cf. Ass. *harâru* 'to pierce'.

The name is supposed to be identical with the name of the *hurris*, a people of unknown origin (however the ruling class had personal names of expressedly Indo-European character) which enters Northern Mesopotamia around 2000 BCE. Their Empire, the *Mitanni*-Empire included – in the 16-14th centuries BCE – the North-Mesopotamian region called by the Assyrians *Subartu* and a great part of Northern Syria; their capital, *Wassukanni*, has not yet been found. The earliest written memories of the people can be assigned to the end of the third millennia BCE. Towards the middle of the second millennium BCE, they play an important part also in *Ugarit* and the *Hittite* Empire (most of their written records have been found at these places). The most important document found is a letter of king *Tushratta* II to Pharaoh AMENHOTEP, consisting of some 500 lines. A *Shumerian-Hurri* word-list written with cuneiform characters has been found in *Ugarit*. The continuation of the *Hurri* language in the first millennium, the *Uartuan*, is not related to the *Hurri* literature. However, DE VAUX does not accept the *chori-hurri* identification.

<sup>4</sup> *Arki*: inhabitants of the town *Arka*, situated 60 miles to the North of Beirut, near the Mediterranean Sea; cf. Ass. *Arka*, on the Amarna Tablets *Irkata*(a), Egyptian *Arkantu*. The Romans named it *Caesarea Libani*.

<sup>5</sup> *Sinni*: cf. the name of the town *Sianu* 'situated on the coast' on Assyrian inscriptions; or the name of the town of Lebanon's invaders, *Sinnas*, mentioned by STRABON (XVI:2.18).

<sup>6</sup> *Artosia*: near the river Elbatros, today Al Cabir. The name remains in the name of the village Sin, about 30 km from the sea. R. SAADYAH *gaon* renders it as the inhabitants of Tripoli.

<sup>7</sup> *Arvadi*: inhabitants of the North-Phenician town, *Arvad*; Ass. *arudai*. Cf. Ass. *Aruada*, today Ruad, North of Tripolis, on an island near the mainland.

<sup>8</sup> *Tzemori*: cf. Ass. *Shimirra*, Egyptian *Da-(m)-ma-ra*, on the Amarna Tablets *Shumra*. Today *Shumra*, North of Tripoli and South of Ruad. *Chometz* given by the *Targum* is, according to modern identifications, the Syrian town *Emasha* on the Eastern bank of the Orontes (today the river el-Ashi), today Hums.

‘wool’: it is possible they were wool-workers or -traders (ב"ר ל"ז, ו);

□ *Chamossi* (חמתי\*):<sup>1</sup> *Antoch* (אנטך; תרגו"י) / *Antiuch* (אנטיוך; א, דה"א); תרגו"י דה"א א, אנטיוך;  
 2. (ט"ז).

Elsewhere (*Beraishis* 15:19-21), the Torah gives a different list of the ten *Canaan* peoples whose land the Eternal will give to *Avrohom*'s descendants: *Kaini* (קניני), *Kenisi* (קניזי)<sup>3</sup>, *Kadmoni* (קדמוני)<sup>4</sup>, *Chitti*, *Perisi* (פרזי)<sup>5</sup>, *Refoim* (רפאים)<sup>6</sup>, *Emori*, *Canaan*, *Girgoshi*, *Yevussi*.

They build eleven (?) towns for themselves calling them after their names (סה"י). Four of *Chom*'s family - *Sdom* (סדום)<sup>7</sup>, *Amoroh* (עמורה), *Admoh* (אדמה), *Tzevoyim* (צבויים) – depart in search for a new „homeland”, and they build towns for themselves in the *Yarden-Valley*, calling them after their names (סה"י).

*Seir ben Chur ben Chivi ben Canaan* (שעיר בן חור בן חוי בן כנען) settles at the *Poron*-mountain, builds a town there, calling it after his name (סה"י).

#### 4.1.3. The descendants of Shem (תולדות שם):

26 families (*Beraishis* 10:22-29), about 370 persons (סה"י).

■ **Elam** (עילם)\*.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Chamossi*: the town *Chamat*, the name meaning 'fortress or sacred place, *temenos*'; cf. Ass. *Amattu*. Today Chama on the Orontes (the river el-Ashi), North of Damascus. According to JOSEPHUS, this is the place called *Amathe*, what the Macedonians call *Ephania* (cf. *Beraishis Rabbah* 37).

<sup>2</sup> *Antoch*: earlier, the „*Targum Rav Yossef*” mentioned it among the descendants of *Yovon*; it is also true, however, that there were more than a dozen towns in the Seleucid Empire with the name *Antiokheia*.

<sup>3</sup> *Kenisi*: presumably a people of South *Canaan*.

<sup>4</sup> *Kadmoni*: the name is supposed to mean 'Eastern or the earlier'.

<sup>5</sup> *Perisi*: the name can be related to the word *פרז* 'an open place'.

<sup>6</sup> *Rephoim*: the giants, aborigines of *Eretz Canaan*. According to modern opinions, their name means 'sunken, powerless or shadowy, vaguely known' (*BDB*).

<sup>7</sup> *Sdom*: an important town in *Canaan*, presumably at the Southern edge of the Dead-Sea, between *Jebel Ushdum* and *Tzoar* of today.

<sup>8</sup> *Elam*: the Greek *Elymais*, South-Eastern neighbour and concurrent of the Mesopotamian states, situated on the territory of the provinces *Lusistan* and *Khisistan* of contemporary Iran. Their name takes

<sup>6</sup> *Ever*: the name is explained on several places in the *TANACH* (*Yehoshuah* 24:2; *Beraishis* 14:13), as meaning the other side of the river (*Pras*, the Euphrates). On the tablets found at Tell-Eblah in Northern Syria, is apparent, that in earlier times there was a kingdom called *Ever*.

- ▶ *Yocton* (יֶקְטָן\*); ‘human lifetime gets shorter’).<sup>1</sup>
- *Peleg*’s son is *Reu* (רְעוּ),<sup>2</sup>
- ▶ his son is *Serug* (שְׂרוּג),
- ▶ his son is *Nochor* (נְחֹר),
- ▶ his son is *Terach* (תְּרַח),<sup>3</sup>
- ▶ his sons are *Horon* (הֶרֶן)<sup>4</sup>, *Nochor* (נְחֹר), *Avrom* (אַבְרָם).
- *Yocton*’s children are (*Beraishis* 10:26-29):
- ▶ *Almodod* (אַלְמוֹדֹד\*),
- ▶ *Sheleph* (שְׁלֵפִי\*),<sup>5</sup>
- ▶ *Chatzarmoves* (חֲצָרְמוֹת\*), ‘brigand’ א, דהי"א א, כ,<sup>6</sup>
- ▶ *Yorach* (יֹרַח\*), ‘poisons his guests to take their money’; כ, דהי"א א, כ,<sup>7</sup>
- ▶ *Hadorom* (הָדוֹרָם\*),<sup>8</sup>
- ▶ *Uzol* (אוּזוֹל\*),<sup>9</sup>
- ▶ *Dicloh* (דִּקְלוֹה\*),<sup>10</sup>
- ▶ *Ovol* (עוֹבֵל\*); in 1.*Divrai haYomim* 1:22 his name is *Aivol* (עֵיבֵל),
- ▶ *Avimoel* (אַבִּימֶל\*),
- ▶ *Shevoh* (שְׁבָא\*),<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Yocton*: South-Arabian, more precisely Yemenite tribes. According to modern opinions, the name can be related to the Arabic verbe *kahtan* ‘to beat’. According to JOSEPHUS, his children live in India, alongside the river *Kophon*. According to Arab tradition, *Cochton* was the founder of Yemen („*Keshes haSofer*”).

<sup>2</sup> *Reu*: according to modern scientific opinions, this is the name of a Mesopotamian g-d.

<sup>3</sup> *Terach*: according to certain modern opinions, ‘Caucasian goat (*capra caucasica*)’, cf. Ass. *turahu*; others say, it is a Mesopotamian g-d’s name.

<sup>4</sup> *Horon*: it can mean ‘mountaineer’.

<sup>5</sup> *Sheleph*: a tribe and a region in Southern Arabia, near Aden. The name presumably means ‘one who takes his sword’, cf. the *Targum*’s explanation about the following two tribes.

<sup>6</sup> *Chazarmoves*: the dwelling place in Southern Arabia, East of Aden, near the Indian Ocean, of the *Khatramotites* mentioned by STRABON (XVI:4.2), today *Hadramaut*.

<sup>7</sup> *Yorach*: a region in Yemen, called *Varach*.

<sup>8</sup> *Hadorom*: modern identification relate it to *Dauram* near San’a in Yemen.

<sup>9</sup> *Uzol*: the old Arab name of San’a, capital of Yemen.

<sup>10</sup> *Dicloh*: the name means dates, meaning a place (an oasis?) with palm-trees. Arab geographers ment-

- *Ophir* (אופיר\*); ‘the land of gold’ כ"ג א, דהי"א א, כ"ג,<sup>2</sup>
- *Chavilah* (חווילה\*); ‘the land of precious stones’; כ"ג א, דהי"א א, כ"ג,<sup>3</sup>
- *Yovov* (יווב\*).
- *Lud* (לוד\*).<sup>4</sup>

His children are: *Pessor* (פתור)<sup>5</sup> and *Azyon* (עזיון);

■ *Aram* (ארם\*).<sup>1</sup>

ion a place in Yemen with this name.

<sup>1</sup> *Shevoh*: he gave the name to the land *Sheba* in South-Western Arabia. The queen of the rich trading country, the „*Queen Saba*” visits *Shlomoh hamelech* (1.*Melochim* 10:1 ff.).

According to Ethiopian tradition, the land of the „*Queen Saba*” was situated on the territory of actual Ethiopia (see 2924, in footnote). This tradition could be based on the fact, that in the Torah there is a *Sevoh* the son of *Cush*, and a *Shevoh* the grandson of *Cush*, and there is a *Shevoh* among the children of *Keturah* also.

<sup>2</sup> *Ofir*: the land where *Shlomoh hamelech* sends ships together with *Chiram* the king of *Tzur*, to bring gold (1.*Melochim* 9:27-28). According to certain opinions, *Ofir* has to be looked for on the Western (Nubian) coast of the Red-Sea; or eventually on the Eastern (Arabian) coast. Others seek it in South-Eastern Arabia, where gold was brought from, and where merchandise coming from distant countries (India, Ceylon, eventually South Africa) was taken from to *Eretz Yisroel*. Again others speak about the Hispanian *Tartessos*, the *Tarsis* mentioned in connection with the children of *Yefes*. The verse speaking about ships turning back once in three years (1.*Melochim* 10:22) is supposed to mean long-distance commerce. The mention of ivory and apes can be an allusion to Africa or India; the mention of the peacocks (*pavo cristatus*) autochthonous in India (*ibid.*), however seems to indicate explicitly India, what is known to have had maritime commercial relations with the Middle-East. According to JOSEPHUS (8:6.4), *Aurea Chersonesus* in India. The Greek text of the *Septuaginth* renders it as *Sophia*, what is the Coptic name of India. Cf. *Supara* or *Upara* in South-Western India. In Oman there is a town named *el-Ofir*.

After the discovery of America, the New World appears in Jewish sources also, as the land *Ofir* mentioned in the Torah (Thor HEYERDAHL's expedition, the *RA* proved it well that it was possible to reach America via the Atlantic Ocean).

Cf. HERODOTE writes (4:42) that *Pharaoh NECHO*, „When he finished to digging out the canal between the Nile and the Red Sea, he sent out a naval expedition, manned by the Phenicians, instructing them to come home by the way of the Straits of Gibraltar, into the Mediterranean and in that fashion get back to Egypt. So, setting out from the Red Sea, the Phenicians sailed into the Indian Ocean. Each autumn they put in at whatever part of Africa they happened to be sailing by, and sowing the soil, they stayed there until harvest time. Reaping the grain, they continued their journey; so that two years passed and it was not until the third year that they rounded the Pillars of Hercules and made it back to Egypt.”

<sup>3</sup> *Chavilah*: it can be the *Khavlotai* at the Persian Gulf (today *Huvaila* in Bahrein), mentioned by STRABON (XVI:7:28). According to other opinions, in Aden. Again others say, Nagar Havili in India, North of Bombay, or Chvala at the Caspian-Sea, the Russian name of the latter being Chvalinskoye Morye.

<sup>4</sup> *Lud*: according to JOSEPHUS, *Lydia* in Asia Minor, Ass. *Luddu*. The capital of the kingdom was *Sardeis*. The royal dynasty was founded by *Gyges*, the last king was *Kroisos*. In 547 BCE, Cyrus of Persia conquers *Lydia*. Not to be confound with *Lud* mentioned among *Mitzrayim*'s children.

<sup>5</sup> *Pessor*: according to modern identification, Ass. *Pitru*, on the Western bank of the Upper-Eufrates.

Elsewhere (1. *Divrai haYomim* 1:17), his children are mentioned together with *Shem's* children in the same *possuq* as if, so to say, abridging the text (רלב"ג):

□ *Utz* (עץ\*):<sup>2</sup> *Armatziah* (אַרְמָצִיָּה; י"ז, תרגור"י דה"א א, י"ז),<sup>3</sup>

□ *Chul* (חול\*),<sup>4</sup>

□ *Gesser* (גתר\*),<sup>5</sup>

□ *Mash* (מש\*) / *Meshech* (משך; י"ז, תרגור"י דה"א א, י"ז).

After the dispersion, they build a town and they call it after the name of their oldest brother, *Utz* (סד"י).

#### 4.2. Ten generations from Noach to Avrohom (*Beraishis* 11:10-26)<sup>6</sup>:

Date	Generation	Aged	His son	Lives more	Total	Dies
1658	<i>Shem</i>	100	<i>Arpachshad</i>	500	600	2158
1693	<i>Arpachshad</i>	35	<i>Shelach</i>	403	438	2096

<sup>1</sup> *Aram*: cf. Ass. *Aramu* (however, it is to remember that Assyrian texts does not use the name *Aramu* to peoples living West of the Euphrates, whom they call generally *Hatti*). They are the most important group of the Semitic tribes living in Mesopotamia and Syria. R. SAADYAH *gaon* renders it *Armenia*, meaning North-Eastern Mesopotamia

<sup>2</sup> *Utz*: according to JOSEPHUS (1:6:4), he was the founder of the towns *Trachnitis* and *Damascus*, living on the territories between *Eretz Yisroel* and *Coelesyria*. According to modern identification *Hauran* or to the North-East of it. Others identify it with the Ass. *Ussu*.

<sup>3</sup> *Armatzya*: according to modern opinions *Armenia* (אַרְמִינִיָּה); or *Armanna* (Romania ?) near Istanbul.

<sup>4</sup> *Chul*: according to JOSEPHUS, he was the founder of *Armenia*.

<sup>5</sup> *Gesser*: according to JOSEPHUS, he was the ancestor of the Bactrians.

<sup>6</sup> Here again, the data given by the *Septuagint* differ from those given by the Torah (see above, chapter 2 for the first ten generations). 100 + 135 (100 more than in the Torah) + (here is intercalated a certain *Kainon* who does not figure in the Torah – but figures among the first ten – and who begot *Selach* at the age of) 130 + 130 (100 more) + 134 (100 more) + 130 (100 more) + 132 (100 more) + 130 (100 more) + 179 (150 or – according to *Alex.* – 50 more) + 70 (identical). Thus, according to the *Septuagint*, *Avrom* was born in the year 3434, instead of having been born in the year 1948 computed traditionally by the „*Seder Olam Rabbah*“, what makes a difference of 1486 years. The *Septuagint* has also certain differences concerning the data of the fifth column, i. e. how many years did they live after having begot the next generation: 500 (identical), 400 (3 less or – according to *Alex.* what has 430 - 27 more), 330 (*Kainon* intercalated), 330 (103 less), 270 (160 or – according to *Alex.* – 60 less), 209 (identical), 200 (identical), 125 (6 or – according to *Alex.* - 10 more). According to JOSEPHUS, *Avrom* was born 290 years after the Flood. However, according to him, *Arpachshad* was born 12 years after the Flood and not 2 as the Torah states. Nevertheless, also according to him, *Avrom* was born in the year 2262 + 12 + 135 + 130 + 134 + 130 + 130 + 132 + 120 + 70 = 3255, thus 993 years after the Flood !?



<b>1723</b>	<i>Shelach</i>	30	<i>Ever</i>	403	433	2126
<b>1757</b>	<i>Ever</i>	34	<i>Peleg</i>	430	464	2287
<b>1787</b>	<i>Peleg</i>	30	<i>Reu</i>	209	239	1996
<b>1819</b>	<i>Reu</i>	32	<i>Serug</i>	207	239	2026
<b>1849</b>	<i>Serug</i>	30	<i>Nochor</i>	200	230	2049
<b>1878</b>	<i>Nochor</i>	29	<i>Terach</i>	119	148	1997
<b>1948</b>	<i>Terach</i>	70	<i>Avrom</i>	135	205	2083

**1657:** one year after the Flood. *Noach* is 601 years old.

*Shem*, *Noach*'s son builds the town of *Sibatah* (צ"ד) (סיבאטא).

**1658:** *Noach* is 602 years old.

*Arpachshad*, ancestor of the *Chaldeans* (סה"ד; כלדיים) is born two years after the Flood (*Beraishis* 11:10).

The construction of *Bovel* (בבל) starts in his days.<sup>1</sup>

The lifetime of people is reduced to half: from 900 to 400.

**1693:** *Noach* is 637 years old.

*Shelach* is born (*Beraishis* 11:12).

He is the ancestor of the inhabitants of *Sarmaria*,<sup>2</sup> situated behind the high mountains called *Monte Kaspi* (מונטי כספי)<sup>3</sup>, and who are called today [in the time of the author of „*Seder haDoros*”] *tartars*<sup>1</sup> (סה"ד בשם סה"י).

<sup>1</sup> *Bovel*: Babylon. The *Shumerian* name of the town, *Babilla* has been interpreted in *Akkadian* as *Bab-ili* 'G-d's gate'. The Greek name, *Babylon* comes from the form *Bab-ilan* 'the G-ds' gate', being a calk of the *Shumerian* expression *Ka-dingir* 'the G-ds' gate'. The Quarter of the Sancturies is the *Essagila* 'house of the lifting of the head' or 'the house with the head lifted high', its central, highest building is the *ziqqurat*.

<sup>2</sup> *Sarmaria*: supposingly the name is taken from the *Sarmatas*, nomad people of Iranian origin, who invaded the territories behind the Caucasus.

<sup>3</sup> *Monte Kaspi*: presumably the Caucasus, situated between the Black-Sea and the Caspian-Sea. The name of the mountain is supposed to come from *Schythian* \**χrohukasi*, meaning 'flittering from ice'. The Black-Sea is called so because its waters in great depth seem black, its oldest known name is the Iranian-Schythian \**zrayo aχšaenam* 'dark sea'; translated into Greek through „popular etymology” as Πόντος Ἀξελυος 'unfriendly sea' and, with a euphemistical transformation, Πόντος Εὐξελυος 'Black Sea'. The Caspian Sea is named after the Caspians (Gr. Κάσπιοι) 'a people in Media'. The form given in the „*Seder haDoros*”, *Monte Kaspi* seems to come from an Italian form: or the source of the „*Seder haDoros*” was an Italian Jewish author, or the author used some Italian geographical description.



**1723:** *Noach* is 667 years old.

*Ever* is born (*Beraishis* 11:14).

The name *Ivri* has been taken from his name: an allusion to their original dwelling place on the other side of the river Euphrates (*Yehosuah* 24:2-3; *Beraishis* 14:13).

**1757:** *Noach* is 701 years old.

*Peleg*<sup>2</sup> is born (*Beraishis* 11:16).

The lifetime of people is reduced to the half for a second time (*Beraishis* 10:25): from 400 to 200.

It is toward the end of his life that the *Tower of Bovel* is erected and, as it provokes heavenly anger, the dispersion of people takes place.

**1786:** *Noach* is 730 years old.

*Yefes'* son's *Gomer's* son *Ashkenaz* is born (י"ס"ד).

He is the first king of *Ashkenaz* (Germany) (צ"ד).

**1787:** *Noach* is 731 years old.

*Reu* is born (*Beraishis* 11:18).

In his days were founded the Czech Kingdom (!?) in Prague (צמח דוד);<sup>3</sup> the kingdom of the *Amazons* (אמזוני) killers of their husbands, whose kingdom

<sup>1</sup> *Tartars*: their name is supposed to be of Mongolian origin: cf. Mong. *tatari* 'a stutterer man'. Old Turkish inscriptions of the 8th century call with this name a people living in Northern China. Curiously, in a part of Western European languages, an *r* has been inserted through popular etymology under the influence of Lat. *Tartarus* 'the lower world', cf. Ital. *Tartari*.

<sup>2</sup> *Peleg*: cuneiform tablets found by Prof. Parrot at *Mari* (today Tell-Hariri), at the middle course of the Euphrates, still on Syrian territory, on the right bank of the river, make mention of *Peleg*, *Serug*, *Terach*, *Nachor*. However, the problems raised by the names on the *Ebla* tablets identified originally as „biblical”, draw the attention to necessary precautions when looking for such identifications.

<sup>3</sup> According to the so-called „*Hagen-chronicle*” (15th century), Austria has been founded 860 years after the Flood. According to COSMAS' *Chronica Boemorum* (Bertold BRETHOLZ Hrsg., *MGH SS Rer. Germ.* NS II. 1923, p. 166.), the oldest Czech chronicle, Jews settled in Prague immediately after the destruction of the *Bais hamikdosh*.

will be annihilated by Alexander the Great,<sup>1</sup> and the Egyptian Empire later occupied by Octavian<sup>2</sup> (סה"ד בשם שה"ק).

**1819:** *Noach* is 763 years old.

*Serug* is born (*Beraishis* 11:20).

**1844:** *Noach* is 788 years old.

*Sefarad* ['Spain'], Portugal and Aragon are founded (צ"ד).

**1849:** *Noach* is 793 years old.

*Nochor*, *Terach*'s father, *Avrohom*'s grandfather is born (*Beraishis* 11:22).

**1878:** *Noach* is 822 years old.

*Terach*, *Avrohom*'s father is born (*Beraishis* 11:24).<sup>3</sup>

He is *Nimrod*'s Grand-Vizir (סה"י).

He is the first to coin money (סה"ד בשם שה"ק).

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<sup>1</sup> HERODOTE (IV:110 ff.) speaks about the *Amazons*, a people consisting of aggressive women who were originally living in *Cappadocia* in Asia-Minor, near the river *Thermodon*, and from there they came to *Scythie*, the region of the Lake *Maietis* (the Sea of Azov). Their society consisted only of armed women, they tolerated no men in their midst. They begot children with the men of the neighbouring peoples. From the children which were born, they killed the boys, or sent them back to their fathers, keeping with them only the girls. And for the girls, one breast has been burnt, that it should not disturb them when throwing their spears. This is the origin of their name through popular etymology: Gr. *amazos* 'without breast'.

STRABON makes also mention (XI:5) of the *Amazons* living North of the Caucasus, and also knows about their queen's relation with Alexandros the Great, however, he considers these stories being of rather legendary character.

An Egyptian story of the 4th century BCE (?) about the *Amazons* is conserved by a papyrus with demotic writing of the 2nd century CE. The Egyptian armies are wageing war against the land of *Hentu* (India ? cf. Hodu [הודו]) in the *Megilah* and *Hindeki* in the *Targum*). Reaching the land of the *Amazons*, they first join battle with them. Later however, queen *Serpet* and *Petuhons*, the commander of the Egyptian army fall in love with one another and, finally, they defeat together *Hentu*. The old Egyptian mythology does not know about the *Amazons*, therefore the above story is generally considered reflecting Greek influences: the Indian campaign of Alexandros, commercial relations between the Ptolemaios' Egypt and India. The old Egyptian „*Petubastis-story*” has also to be mentioned: legendary stories around the figure of *Petubastis* (818-793 BCE, 23th Dynasty); being the late (already of the Roman periode) apparition of the Egyptian epic poetry, cf. the „*Iliad*”).

<sup>2</sup> Whether the *Egyptian Empire* mentioned by the „*Seder haDoros*” is the Old- or the Middle-Empire, difficult to say. However, as I incline to consider the *Exode* being related to the collapse of the Old-Empire (see 2448), I would prefer to speak here also about its foundation in c. 3000 BCE, obviously disregarding comparative chronological parallelisms.

<sup>3</sup> According to the edition of „*Tzemach Dovid*” in my possession, *Terach* is born in the year 1879, what

**1906:** *Noach* is 850 years old.

*Niniveh* is named after King *Ninos* (צ"ד).<sup>1</sup>

**1908:** 252 years after the Flood. *Noach* is 852 years old.

*Chom*'s son, *Cush* fathers a son in the elderly years: *Nimrod* [‘people start to revolt against the Eternal’, תרגו"י]; his other name is *Amrofel* (אמרפל) ‘who ordered *Avrohom* to be thrown in the lime-kiln’ (ב"ר מ"ב, ד) or ‘his ministers and people died at the construction of the *Tower*’ (ס"ה).

*Nimrod* is a „mighty hunter” (*Beraishis* 10:9): at the age of twenty, he receives *Odom horishon*'s coat, what *Chom* had stolen from his father, and later given to his son *Cush*. Due to the coat, he is successful in hunting (פדר"א כ"ד), and also in war: he is able to defeat all of his enemies (ס"ה).

At the beginning, he always brings sacrifices to the Eternal of the hunting spoils.

*Chom*'s other name is *Doroastro*<sup>2</sup> (others say, this is *Nimrod*'s other name): he is the first magician, and the first to cultivate the so-called „*Seven Liberal Arts*” (ס"ה; שבע חכמות לבראלי).<sup>1</sup>

must be a copist's or printer's error.

<sup>1</sup> *Niniveh*: the name of the town is supposed to be of *Hurri* origin, cf. Akkadian *Ninuwa*. According to the tradition conserved by *DIODOROS Sikeliotis* (following *KTESIAS Knidios*), the name remembers the memory of the town's legendary founder, called by the Greeks *Ninos*. However it is more probable, that he has been considered as the founder of the town only because of the similarity of the names. The ruins of the town are still to be seen on the left bank of the *Euphrates*, opposite *Mosul*.

*Ninos*' wife, *Semiramis* is also a legendary figure: daughter of the Phenician g-dess *Derketo* and *Simios*, wife of a Syrian governor called *Oannes*, from whom *Ninos* took her with force. According to tradition, after her husband's death, she founds *Babylon* and *Ekbatana*, abdicates in favour of her son, *Ninuas*, in conspiracy against her. Later she becomes a dove, the favorite animal of the g-dess *Ishtar*. In her figure the Phenician g-dess *Derketo-Astarte/Attart/Ashtarot* is mingled with the Assyrian-Babylonian *Ishtar-Billit*. According to the ancient historical tradition, the Assyrian Empire founded by *Ninos* and *Semiramis* stands for 1306 years (2189-883 BCE), from *Ninos* to *Sardanapallos* (ASSURBANAPLI; 668-627 BCE). Cf. 1788, 3140. Although *Ninos* and *Semiramis* are legendary figures, however let's remember that the mother of King *ADAD-NIRARI III* of Assyria (810-783 BCE), *Sammuramit* – after the death of her husband, *SHAMSHI-ADAD V* (823-811 BCE) -, being the guardian of her minor son, leads several successful military campaigns.

<sup>2</sup> *Doroastro*: cf. *Zoroaster* or *Zarathustra* (628-551 BCE), reformer of *Mazdeism*, founder of *Zoroastrianism* named after him. The holy book of his followers, at the same time the oldest monument of Persian literature, the „*Avesta*” is a collection of religious texts (mainly prayers and ritual

*Nimrod* is one of the ten kings who rule over the whole world: the Eternal, *Nimrod*, *Yossef*, *Shlomoh hamelech*, *Achov*, (*Achashverosh* rules only over the half of the world, over 127 lands), *Nevuchadnetzar*, *Koresh*, *Alexandros Mokdon* and, finally, again the Eternal (פדר"א י"א).

*Nimrod*, together with his relatives, the descendants of *Chom*, defeat and subdue the descendants of *Yefes*, and therefore he is crowned a king (סה"י).

They throw off of themselves the yoke of the *King* – the Eternal –, and elect instead for a king the servants's servant (פדר"א כ"ד): *Chom*'s descendants are the servants of *Shem* and *Yefes* (*Beraishis* 9:25). *Nimrod*'s name itself is an allusion to the revolt against the Eternal (ב"ר כ"ג, ז).

During his reign, real idolatry starts: he has his statue erected, and everyone is obliged to bow to it. The statue will be destroyed by *Daniel* (סה"ד).

He is the founder of the great towns of the *Land Shinear* (שנער<sup>2</sup>; 'Pontus' [פונטוס]<sup>1</sup>, תרגו"י), among them the capital of his empire, *Bovel* (*Beraishis* 10:10).

prescriptions) of different periods, its 17 oldest pieces are said to be of *Zarathustra* himself. In the *Sassanide* periode, the book has been written down with the Aramaic alphabet; however, later, presumably in the 6th century, a special *Avestian* alphabet has been elaborated, and the text has been provided with a middle-Persian translation and commentaries. The Persian word for commentary, *zand*, has been misunderstood, and this gave birth to the erroneous denomination *Zend-Avesta* (Middle-Persian *apastak u zand* 'text and commentary'; according to an other etymology the word *Avesta* means 'praise'.

<sup>1</sup> In the Middle-Ages, basic sciences were classified into two cycles (*Septem artes liberales*): *trivium* (grammar, rhetoric, dialectic) and *quadrivium* (arithmetic, music, geometry, astronomy). The form given by the „*Seder haDoros*“, *liberali*, again alludes to the using of Italian sources.

<sup>2</sup> *Shinear*: the name is generally identified with the name of the *Shumerians* and, through this, with Babylonia. The oldest known – but not the oldest – inhabitants of Southern Mesopotamia, the *Shumerians* settle – according to the actual scientific consensus – in the fourth millennium BCE between Babylon and the Persian-Gulf, alongside the lower courses and the delta of the rivers *Buranunna* and *Idigina* (in the Antiquity, the two rivers reached the Gulf separately, the Shatt-el-Arab is a medieval formation). On the turning of the fourth and third millennia, they establish their script, called cuneiform, taken later over by the semitic *Akkadians*, who on their turn transmit it to several other peoples. The cultic center of the *Shumerian* city-states was *Nippur*. Their literature influenced manifoldly the literatures of the whole Near East.

According to other modern opinions, *Shinear* is the North-Mesopotamian *Shangar* (Egypt. *Shangar*, *Sanhar* on the Amarna-tablets).

Let us remember that the „*Seder haDoros*“ – in contradiction to the Torah – speaks about the *town* of *Shinear*, however rabbinic literature does not necessarily make any difference between *town* and *land*,

From there, he rules over the subdued peoples, all the descendants of *Noach* (סה"ד בשם שה"ק).

*Nimrod* rules for 185 years: he ascends to the throne at the age of 30, and he is 215 years old when *Aisov* kills him during a hunting, in 2123 (ב"ר ט"ג, י"ב; סה"י). According to others (צ"ד), *Nimrod* is born in the year 1748, when *Noach* was 692 years old, he comes to the throne at the age of forty, rules for 47 years, and his kingdom stands for 1601 years: until 3389, the assassination of *Belshatzar*, there will be 51 kings (cf. 3140, *Pul Bilachu*).<sup>2</sup> Others say (סה"ד), 37 kings rule during 1305 years.<sup>3</sup>

*Nimrod*'s son, *Mirdon* (מרדון) is even more wicked than his father (סה"י).<sup>4</sup>

**1948:** 292 years after the Flood. *Noach* is 892 years old.

*Avrom* (אברם) is born (*Beraishis* 11:26).

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cf. „city-states”.

<sup>1</sup> *Pontus*: this not the ancient kingdom of *Pontus*, situated once in Asia-Minor, South of the Black-Sea, between *Bithynia* and Armenia, rather Lat. *pontus* 'sea', the „sea-land”, cf. the so-called dynasties of the Sea-Land in Southern-Mesopotamia.

<sup>2</sup> Purely chronological considerations would suggest an allusion to the empire of the so-called 3rd Dynasty of *Ur*, coming to the power with UR-NAMMU (2112-2095 BCE). However, there are serious chronological problems to be solved: after NAZI-MARUTTASH, TIGLAT PILESSER III is the 51st king; counting backward from TIGLAT PILESSER III, MERODACH BALADON I (1171-1159 BCE, the so-called *kashu* dynasty), is the 40th. However, it is more than probable that not all the kings – known by modern historiography – have been listed.

<sup>3</sup> According to the „*Sefer haYoshor*” (פ' נח), *Nimrod* is crowned at the age of 40, however this contradicts the information given later by the same book (פ' תולדות), according to what *Nimrod* dies at the age of 215 years, when *Aisov* kills him after 185 years at the throne. This means, he had to ascend to the throne at the age of thirty. Presumably, we have to do with copist's and/or printer's error(s), and it seems being impossible to correct them.

And also, if *Nimrod* is born in the year 1748, is crowned at the age of forty, in 1788, and rules (according to the „*Tzemach Dovid*”) for 47 years, his rule ends in the year 1835. How then could *Terach* – born in 1878 – be the Grand-Vizir of *Nimrod* who ruled until 1835? An other difficulty of this tradition is that *Nimrod* who rules until 1835 cannot have *Avrom* thrown into the lime-kiln, when the latter will be born only in 1948. If however – according to the other tradition - *Nimrod* is born in the year 1908, and ascends the throne at the age of forty, which is the year of *Avrom*'s birth, 1948, when *Terach* is seventy years old, this difficulty seems to be solved.

<sup>4</sup> *Mirdon*: the name contains the same letters as that of his father, *Nimrod*.

## CHAPTER FIVE: THE AVOS (הַאֲבוֹת) 'PATRIARCHS')

### 5.1. Avrohom (אַבְרָהָם)

**1948:** *Noach* is 892 years old; 292 years after the *Mabul*.

*Avrom* (אַבְרָם) is born.

The year when *Avrom* was born can be computed from the Torah (*Beraishis* 11:10-26). His birthplace, however, is not given there. About the whole period of his life until the *covenant between the parts* (*Beraishis* 15:9), the Torah only informs us about two events: that he got married (*Beraishis* 11:29) and, later, he left *Ur Casdim* (אֹּר כַּשְׂדִּים).<sup>1</sup> We also learn that, following the Eternal's command, he was supposed to go to *Eretz Canaan* and, as a first step, he arrived to the North-Mesopotamian town, *Choron* (חֹרָן;<sup>2</sup> *Beraishis* 11:31).

*Terach*'s two elder sons, *Nochor* (נָחֹר) and *Avrom* were still born on the ancient territory of *Shem*'s descendants. The region, situated between the rivers *Pras* and *Chidekkel* (the *Euphrates* and the *Tigris*), is called in the Torah *Aram*

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<sup>1</sup> *Ur Casdim*: according to modern „tradition” (see *BDB*) *Ur Casdim* is the South-Mesopotamian *Ur*, situated about 150 miles South-East of Babylon, „the homeland of *Terach*, and *Avrohom*'s starting point toward Mesopotamia and *Canaan*”. The name of the town *Ur* takes its origin from Akkadian *Urim*, *Uru*, *Uri* meaning 'the region of the light, East'; where the Moon-g-dess was revered in Southern-Mesopotamia, today *Tell Muqayyar*.

However, the characteristics of the city *Ur* can difficultly be conformed to the way of life of *Avrohom* and his descendants who were nomad or at least half-nomad (wandering over smaller territories) sheperds. They have to be related to the appearance of *Semitic* tribes in Mesopotamia after the *Shumerians*.

An other difficulty is constituted by the fact that the expression *ever hanohor* 'the other side of the river' (*Yehoshuah* 24:2-3) can difficultly be related to the town *Ur*, situated on the *right* bank of the *Euphrates* i.e. – seen from *Eretz Yisroel* – on „*this side*” of the river.

It is also true, however, that the information given in *Beraishis* 11:31– according to what *Terach* together with his family came out of *Ur Casdim*, to go to *Eretz Canaan* – makes in itself possible the identification of *Ur Casdim* with the Mesopotamian town, as only *Avrom* has been thrown into the burning furnace, *Terach*, *Lot* and *Soray* not. See below.

<sup>2</sup> *Choron*: *Harran* in Northern Mesopotamia, Ass. *Harrana* (-ni) 'way', today *Sultantepe*. The name is mentioned, apart of the Torah, in Hettite texts and Assyrian royal inscriptions from the last third of the second millennium BCE. Later, it was conquered by the Assyrians. The sanctuary of its principal deity,

*Naharaim* (אֲרַם נְהָרִים, 'the Mesopotamian Aram'; *Beraishis* 24:10)<sup>1</sup> or *Ever haNohor* (עֵבֶר הַנְּהָר, 'on the other side of the river, i.e. the Euphrates'; *Yehosuhah* 24:2-3). *Avrom* was born in *Cuta* (כּוּתָּא),<sup>2</sup> situated between *Choron* and *Ashur*, some six days walk from the former; while *Nochor* one year later (ב"ר ל"ח; סנהדרין ס"ט) or in the same *Cuta* or in *Choron* (if he was born in *Cuta* he had to settle in *Choron* later).

From *Choron*, *Terach* goes together with *Avrom* to the South, to the land of the *Casdim*, to the land *Shinear* (שִׁנְעָר), the territory of *Chom*'s descendants.<sup>3</sup>

It was there that, after one more year (ב"ר ל"ח; סנהדרין ס"ט), the third brother, *Horon* (הֶרֶן) was born (*Beraishis* 11:28).

From there – after *Avrom* had been miraculously saved and *Horon* died<sup>1</sup> - *Terach* returns to North-West-Mesopotamia, to *Choron*, accompanied by *Avrom* and *Horon*'s son, *Lot* (the latter was born in 1925, what means he is 23 years older than *Avrom*).

And it will be from the same *Choron* that *Avrom*, following the Eternal's command (רַמְבַּ"ן בְּרָא' י"א, פ' לך לך; *Beraishis* 12:1), departs for *Eretz Canaan* (רַמְבַּ"ן בְּרָא' י"א, פ' לך לך).

the Moon-g-d *Sin* – was rebuilt by the Babylonian king, NABU-NAID (555-539 BCE).

<sup>1</sup> *Ever hanohor, Aram-Naharaim*: North-West-Mesopotamia, the territory between the Euphrates and the Khaboras, the Eastern part of today's Syria. The latter name takes its origin from Akkadian *Suri*, name etymologically not related to the name of the Assyrian people. In Greek mythological tradition, the region received its name after *Syros*, the son of *Apollon* and *Synope*.

<sup>2</sup> *Cuta*: holy town of the *Shumerians-Akkadians* (*Gudua/Kutu*), later of the Babylonians, today *Tell Ibrahim*, 50 kms North-East from from Babylon. According to a German map, published during World War I, the channel running nearby is called *Nahr Habi Ibrahim oder Nahr Kutha*. One of the places where the Assyrians brought settlers from to *Shomron* (*Samaria*, 2.*Melochim* 17:24), after the destruction of the Northern Kingdom, Israel. There, the new settlers introduce the cult of *Nergal*, the deity of their birth-place (2.*Melochim* 17:30). According to Assyrian sources, *Sancherib* destroys *Cuta*, the center of Babylonian resistance, presumably the deportation of its inhabitants is due to this fact. According to the *RAMBAN* (to *Beraishis* 11:28; referring to disciples coming from that region) *Cuta* has to be looked for between *Assur* and *Choron*, although in reality it was situated more to the North-West, between Babylon and Seleukeia. It is also true, however, that the Talmud identifies in two different places (יִזְמָא'; כתובות י) *Assur* with *Seleukeia* (*Salico*).

<sup>3</sup> However, IBN EZRA (to *Beraishis* 11:28) draws the attention to the fact that the *Casdim* are the descendants of *Avrohom*'s brother, *Nochor*, see the precedent chapter.



(כ"ח; ר' בחיי ס"פ נה).

According to others (רמב"ם מורה נבוכים ג, כ"ט בשם ספר "עבודת האכרים המצריים" הוא) *Avrom* is born in *Cuta* and after his separation from the masses which rever the Sun, the king exiles him to the border of *Eretz Canaan*, thus making him impossible to influence the people against the official idolatry. Again others say (רש"י יחזק-ל ט"ז, ג. vö; רש"י סנהדרין מ"ד), *Terach* and his ancestors came from *Eretz Canaan*.

According to an other tradition (סה"י), *Horon* and *Nochor* were 32 years older than *Avrom*: they were both born in the year 1916, but from two different mothers; if so, *Nochor* dies in the age of 172, in the year 2088.

*Avrom*'s mother is called *Amaslay bas Carnebo* (אמתלאי בת כרנבו; ב"ב צ"א; <sup>2</sup>סה"י).

His father, *Terach* was a minister of *Nimrod*. A leading figure in idolatry, he has twelve idols in his house, and every month he brings sacrifices to one of them (ב"ר י"ט, י"ט; סה"י).

Before *Avrom* is born, the magicians tell *Nimrod* that a child is to be born who will deny the divine character of the king, and will finally destroy the king himself. Consequently, the king orders to kill all the new-born children: 700.000 new-borns are massacred.<sup>3</sup>

*Terach*'s family is exempted.

When *Avrom* is born, the magicians see a great and very luminous star above *Terach*'s house, rising from the East, and swallowing four stars from the four directions (סה"י).

Now they seek to kill *Terach*'s new-born also, so the father changes his child for

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<sup>1</sup> See below, 1998.

<sup>2</sup> *Amaslay*: in my exemplar of the „*Seder haDoros*” the name is written *Amaslo* (אמתלאה).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Pharao*'s similar order when *Moshe rabainu* is born.



a maidservant's new-born<sup>1</sup> who will effectively be put to death.

*Terach* hids *Avrom* in a cave with his mother and the nurse for ten years (סה"י); according to others (פדר"א כ"ו), for thirteen years.

Already at the age of three, he recognizes through contemplation and reflexion that the world has been created by the Eternal. Consequently, he is only willing to serve Him: „עק"ב אשר שמע אברהם בקולי, (,Because Abraham obeyed my voice..."; *Beraishis* 26:5), the *gematrioh* (the total numerical value of the letters) of the word עק"ב is 172, Avrohom lived 175 years,  $175 - 172 = 3$  (יומא (כ"ח; נדרים ל"ב; ב"ר כ"ד ד; סה"י).

When he leaves the cave at the age of ten (thirteen), *Avrom* speaks *loshon hakodesh* (לשון הקדש), he despises the idols and recognizes his Creator (פדר"א (כ"ו).

During the following 39 years, he lives in the house of *Noach* and *Shem*: he learns from them how to follow the Eternal's ways (סה"י). He also learns from *Noach* directly about the *mabul*, and from „third hand” (after *Odom horishon* and *Lemech*) about the *Creation* of the world (פדר"א כ"ו).

According to others (ס' יוחסין; ב"ר כ"ד ד; ס' יוחסין), *Avrom* is 48 years old when, in connection with the building and the subsequent destruction of the *Tower of Bovel*, he recognizes the Eternal as the Creator of the world. He is 52 when, in the year 2000, he starts to proclaim in public the knowledge of the Eternal. Again others say (ב"ב פ"ה; שה"ק), he is 51 when he recognizes his Creator, and 60 when he starts to proclaim the knowledge of the Eternal in the world.

He is the author of the „*Sefer Yetziroh*” (ספר יצירה):<sup>2</sup> this mystical book of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the interchanging of R. Yehudoh *hanossi* and ANTONINUS, see 3900.

<sup>2</sup> According to modern scientific opinion, the „*Sefer Yetziroh*” has been written or after the Bar Kochba uprising or around the year 850, presumably in Alexandria. According to Gershom SCHOLEM, in *EJ*, it was written in *Eretz Yisroel* between the 3-6. centuries CE.

cosmogony contains many *gematrios* (גמטריות) and also vocal symbolisms.

**1956:** *Avrom* is 8 years old; *Noach* 900; 300 years after the *Mabul*.

*Lot* (לוט) is born. He is the son of *Avrom*'s younger brother, *Horon* (ב"ר פ' נח).

According to others (סה"י), *Horon* – who is 32 years older than *Avrom*, thus born in the year 1916 – gets married at the age of 39, he is 40 when his son *Lot* is born. The latter will die at the age of 142, in the year when *Yitzchok* is 39, i.e. two years after the *Akaidoh* (2087).<sup>1</sup>

**1958:** *Avrom* is 10 years old; *Noach* is 902; 302 years after the *Mabul*.

*Soray* (שרי) is born (cf. *Beraishis* 17:17).

She is the daughter of *Avrom*'s younger brother, *Horon*, and a younger sister of *Lot*. According to the other abovementioned data (סה"י), she was born to *Horon* when the latter was 40 years old.

Her other name was *Yischoh* (יסכה): because of her beauty (הכל סכין בה; cf. *Beraishis* 12:15), or because she was a prophetess (היתה סוכה בנבואה; cf. *Beraishis* 21:12; מגילה י"ד; סנהדרין ס"ט).

She is one of the seven profetess: *Soroh*, *Myriam*, *Devorah*, *Chanah*, *Avigail*, *Chuldah*, *Ester* (מגילה י"ד).

In the same year, *Bovel* is surrounded by a wall, and the towns Worms (וורמש), Mainz (מענץ) and Strassburg (שטראסבורג; צ"ד) are built.

**1973:** *Avrom* is 25 years old; *Noach* is 917; 317 years after the *Mabul*.

*Avrom* marries *Soray* (תדא"ר י"ח; יל"ש לך לך ע"ח). According to others (סה"ד), he gets married only at the age of fifty.

<sup>1</sup> However, the „*Seder haDoros*” queries the data of the „*Sefer haYoshor*”: if *Lot* was born in the year 1925, and lived 142 years, he had to die in the year 2067. But *Lot* was born in 1956! Consequently, if he lived 142 years, he had to die in the year 2098, and not in 2087, two years after the *Akaidoh*. The data of the „*Seder haDoros*” (1925) is presumably a copist's or printer's error, maybe through the interchanging of the letters כ and נ (what occurs several times in the available editions of the „*Seder haDoros*”)!

*Soray's sister, Milkoh will be married to Avrom's other brother, Nochor (Beraishis 11:29).*

The descendants of **Horon** (Beraishis 11:27-29):

- ▶ **Lot** (לוט); his children are: *Moab* (מואב),<sup>1</sup> *Amon* (עמון)<sup>2</sup>;
- ▶ **Milcoh** (מלכה);
- ▶ **Yiscoh** = *Soray*.

The descendants of **Nochor** (Beraishis 22:21-24):

□ of *Milcoh*:

- **Utz** (עוץ). His children are: *Avichoref* (אביחרף), *Gadin* (גדין), *Milom* (מילום), *Dvorah* (דבורה);
- **Buz** (בוז).<sup>3</sup> His children are: *Barachel* (ברכ-ל), *Naamos* (נעמת), *Shuach* (שוח), *Medoni* (מדני);
- **Kemuel** (קמו-ל). His children are: *Arom* (ארם), *Rechov* (רחוב);
- **Kessed** (כשד).<sup>4</sup> His children are: *Anamelech* (ענמלך), *Messor* (מישר), *Bonon* (בנון), *Yifi* (יפעי);
- **Chasoh** (חזו).<sup>5</sup> His children are: *Pildos* (פלדש), *Menay* (מיני), *Aifer* (עפר);
- **Pildosh** (פלדש). His children are: *Orod* (ערוד), *Amorom* (אמורם), *Miryod* (מריד), *Meloch* (מילך);
- **Yidlof** (ידלף). His children are: *Musson* (מושן), *Kusson* (כושן), *Motzi* (מוציא);

<sup>1</sup> *Moab*: ancient people living East of the Jordan, cf. Ass. *Ma'aba*, *Ma'bu*, *Mu'aba*.

<sup>2</sup> *Amon*: ancient people living East of the Jordan, North-East of *Moab*, between the rivers *Arnon* and *Yabbok*, cf. Ass. *Bit Ammanu*.

<sup>3</sup> *Buz*: modern opinions seek to identify it with an Assyrian place-name, *Bazu*.

<sup>4</sup> *Kessed*: the *casdim* > *chaldeans* can be his descendants, see the precedent chapter.

<sup>5</sup> *Chazo*: cf. the place-name *Hazu*, mentioned in cuneiform texts together with *Bazu*.

■ **Besuel** (בתו-ל). His children are:

► *Sochor* (שכר);

► *Lovon* (לבן).

Four of *Lovon*'s daughters are mentioned by name. Two from his wife: *Leah* (לאה)<sup>1</sup> and *Rochel* (רחל);<sup>2</sup> and two from concubines: *Zilpoh* (זלפה) and *Bilhoh* (בלחה);

► *Rivkoh* (רבקה);

□ of *Reumoh* (ראומה; a concubine): **Tevach** (טבח), **Gacham** (גחם),<sup>3</sup> **Tachash** (תחש),<sup>4</sup> **Maacoh** (מעכה).

Apart of the twelve boys (*cf.* *Yaakov*'s twelve sons), daughters are also born to him.

## 5.2. The Tower of Bovel

**1996:** *Avrom* is 48 years old; *Noach* 940; 340 years after the *Mabul*.

*Peleg* dies at the age of 239 years.

To avoid destruction by an eventual new Flood, following *Nimrod*'s counsel, people start to construct a tower in *Bovel*, „whose top may reach to heaven” (*Beraishis* 11:4).

Their intention is to escape, from the top of the tower, being already independent of gravitation, with a ship to the Moon (תורת יהונתן, פ' נח).

They also want to erect an idol on top of the tower, to wage war against the Eternal (ב"ר ל"ח, ו; סנהדרין ק"ח).

<sup>1</sup> *Leah*: according to modern opinions, the name is supposed to mean 'wild cow'.

<sup>2</sup> *Rochel*: the name means 'ewe'.

<sup>3</sup> *Gacham*: the name is supposed to mean 'flame'.

<sup>4</sup> *Tachas*: according to modern identification, it is presumably *Tihessi*, mentioned in Egyptian texts, North of *Kadesh* on the *Orontes* river.

As no stones can be found in Mesopotamia, they burn bricks (פדר"א כ"ד). „*And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar*” (*Beraishis* 11:3).

They build the tower up to 70 *mils* (ca. 70 kms!) high (פדר"א כ"ד).

Apart of *Avrom*, it is only *Noach*, his son *Shem* and his great-grandson *Ever* who do not take part in the construction of the tower.

When *Avrom* tries to convince people not to revolt against the Eternal, they renounce his call for *teshuvoh* reminding him of his childlessness.

Thereafter, *Avrom* curses them: „*Destroy, O Lord, and divide their tongues; for I have seen violence and strife in the city.*” (*Tehilim* 55:10).

It is only *Shem*'s son, *Ashur*, who heeds to *Avrom*'s words, and leaves *Bovel*.

As a reward, the Eternal promises him four towns. Subsequently, *Ashur* builds the four towns (*Beraishis* 10:11-12; משנת ר"א):

- *Niniveh* (נינוה);<sup>1</sup>
- *Rechovos Ir* (רחובות עיר):<sup>2</sup> *Mishon* on the Euphrates (פרת דמישן; יומא י). According to others this is *Paltias Karto* (פלטיאת קרתא) 'the wide roads of the city'; (תרגום ירושלמי; פלטיאת דקרתא) / *Platoyoso deKarto* (תרגו"י);
- *Kolach* (כלח):<sup>3</sup> *Borsip* on the Euphrates (פרת דבורסיף);<sup>4</sup> According to others this is *Paryos* (פריות) / *Charyas* (חריית; תרגו"י) / *Charyos* (חרית; תרגום ירושלמי);<sup>5</sup>
- *Ressen* (רסן):<sup>6</sup> town situated between *Kolach* and *Niniveh*, *Talassar*

<sup>1</sup> *Niniveh*: see below.

<sup>2</sup> *Rechovos Ir*: cf. Ass. *rebit Nina. Meshan* or *Messeneh*, the island surrounded by the two rivers and the Royal Channel, near *Basra*, on the lower course of the *Tigris*.

<sup>3</sup> *Kolach*: on the East-Bank of the *Tigris*, at the North-Eastern corner of the river, 35 kms South of *Niniveh*, ASSUR-NASSIR-APLI II (883-859 BCE) founds a new capital in 883 BCE, called *Kalhu*. Today *Nimrud*.

<sup>4</sup> *Borsippah*: important town in Southern Mesopotamia, South of Babylon, always dependant of the latter since 2100 BCE, the periode of the 3rd Dynasty of *Ur*. Today *Birs-Nimrud*.

<sup>5</sup> *Paryos/Charyos*: one of the two is presumably a copist's error. It can be *Chadiyoth* in Assyria.

<sup>6</sup> *Ressen*: the name of the Assyrian town situated near to *Niniveh* can take its origin from Ass. *resh eni*

(יומא י<sup>2</sup>; אקטיספון) *Ktesiphon*<sup>1</sup>; (תלאסר; תרגו"י).

According to others (תרגו"י), *Nimrod* is coming out of the Land *Shinear*, he reigns in *Ashur* and builds the four towns. This tradition, in apparent contradiction with the text of the Torah, can be explained by the grammar: out of that Land [*i.e.* the Land *Shinear*] came out [*i.e.* Nimrod, to go to] *Ashur*, and built the towns; that is the reason why Assyria [*Eretz Ashur*] is called (*Michoh* 5:5) *Nimrod's* land (רמב"ן).

Accompanied by seventy angels, the Eternal descends on earth (*Beraishis* 11:5-7), and confuses the language of the people speaking until then exclusively *loshon hakodesh*. Thus he separates the peoples: seventy different languages for the seventy different peoples (however each of the seventy languages conserves elements of *loshon hakodesh*, צ"ד), and each has an angel, a heavenly „representant” (פדר"א כ"ד).

Other five occasions when the Eternal descends on earth:

- ▶ *Sdom* (*Beraishis* 18:21),
- ▶ *Mitzrayim* (*Beraishis* 46:4),
- ▶ the burning bush (*Shemos* 3:8),
- ▶ *Sinai* (*Shemos* 19:20),
- ▶ when He shows Himself (*Shemos* 34:5; ל"ט-מ"א; פדר"א כ"ה).

As people are unwilling to do *teshuvoh*, the Eternal punishes them:

- ▶ those who only want to escape from a new *mabul*, will be dispersed;
- ▶ those who want to wage war against Him, will be changed in apes and

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meaning 'the head of spring'.

<sup>1</sup> *Talassar*: *Til Assuri* on the right bank of the *Tigris*, cf. 2.*Melochim* 19:12.

<sup>2</sup> *Ktesiphon*: the town was built on the left bank of the *Tigris*, in front of *Seleukeia*. After the destruction of the latter by the Romans in 165 BCE, the winter residence of the Parthian kings. Its New Persian name is *Tissifūn*, popularly called *Tak i Kisrah* 'the throne of Chusrau'.

demons;

- those who want to use the tower also for idolatry, will have their language confused (דור הפלוגה ; סנהדרין ק"ח).

According to others (סה"י):

- those who want to use the tower for idolatry, will be changed in apes;
- those who want to attack heaven with arrows, will die of each others' hands;
- those who want to wage war against Him, will be dispersed.

He does not destroy them all like the generation of the *mabul*, because – although they revolted against Him – at least they lived in peace and unity with each other, and the destruction of the generation of the *mabul* was due to their mutual hatred (מדה"ג י"א, ט).

The half of the Earth is destroyed by the waters of the Ocean (ב"ר). According to others (פדר"א כ"ד), people unable to communicate, to understand each other, kill each other: the half of the population.

The lower third of the tower is swallowed by the earth, the upper third is burnt down, the middle of it remains for a reminder (רש"י סנהדרין ק"ט; סה"י).

At this time extraordinary creatures live on the different parts of the Earth (סה"ד):<sup>1</sup>

- *androgynoses* (אנדרוגיניוס; 'hermaphrodites');<sup>2</sup>
- in Scythie:<sup>3</sup> people with only one eye, creatures with a human face but with

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the miraculous beings of the Greek mythology, e.g. the *kentaurs* (sons of the image of *Ixion* and *Hera*; or the sons of *Kentauros* the son of the image of *Ixiôn* and *Hera*) their body is human but their feet are of a horse; they lived on the mountains of *Thessalia*, etc.

<sup>2</sup> *Androgynos*: the Talmudic word is composed of two Greek words: Gr. *anér*, *andros* 'man' and *gynes* 'woman'. Cf. Platon's concept of the ancient „androgyn” nature of humans.

In Greek mythology, *Hermaphroditos* is the son of *Hermes* and *Aphrodit*, with whom a *nymph* of Karye, *Salmakis*, falls in love. When he renounces, the *nymph* seizes him while taking a bath in her lake. On her demand, the g-ds convert them into one being with one body but two sexes. And the lake weakens the virility of those entering it.

<sup>3</sup> *Scythie*: name given by the ancient Greeks to the Southern part of today's Russia between the rivers Danube and Don, occupied between the 12th-2nd centuries BCE by the nomad Scythians of Iranian

feet of a horse, called *stiri*; creatures which are wolf during summer and human during winter, which bring human sacrifices to the stars;

- in India (הודו):<sup>1</sup> people without a mouth; people with tails; creatures with body of a horse and head of a ram with horns on their heads which light. Also creatures with human heads but with body of a lion, having three ranks of teeth; people without neck, who have their eyes on their back; people with only one foot but with very wide palm thus being able to run very quickly;
- in Arabia: small people, their wives have children at the age of five; at the age of eight they are already old; they are continuously in war with their neighbours;
- in Ethiopia (*Cush*): people living in caves, who eat snakes; they do not speak, only give voices;<sup>2</sup>
- in Romania:<sup>3</sup> people dressed in fish-skins.

*Noach's* dispersed grandchildren build towns named after the founders' names (their own names or that of their children): until now they lived only in the Land *Shinear*, it was there that they constructed the Tower, and after its destruction they are dispersed by the Eternal (רש"י שבת י):

- the five towns of the *Pelishtim*: *Azah* (עזה), *Ashdod* (אשדוד)<sup>4</sup>, *Ashkelon* (אשקלון)<sup>5</sup>, *Gas* (גת), *Ecron* (עקרון; *Yehoshuah* 13:3);

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origin; their name is also of Iranian origin.

<sup>1</sup> *India*: the name takes its origin from the Persian form *Hind* of the Old-Indian name (*Sindhu* 'river') of the river *Indus*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the *troglodytes*.

<sup>3</sup> *Romania*: it is more than improbable, that it should mean the territory of actual Rumania as at the time of the author of the „*Seder haDoros*“ the entire Balcan peninsula was under Turkish rule, and also because a land called Rumania never existed in history. Presumably, the text means the Byzantine (East-Roman) Empire which considered itself and also called itself a legal continuation of the Roman Empire.

<sup>4</sup> *Ashdod*: Philistine town on the Mediterranean coast, West of Yerushalayim, Ass. *Asdudu*, Ar. *Esdúd*.

<sup>5</sup> *Ashkelon*: Philistine town on the Mediterranean coast, South-West of Yerushalayim, Ass. *Isqalunah*, Ar. *Asqalan*.



- *Chevron* (חברון):<sup>1</sup> it is built by *Chom* for his youngest son, *Canaan* (רש"י במדבר י"ג, כ"ב). According to others (רמב"ן), the giant *Arbah* (ענק) living there builds the town for his son, *Anok* (ענק);
- *Sdom* (סדם), *Amoroh* (עמרה), *Tzevoim* (צבעים), *Admoh* (אדמה), from *Chom*'s family in the Jordan-valley (ירדן);<sup>2</sup>
- *Seir* (שעיר), *Canaan*'s great-grandson (see below);
- *Ashur*, *Shem*'s son (according to others, *Nimrod*, see above) builds the towns *Ashur*, *Niniveh*, etc.;
- *Nimrod* – still in the Land *Shinear* – builds the great Mesopotamian towns:
  - *Bovel* (בבל);
  - *Erech* (ארך): *Urikos* (אורכוס);<sup>3</sup> According to others (תרגו"י ברא' י, ),<sup>4</sup> Again others say (ב"ר ל"ז) *Choron*; *Hados* (חדס);<sup>4</sup>
  - *Akkad* (אכד):<sup>5</sup> *Netzivin* (נציבין);<sup>6</sup> in Northern Mesopotamia (שבת ל"ב);
  - *Calneh* (כלנה):<sup>6</sup> *Nofar Ninfi* (נופר נינפי);<sup>7</sup> According to others (תרגו"י ברא' י, ), *Ktesiphon*<sup>8</sup> (*Beraishis* 10:10).

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 2003.

<sup>2</sup> *Jordan*: Arab *Urdunn*, of Semitic etymology, presumably meaning 'a river running quickly down'.

<sup>3</sup> *Erech / Urikos*: the South-Mesopotamian *Uruk*, *Shumerian Unug*, today Warka on the left bank of the Euphrates, 40 miles North of Ur.

<sup>4</sup> *Hados*: presumably Edessa. It can be interesting to remark that while according to modern scientific opinions these towns are to be looked for in the Babylonian region or South of it, the *Targum*, the *Midrash* and also the Talmud place all of them to North-Western Mesopotamia.

<sup>5</sup> *Akkad*: *Shumerian Agade* 'crown of fire', *Akkadian Akkadi*, Hebr. *Akkad*. Its place – and its identification with *Akkad* in *Beraishis* 10:10 – is still uncertain. New researches seek them in *Ishan-Mizyad* North of Babylon. Presumably, the town was founded by SHARRUKIN I (ca. 2334-2279 BCE) as the capital of his empire.

<sup>6</sup> *Calneh*: Babylonian town conquered by SARGON, possibly *Kul-unu = Zirlab*, its place is still unknown. According to certain opinions, *Kullanhou* near Aleppo, conquered by TIGLAT-PILESSER III in 738 BCE; others say, it is *Kunulua* South-East of Antiokh.

<sup>7</sup> *Nofar-Ninfi*: the middle-Babylonian *Nippur*, *Shumerian Nibru*; today Niffer, on half-way between *Erech* and Babylon on the Euphrates.

<sup>8</sup> *Ktesiphon*: it has to be remembered that the above quoted Talmudic place identifies *Resen* mentioned in *Beraishis* 10:11-12 with *Ktesiphon*.

*Nimrod* reorganizes his empire and transfers his capital to *Bovel*.<sup>1</sup> According to others (מ"ע פ' נ"ז), *Nimrod* founds *Bovel* and builds the tower 135 years after the *Mabul*, in the year 1791.

His subjects call him henceforward *Amrofel* (אמרפל; סה"ד; עירובין נ"ג):<sup>2</sup> 'who ordered *Avrom* be thrown in the burning furnace' (ב"ר מ"ב, ד). According to others (סה"י), the name means 'his ministers and his people had been destroyed at the *Tower*'.

**1997:** *Avrom* is 49 years old; *Noach* is 941; 341 years after the *Mabul*.

*Nochor* dies at the age of 148.

*Kedorloomer* (כדרלעומר),<sup>3</sup> *Chom*'s descendant, king of *Elom* (עילם), subjugates the five towns of the Jordan Valley, thus forcing them to pay him tribute during 12 years (*Beraishis* 14:4). Earlier, he was one of *Nimrod*'s generals, after the construction of the Tower of *Bovel* and the dispersion what followed he went to *Elom*, became its king in revolt against his former sovereign.

### 5.3. Ur Casdim

**1998:** *Avrom* is 50 years old; *Noach* is 942; 342 years after the *Mabul*.

*Avrom* asks his mother to prepare food – a goat (*Pessach* ?; cf. *Yitzchok*'s blessing) – for his father's twelve idols (ב"ר ל"ח, י"ט).

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. the periode of the first Babylonian dynasty (ca. 1894-1595 BCE) which came to the power after the incursion into Mesopotamia of the Semitic *Amurru* tribes who destroy the reign of the *Shumerian* 3rd dynasty of *Ur* (ca. 2112-2004 BCE). Their outstanding ruler was HAMMURAPI (1792-1750 BCE). The Old-Babylonian Empire has been destroyed by the Hettite MURSILIS I (1620-1590 BCE).

<sup>2</sup> *Amrofel*: modern opinions identify him with HAMMURAPI.

<sup>3</sup> *Kedorloomer*: according to modern identification, in reality the king of Babylon, Acc. *Kudar-laga(mar)*, cf. *Lagamaru* = the name of one of the Babylonian g-ds.

When he observes that they do not touch the food, he broke them with an axe except one, and places the axe in the hand of the biggest idol left intact.

When his father, *Terach*, queries about what happened, he answers that the statues started to fight over the food and the biggest broke the others.

Upon his father's answer that these are but wooden statues unable to move *etc.*, *Avrom* tries to convince his father to abandon the unsensed idolatry and return to the service of the Eternal (ס"ה).

Later, when they go together to the royal palace to bring sacrifices there, *Avrom* brings together all the idols of the palace, and burns them (מדה"ג י"א, כ"ח).

Consequently, *Terach* denounces *Avrom*, his own son, to *Nimrod* (ב"ר ל"ח, י"ט).

As *Avrom* declares publicly that *Nimrod* is nothing else but a mortal human being (מדה"ג י"א, כ"ח), the latter has him imprisoned for ten years: he spends three years in *Cuta* and seven in *Kardu* (קרדו).<sup>1</sup> Others say (ב"ב צ"א; פדר"א ו; שה"ק) this in the opposite way: seven in *Kuta* and three in *Kardu*.

As *Avrom* is still unwilling to bow to the idol representing *Nimrod*, following the king's order, he is thrown in a burning furnace heated previously for three days and three nights.

In the Torah, we do not find the name of the town where all this took place. One could think that in the royal capital, *Bovel*, eventually in *Avrom*'s birth-place, *Cuta*, or in *Choron* where he actually lived. According to the Talmud (ב"ב צ"א), *Ur Casdim* is *Cuta*, and received its name after the miracle which happened there. MENACHEM ben Shuruq renders *Ur* (אור) as a deep situated place, a

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<sup>1</sup> *Kardu*: cf. *Beraishis* 8:4, where the *Targums*, in connection with the Flood, render the Mount *Ararat*-as *Kardu*. *Kardu* has also to be looked for in North-Western Mesopotamia: the kingdom *Arorot* is rendered by the *Targums* (to *Yirmeyoh* 51:27) as the kingdom of the Land *Kardu*; and the Talmud says (*bYevamos* 16a) that converts has to be accepted from among the *Kardus*. The name is the etymon of the name of today's Kurdistan, of unclarified etymology.

valley. This means that there was a deep situated place in this town, it was there that *Avrom* has been thrown into the burning furnace, and it was from there that the Eternal saved him („brought him out”, *Beraishis* 15:7; כח, י"א, רמב"ן ברא' י"א, כח).

The Eternal personally descends on Earth to save *Avrom* ( פדר"א ו; רש"י פסחים ) (קי"ח).

A miracle happens: *Avrom* is not reached by the fire, not even his clothes are burnt.

From the four corners of the world, about 900.000 people come to see the big event.

*Avrom* spends three days and three nights in the burning furnace, thereafter he comes out intact.

Those, on the other hand, who threw him into the burning furnace, and also those who wanted to pull him out following the kings order - about twenty people –, are burnt (סה"י).

Certainly from among those presents are unwilling to believe that a miracle happened: they accuse *Avrom's* brother, *Horon*, that he saved his brother's life through magic (תרגו"י י"א, כ"ח; מדא"ג י"א, כ"ח).

Meanwhile, *Terach*, the father, in order to avoid punishment, accuses his other son, *Horon*, before the king, that it was he who proposed the new-born *Avrom* should be interchanged with a maidservant's child and, later, to be hidden that the king could not have him killed (סה"י).

Seeing his brother saved, *Horon* lets himself to be thrown into the furnace.

His is burnt entirely: no miracle happens for someone who is ready to „sacrifice” his life for the Eternal only when he is sure of being finally saved ( ב"ר ל"ח, י"ט; ) (שבת ל"ב). According to others (סה"י), *Horon* was thrown into the furnace together with *Avrom*, however, as his heart is not entirely dedicated to the

Eternal, he was immediately burnt.

His death, on the other hand, shows that *Avrom* has been saved through a real miracle and not through magic.

The parents, *Terach* and his wife mourn for *Horon*: they eat lentils (פדר"א ל"ה).<sup>1</sup> *Nimrod* and the princes of the country give lots of presents to *Avrom*, and send him away. They also give him two servants: *Nimrod*'s son, *Eliezer* (אליעזר) and a second by the name *Uni* (עני). According to others (ב"ר), *Eliezer* mentioned in the Torah is the same person with *Chom*'s son *Canaan*. Again others say (תרגו"א), he was from Damascus; or he was *Nimrod*'s servant, or the son of one of his concubines (פדר"א ט"ז).

About three hundred people follow *Avrom* to serve the Eternal.

In the same year, a man named *Bola* (בלע) from the family of *Shem*'s son *Ashur* goes out from *Niniveh* together with his family in search of a new home. When they arrive to the Jordan-Valley, they settle near *Sdom*. There, they build a small town, and name it *Bela*: this is *Tzoar* (סד"י; צער).<sup>2</sup>

**2000:** *Avrom* is 52 years old; *Noach* is 944; 344 years after the *Mabul*.

*Nimrod* has an unpleasant dream: a man similar to *Avrom* comes out of the burning furnace and runs after the escaping king to kill him with his sword. Unable to reach the king, the man throws an egg to *Nimrod*'s head. The egg suddenly turns into a huge river, and all the king's men and soldiers are drawn into it, only *Nimrod* escapes accompanied by three men dressed in his clothes and being thus similar to him. Then the river returns into an egg and a small bird comes out of it gouging the king's eye.

According to the interpretation presented by one of *Nimrod*'s counselors, *Enoki*

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. 2123.

<sup>2</sup> *Tzoar*: small town at the South-Eastern edge of the Dead Sea, its name presumably means 'insignificant'.

(אנוקי),<sup>1</sup> the dream means that *Avrom* and his descendants are a real danger for the king's house: he proposes to kill *Avrom* (סה"י).

However, *Eliezer*, who at that moment was at the royal court, informs *Avrom* about the royal plans: *Avrom* goes into hiding in *Noach*'s house for one month.

*Terach* secretly visits his son who convinces his father they should leave *Ur Casdim - Kuta* (סה"י) or *Bovel* – and go to *Eretz Canaan* (ארץ כנען; סה"ד).

*Avrom* wants to ensure the security of his whole family, he does not want to rely himself upon miracles (יל"ש ה"א ע"ז).

Apart of *Avrom*'s wife, *Soray*, *Avrom*'s nephew, *Lot*, the son of his dead brother, *Horon*, also goes with them (*Beraishis* 11:31).

As they reach *Aram-Naharaim* (ארם נהרים), the land where the descendants of *Shem*'s son *Aram* founded several empires, they do not feel the danger any more: *Terach* settles with his family in the rich town, *Choron*.

*Avrom* travels across the country to propagate the knowledge of the Eternal and his belief among the people: he gains tens of thousands of followers (רמב"ם ה' (עכו"ם פ"א ה"ג).

He writes several books to prove the vanity of idolatry (ע"ז י"ד).

This is the end of the 2000 years of *Tohuvabohu*.

#### **5.4. *Avrom in Eretz Canaan***

**2003:** *Avrom* is 55 years old; *Noach* is 947; 347 years after the *Mabul*.

Following the Eternal's command, *Avrom* goes from *Choron* to *Eretz Canaan* together with his wife, *Soray*.

For the coming 15 years he travels between *Choron* and *Eretz Canaan* to

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<sup>1</sup> *Enoki*: cf. *Enki* 'the Lord of the Earth' in the *Shumerian* mythology; the *Shumerian* precedent of

accomplish his task.

*Terach, Nochor and Lot stay in Choron.*

*Tzoan Mitzrayim* (תרגו"י, טניס, טאניס 'Tanis', צען מצרים) <sup>1</sup> is built, seven years after *Chevron* (*Bamidbor* 13:22). This is the most important town in *Mitzrayim*, the royal capital (cf. *Yishayoh* 30:4), built by *Chom* for his second son seven years after he has built *Chevron* for his youngest son, *Canaan* (רש"י במדבר י"ג, כ"ב).

**2006:** *Avrom* is 58 years old; 350 years after the *Mabul*.

*Noach* dies at the age of 950 years.

**2008:** *Avrom* is 60 years old.

After paying tributes during 12 years, the towns of the Jordan Valley (*Sdom, Amoroh etc.*) stand up against *Kedorloomer*. They will be in revolt against him for the coming 13 years (*Beraishis* 14:4).<sup>2</sup>

**2013:** *Avrom* is 65 years old.

Hearing about the revolt, *Nimrod* tries to subjugate his former general, *Kedorloomer*. With an army of 7.000 soldiers, he goes into battle against the 5.000 people of *Kedorloomer*. In the battle which takes place in the valley of *Bovel*, between *Elom* and *Shinear*, he is defeated (סד"י).

*Kedorloomer* concludes an alliance with the kings of the surrounding countries:

*Akkadian Ea*; he „creates” the humans they should work instead of the g-ds.

<sup>1</sup> *Tzoan*: the town *Tanis* (Egy. *Da'ne[t]*, Ass. *Si'inu, Sa'anu*, today *San*), situated in the delta of the Nile, becomes the royal capital during the reign of RAMSES III (1184-1153 BCE, 20th Dynasty) and his successors, the pharaohs of the 21-23rd Dynasties. In the time of the prophet *Yishayoh*, in the 8th century BCE, it was surely, but he lived about thousand years after *Avrohom*! Generally, *Tzoan* means Lower-Egypt. The *Targums* render, beside *Tzoan*, the towns *On* (see 2229) and *Pisom* (see 2340) also as *Tanis*.

Just to remember: when founding the Middle Empire (11th and 12th Dynasties, 2040-1786 BCE), a new capital has been constructed: Thebes in Upper-Egypt. The Old-Egyptian name of the town was *Uasset*; Gr. *Thebai*, name of presumably *Pelasgian* origin, meaning 'a fortified hill'; today Luxor.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. 1996.

with *Aryoch* (אריֹךְ)<sup>1</sup>, king of *Elossor* (אלסר)<sup>2</sup> and *Sidol* (תדעל)<sup>3</sup>, king of *Goyim* (גוים)<sup>4</sup> (סה"ד).

**2018:** *Avrom* is 70 years old, 362 years after the *Mabul*.

- **Nissan 15, Pessach** (פֶּסַח א"א כ"ד): *the Covenant between the parts* (ברית בן) (הבֵּתֵרִים; *Beraishis* 15:9-21).

According to others (תְּנַחֲוֵמָא), it took place in the year 1996, during the building of the *Tower of Bovel*, when *Avrom* was 48 years old. And from the Torah it looks like it happened after the *War of the Kings*.

It is written in the Torah (*Shemos* 12:41), that the *Bnai Yisroel* stay in *Mitzrayim* 430 years, while here the Eternal promises 400 years of slavery. These 400 years has to be computed from *Yitzchok's* birth, when *Avrohom* is 100 years old. This means that this *Covenant* had been concluded thirty years earlier, when *Avrom* was 70 years old (ס"ע; במדב"ר כ"ג, י"ד).

The Eternal enters into a covenant with *Avrom* between the parts of three times three animals (heifer, female goat and ram) cut in two, and a turtledove and a young pigeon (*Beraishis* 15:9). The animals symbolize the sacrifices what the *Bnai Yisroel* will bring ulteriorly to the *Bais hamikdosh* (ב"ר מ"ד, י"ז).

The animals also symbolize the four empires which will one day rule over the *Bnai Yisroel*:

- the heifer (עגלה) symbolizes Rome,
- the female goat (עז) symbolizes Greece,
- the ram (איל) symbolizes the Mede-Persian empire,

<sup>1</sup> *Aryoch*: according to modern identification, he can be *Rim-Aku*, the Elamite king of *Larsa*.

<sup>2</sup> *Elossor*: according to modern identification, Akkadian *Larsa*, today Senkereh, 28 miles North-East of *Ur*.

<sup>3</sup> *Sidol*: according to modern identification, he can be *Tudhula* mentioned on later Babylonian tablets.

<sup>4</sup> *Goyim*: according to modern identification, they can be the *Gutus* (cf. *Gutium* in Kurdistan). Others say, the name has been corrupted from a Babylonian or Elamite king's name. According to *RASHI*, the name of an (unidentified) place.



- ▶ the turtledove (תר, in *loshon hakodesh* 'turtledove', but in *Aramaic* 'stir') symbolizes *Bovel*,
- ▶ finally the young pigeon (גוזל) symbolizes the *Bnai Yisroel* (פדר"א כ"ה).

The Eternal promises that

- ▶ although, according to the stars, *Avrom* can not have any children, he will have as much *descendants* as the stars in heaven (*Beraishis* 15:5): the *Bnai Yisroel* are not under the rule of the stars (שבת קנ"ו).

An other verse in the Torah (*Beraishis* 22:17) compares the number of his descendants to that of the sand on the sea-shore: if they will heed to the commands of the Eternal, people will look up to them as to the stars; but if not, they will be walked over as the sand of the earth;

- ▶ his descendants will inherit the land of *Canaan*, expulsiing from there the ten peoples living there: seven in the times of *Yehoshuah*, the other three when *Moshiach* will come (מדה"ג ט"ו, י"ח);
- ▶ this will, however, be preceded by *400 years of slavery* in a foreign land (*Beraishis* 15:13): the Eternal shows to *Avrom* the slavery in *Mitzrayim*, and also the four subsequent exiles: the Babylonian, Mede-Persian, Greek, Roman ones (ב"ר מ"ד, י"ז);
- ▶ where they will ultimately be liberated from and come out with great wealth (*Beraishis* 15:14): the fourth generation (*Beraishis* 15:16).

*Iyov* (איוב) is born: he is the son or the grandson of *Nochor*'s firstborn, *Utz* (אבן) (עזרא איוב א, א). According to others (רש"י איוב א, א), he is *Utz* himself.

Other opinions concerning *Iyov*:

- ▶ the „*Sefer Iyov*” is only a *moshol*, a parable;
- ▶ *Iyov* lived in *Yaakov*'s days and married the latter's daughter, *Dinoh*: as *Iyov* was born circumcised, *Dinoh* was willing to marry him. They had four sons and

three daughters. *Iyov* was very rich and lived until *Yossef's* death ( יל"ר וישלח ס"ג ) (רע"א);

- ▶ *Iyov* was born when *Yaakov* descended to *Mitzrayim*, he lived 210 years, and died when the *Bnai Yisroel* came out from *Mitzrayim* ( ירושלמי ; שמו"ר כ"א; ב"ר נ"ז; שמו"ר כ"א; ירושלמי ) (סוטה סופ"ה בשם ר' יוסי בר חלפתא וס"ע; ב"ב ט"ו);
- ▶ he was one of *Paroh's* counselors, and the calamities are the punishment for the wicked counsel he gave to *Paroh* ( סנהדרין ק"ו ) (סוטה י"א; נזר הקדש ). Others say ( פנ"ז ס"ג ), this is not the same person, but a *gilgul*, the second life lasting 210 years is the punishment for the first one;
- ▶ he is *Yovov ben Zerach* who, four years before the *Exode*, is elected king of *Edom* ( יוחסין מאמר ה זמן ג );
- ▶ he is among those who come back from the Babylonian exile, and is at the head of an *yeshivah* in *Tveryeh* ( R. Yochanan and R. Eleozor; ב"ב ט"ו );
- ▶ he lives in the days of the Judges ( R. Eleozor );
- ▶ he lives in the days of the Queen *Shevoh* ( שבא 'Sheba' ), i. e. *Shlomoh hamelech* ( R. Nosson );
- ▶ he lives in the days of the *Casdim* [the Assyrians]. According to certain opinions, these *Casdim* are not the descendants of *Kessed* mentioned among *Nochor's* descendants, and this Queen *Shevoh* is not the *Shevoh* mentioned among the descendants of *Keturoh* ( סה"ד בשם יפת תאר );
- ▶ he lives in the days of *Achashverosh* ( R. Yehosuah ben Korcha );
- ▶ a descendant of *Avrohom*, he lives in Arabia ( ערביא ), in the land *Shevoh* and in the land of *Edom*, South-East of *Eretz Yisroel* ( רמב"ן; שה"ק ). However, the *Targum* renders *Utz* as *Armenia*, what is Asia Minor. Besides, Also according to the *Targum*, he has been burried in Constantinople ( קונסטאנטינא; in the *Targum Edom's* town in *Armenia*): it can well be that he went to live there from

his birth place, *Aram Naharaim* (סה"ד).<sup>1</sup>

*Avrom* returns to *Choron* to visit his father and other relatives: he spends there five years (ס"ע; סה"י).

According to others (פדר"א כ"ו), it is at this moment that he goes from *Ur Casdim* to *Choron*: this however had to happen earlier, in the year 2000.

**2021:** *Avrom* is 73 years old, 365 years after the *Mabul* (תוספות ברכות ז).

*Kedorloomer*, king of *Elom* and his allies (*Aryoch* king of *Elossor* and *Sidol* king of *Goyim*) and also *Amrofel* king of *Shinear* (he is *Nimrod*, defeated earlier by *Kedorloomer*), four kings wage war (מלחמת המלכים) against the five revolting kings of the Dead-Sea region. The name of the five kings are: *Bera* (ברע) king of *Sdom*, *Birsha* (ברשע) king of *Amoroh*, *Shinov* (שאנב) king of *Admoh*, *Shemever* (שמאבר) king of *Tzevoim* and *Bela* (בלע) king of *Tzoar* (*Beraishis* 14:1-2).<sup>2</sup>

The four kings, who will be finally defeated by *Avrom*, symbolize the four kingdoms what will later subjugate the *Bnai Yisroel*; while *Avrom*'s victory alludes to the fact that – with the Eternal's help – finally it will be the *Bnai Yisroel* to win.

- the first one is *Amrofel* = *Nimrod*: *Bovel* (*Daniel* 2:38);
- the second one is *Elossor*: presumably a town in *Moday*;
- the third one is *Elom*: it will be there that the king of *Yovon*, *Alexander Mokdon*, will reign for six years, and thereafter – after having defeated *Daryovesh* – will extend his dominion over the entire world (ע"ז י);
- the fourth one is *Goyim*: Rome, what will reign over many peoples (רמב"ן).

<sup>1</sup> *Iyov*: according to the apocryphic „*Iyov's testament*” - a pseudoepigraphic Jewish text, composed presumably in the first century BCE, written originally in Hebrew or in Aramaic, but preserved only in Greek translation - he was a king of Egypt.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. 2047.

The Eternal's intention is with the whole warfare is that, as a result of the war, all of their belongings should finally come into *Avrom*'s possession.

The army of *Kedorloomer* and his allies numbers alltogether 800.000 [!] men.

The decisive battle takes place in *Aimek hasidim* (עמק הסדים): the revolting kings are defeated.

*Lot* with all his belongings is taken captive (*Beraishis* 14:12).

The giant *Og* brings the news to *Avrom* who at that moment is baking *matzos* for *Pessach* (ב"ר מ"ב, י"ב). According to others (פדר"א כ"ז), the Archangel *Michoel* informs *Avrom*.

The name of the giant takes its origin from the word *ugah* (עגה) 'cake': he makes as if he would be interested in the *mitzvoh* of baking *matzos*, and intended to convert.

*Og* hopes that *Avrom* will try to liberate *Lot*, but will be killed and so he, *Og*, can marry *Soray* (ב"ר מ"ב, ח).

*Avrom* goes into battle accompanied by his 318 trained servants (*Beraishis* 14:14): the *Sages* criticize him, as the latters are suspending Torah-learning when going to war. According to others (תנחומא לך י; נדרים ל"ב), it is only *Eliezer* who goes with him: the *gematrioh* of the latter's name is 318: the force of *Avrom*'s all 318 followers is given to *Eliezer* by the Eternal.<sup>1</sup>

• **Nissan 15:** the Eternal divides the night of *Pessach* (*Beraishis* 14:15). The half of it is for *Avrom*'s victory, while the other half will be reserved for the *Exode* (*Shemos* 12:29; פדר"א כ"ז).

*Avrom* defeats the army of the four victorious kings, and liberates *Lot*.

However, he does not accept anything of the spoil that the king of *Sdom* should

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<sup>1</sup> The „*Sefer haYoshor*” brings both traditions: in פ' לך לך the latter, in פ' ויגש the former.

not say, *Avrom* became rich through him (*Beraishis* 14:23). He only takes the wages of his allies: *Mamray* (ממרא) the *emori* and his brothers, *Eshkol* (אשכל) and *Onair* (ענר; *Beraishis* 14:24) who were taking care of his belongings during the battle.

*Avrom* restitutes to the king of *Sdom* the latter's liberated subjects. However, he retains by him the children whom he teaches the knowledge of the Eternal (ב"ר) (מ"ג, ח; נדרים ל"ב).

After the battle, *Avrom* meets *Malki Tzedek* (מלכי צדק) – i.e. *Shem* (ב"ר מ"ג, ו; ו), the priest-king of *Sholem* (שלם; = *Yerusholayim*) who blesses *Avrom*. As *Malki Tzedek* gives precedence in his blessing to *Avrom* over the Eternal, the Lord takes away the priesthood from him and gives it to *Avrom* (נדרים ל"ב). The priesthood was anyway to be inherited by *Avrom*'s descendants but, in this way, the heritage came to them on *Avrom*'s right and not of that of *Malki Tzedek*'s.

*Avrom* gives tithe to *Malki Tzedek* of the spoil (*Beraishis* 14:18-20) and of *Lot*'s possessions (פדר"א כ"ז; יל"ש ח"א מ"א).

**2023:** *Avrom* is 75 years old (*Beraishis* 12:4).

The Eternal orders *Avrom* „...*Get out from your country...*” (לך לך; *Beraishis* 12:1): although not born in *Choron*, he settled there with his family, therefore the Torah says „...*Get out from your country...*”.

The purpose of this changing the dwelling-place is to gain more people to the Eternal's service, and to can have children (א, רש"י י"ב, א) (תנחומא לך ג; רש"י י"ב, א).

This is already the second time that the Eternal orders him „*Lech lecho*”, „...*Get out from your country...*”: the first time was twenty years earlier, what made *Avrom* to leave *Ur Casdim* (סד"י), i.e. *Cuta* (see above).

The Eternal does not tell him where to go, that the challenge should be greater

(לך"ט). According to others (סה"י), the Eternal tells him that he has to go to *Eretz Canaan*.

*Avrom*, together with his wife, his nephew *Lot* and the people whom he gained for the Eternal's service, go again to *Eretz Canaan* (*Beraishis* 12:5): *Chevron* is 17 days walk from *Choron*.

He spends 25 years in *Chevron*, travelling back and forth in the *Land* (*Beraishis* 12:9): through this, he takes possession of the land according to the *halochoh* (ב"ר מ"א, י"ג).

*Avrom*'s father, *Terach* and also his brother, *Nochor* stay in *Choron*.

In those days, an especially beautiful, but very poor man from the Land *Shinear*, by the name *Rakoyon* (רקיון), who was well dressed in all the sciences, goes to *Mitzrayim* to offer his services to the king *Ashverosh ben Ainom* (אשורוש בן ענם).<sup>1</sup> As the people can see their king only one day in a year, and as he has to gain his life in the meanwhile also, *Rakoyon* with a few armed people occupies the cemetery and – pretending acting in the name of the king – he allows the deads to be burried only after the family pays a „tax” to him. When the next year people complain about this before the king, the latter orders *Rakoyon* should be brought before him. The compelled however appears in the royal palace accompanied by his men bringing rich presents to the king. Consequently, he is made a king over the whole Land *Mitzrayim*, and is even given a new name: *Paroh* (פרעה; ‘you made the deads to pay’<sup>2</sup>). During the whole year, it is *Rakoyon* who rules over the town, *Ashverosh* himself rules only

<sup>1</sup> *Ashverosh*: the name given in the „*Sefer haYoshor*” is curiously similar to the name of *Ahashverosh* in the „*Megilas Esther*”. Cf. for example the renderings of the French LAROUSSE: *Assuérus* ‘the name of the Persian king Xerxes I quoted in the Biblical Book of Esther’; and *Ahashverush* ‘the name of the legendary figure of the wandering Jew (le juif errant)’.

<sup>2</sup> *Paroh*: the word taken over to the European languages through Greco-Latin intermediaries as *Pharaoh*, takes its origin from the Old Egyptian *per a'a* ‘big house’, designating the royal court and, later, the king himself from the 18th Dynasty (New Empire) on.

one day a year. From this day on, the king of *Mitzrayim* is called *Paroh* (סה"י).<sup>1</sup>

**2026:** *Avrom* is 78 years old, he lives in *Eretz Canaan* since 3 years.

*Reu* dies at the age of 239 years.

**2030 c.:** *Avrom* is 82 years old, he lives in *Eretz Canaan* since 7 years.

*Avrom* goes to *Mitzrayim*<sup>2</sup> with his whole household and his nephew, *Lot*, because of the famine in *Eretz Canaan* (*Beraishis* 12:10). This was the first famine since the creation of the world, and it striked only *Eretz Canaan*.

Although *Avrom* hids *Soray* in one of the luggages, she is discovered by the *Mitzri* border-guards and taken to *Paroh*'s house (*Beraishis* 12:14-15): this happens *Pessach* by night (פדר"א כ"ו).

*Soray* pretends being *Avrom*'s sister (*Beraishis* 12:13): this is not a lie as a niece can be called a sister (מדה"ג י"ב, י"ב).

*Paroh*, in the intention to marry *Soray*, sends rich presents to *Avrom* (*Beraishis* 12:16); and to *Soray*, besides other presents, as an engagement he gives a land-property (act confirmed by a legal contract): the province *Goshen* (פדר"א כ"ו).<sup>3</sup>

Now *Soray* tells *Paroh* that *Avrom* is her husband, but the king insists to force her to marry him.

Therefore, the Eternal gives a punishment to *Paroh* and his whole household

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<sup>1</sup> The story told by the „*Sefer haYoshor*” show several surprising similarities to the transition from the 11th to the 12th Dynasties. After the collapse of the Old Empire, during the first transition periode, the land is divided into three parts, reunited finally by MENTUHOTEP I (2134-2118 BCE), the first ruler of the 11th Dynasty in Thebes. Towards the end of the periode, the former *vizir*, seizing the control over the whole country, rules under the name AMENEMHAT I (1991-1962 BCE), and founds the new 12th Dynasty. He constructs a new capital South of Cairo, near today's List, the town is called *Itj-Taui* ('Conqueror of the two Lands'). And although the title *Pharaoh* comes to be used only later, let us remember that the non-Jewish stories (*e. g.* the Punic wars *etc.*) are not always presented with chronological exactitude.

<sup>2</sup> In *Beni Hassan*, situated about 300 kms South of Cairo, a wall painting made around 1900 BCE has been discovered in a grave. According to the inscription, the painting represented Egyptian border-guards in white „uniform” accompanying a semitic group dressed in colored clothes. The men and women are going by foot, the children and the packages are carried by donkeys.

<sup>3</sup> See 2238.

(*Beraishis* 12:17): they are inflicted by the most severe of the 24 kinds of leprosy (צרעת), this symbolizes the last of the ten plagues what will also be inflicted on the *Mitzriim Pessach* by night (ב"ר מ"א, ב; תנחומא לך ה; פדר"א כ"ו; ערכין ט"ו).

*Paroh* gives new presents to *Avrom*, giving him also one of his daughters, *Hogor* (הגר) – a descendant of *Chom* (ב"ר מ"ה, ב) -, born from a concubine. He says to her: it is better for you to be a maidservant in the house of this holy man, than to be a lady in mine (סה"י). According to others (יוחסין מאמר ה זמן ב), the widow queen, ruling instead of her minor son heir to the throne, after the death of her husband, the *Paroh* named *Totis*,<sup>1</sup> gives her maidservant *Hogor*, to *Soray*.

*Paroh* sends away *Avrom* from *Mitzrayim* together with his family, accompanying him four steps. As a reward, *Avrom*'s descendants are supposed to serve him for 400 years.

After three months, *Avrom* returns from *Mitzrayim* to *Eretz Canaan*, and settles near the altar erected earlier by him between *Bais Kel* (בית ק-ל) and *Ai* (עי; *Beraishis* 13:3).

*Avrom* separates himself from *Lot*, being ashamed by the behavior of his nephew who, although he acquired his great wealth in *Avrom*'s merit, does not turn with his whole heart to the Eternal, he rather puts his confidence into idols. Besides, it is a permanent source of conflicts with local herdsmen, that *Lot*'s herdsmen take regularly their cattle on the fields of others (*Beraishis* 13:5-9).

*Lot* settles in *Sdom*, a town ill-famed because of its wicked inhabitants (*Beraishis* 13:10-12): he hopes to enlarge his wealth in the rich town (סנהדרין י; ק"ח).

*Lot* marries someone from *Sdom*: *Iris* (עירית; כ"ו בשם פדר"א י"ט, כ"ו בשם פדר"א).

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<sup>1</sup> *Totis*: there is no Pharaoh called *Totis* in the extant Egyptian king-lists. The name eventually remembers not a concrete *Pharaoh*, rather the Egyptian g-d of wisdom, *Thot*, who by times personifies even the Moon. Other names sounding „similar“ can be *Thot* (Sehemre-Sementaui of the 17th Dynasty, 1644-43 BCE) ruling in Thebes subordinated to the *Hyksos*; or one of the four *Pharaohs* of the 12th Dynasty ruling during the New Empire, by the name *Thotmes*.



<sup>1</sup> (פדר"א כ"ה; סה"י; עדית) / *Idis* (כ"ה).

*Avrom* settles in the plain of *Mamray* (אלני ממרא) the *Emori* – a brother of his allies, *Eshkol* and *Onair* -, near *Chevron*: he builds an altar to the Eternal (*Beraishis* 13:18).

### 5.5. *Yishmoel*

**2033:** *Avrom* is 85 years old, he lives in *Eretz Canaan* since 10 years.

*Soray* is barren, therefore she gives her maidservant, *Hogor*, to *Avrom*. *Hogor* becomes pregnant, aborts, and becomes again pregnant (*Beraishis* 16:1-4).

*Soray* is jealous of *Hogor* who, consequently, escapes into the desert (*Beraishis* 16:6; סה"י).

The Eternal sends an Angel to *Hogor* (*Beraishis* 16:7) who orders her to call her future child's name *Yishmoel* (ישמע-ל; *Beraishis* 16:11): he receives a possibility to greatness, to live according to the Torah, but he disregards it (ב"ר (מ"ה, י"א).

The Eternal will hear (לשמע) the cry of the *Bnai Yisroel* suffering from the *Bnai Yishmoel* (פדר"א ל"ב).

Six persons received their name before their birth: *Yishmoel*, *Yitzchok*, *Moshe rabainu*, *Shlomoh hamelech*, *Yoshiyoh hamelech* and *Moshiach* (פדר"א ל"ב).

The Angel also tells *Hogor* that the great king of *Bovel*, *Nevuchadnezar* will be a descendant of *Yishmoel* (ב"ר מ"ה, י"ב).

The Angel also orders her to return to *Avrom*'s house (*Beraishis* 16:9; סה"י).

*Hogor* names the well situated between *Kodesh* (קדש)<sup>2</sup> and *Bered* (ברד) – in the

<sup>1</sup> *Iris/Idis*: presumably a copist's error through interchanging the letters י and ד.

<sup>2</sup> *Kodesh*: according to *Beraishis* 14:7, this is an other name of *Ain Mishpot* (עין משפט), situated in

*Targums* between *Rekom* / *Rekam* (רקם) and *Chagro* (חגרא; ת"א) / *Chalutzoh* (באר לחי) -, where the Angel spoke to her, *Beer laChai Roi* (חלוצה; ראי; 'the well of seeing the Living one'; *Beraishis* 16:14).

**2034:** *Avrom* is 86 years old (*Beraishis* 16:16), he lives in *Eretz Canaan* since 11 years.

*Yishmoel* is born (*Beraishis* 16:15).

*Avrom* does not sufficiently admonish his son (ב"ר א, א): this is one of the reasons why *Yishmoel* turns away of the Eternal's service.

**2039:** *Avrom* is 91 years old, he lives in *Eretz Canaan* since 16 years.

The descendants of *Yovon*'s son, *Kittim* attack the descendants of *Tuvol*, living also in Italy. Both tribes arrived to Italy with the dispersion which followed the construction and destruction of the Tower of *Bovel*. *Kittim*'s descendants have built themselves a town alongside the river *Tiberayu*, while *Tuvol*'s descendants settled in *Tushkanah*, South of the river *Pashia*, and built a town what they name after *Tuvol*'s son, *Sabinoh*. Because of the war, the latters swear with an oath not to marry henceforward their enemies: their daughters of extraordinary beauty were looked for even for kings and princes (סד"י).

**2042:** *Avrom* is 94 years old, he lives in *Eretz Canaan* since 19 years;

After three years, however, during harvest, while the men of *Tuvol* are working in the fields, *Kittim*'s sons attack *Sabinoh*, the town of *Tuvol*'s sons, raping the girls who stayed at home.

Now, *Tuvol*'s sons attack *Kittim*'s sons, but they are defeated.

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the wilderness of *Tzin* (*Bamidbor* 20:1). According to the *Midrash* (תנחומא ה), the place received the name *Ain Mishpot* following the sentence pronounced over *Moshe rabainu* because of the rock (see below). According to the *RAMBAN* (to *Beraishis* 14:7) it is not identical with *Kodesh Barneah* (*Bamidbor* 13:26) situated in the wilderness of *Poron*, although this *possuk* speaks about *Kodesh* alone. According to the *BDB*, it is well identical with *Kodesh Barneah*. Ar. 'Ain Kadish ca. 50 miles South of Beer-Shevah.

After their defeat, *Tuvol's* sons recruit a mercenary army of around ten thousand soldiers, and attack again *Kittim's* sons: the war ends with the conclusion of peace.<sup>1</sup> According to others (צ"ד), the so-called „war for the women” (מלחמות) (הנשים) takes place in the year 2,037.

**2047:** *Kittim's* sons build two towns near the sea: *Portu*<sup>2</sup> (פורטו) and *Aritzoh* (סה"י; אריצה).<sup>3</sup>

**2047:** *Avrom* is 99 years old, *Soray* is 89 (*Beraishis* 17:1), *Avrom* lives in *Eretz Canaan* since 24 years.

• **Nissan 13:** the circumcision (ברית מילה; *Beraishis* 17:10-11).<sup>4</sup> According to others (פדר"א כ"ה), it happened on *Yom Kippur*.

On the ulterior place of the altar of the *Bais hamikdosh* (פדר"א כ"ט).

His descendants have to be circumcised on the eighth day after their birth (*Beraishis* 17:12).

In case *Avrom* renounces to perform the *mitzvoh*, the Eternal is ready to send the world back to *Tohuvabohu* (תהוומא).

The act of circumcision is a covenant (ברית מילה; *Beraishis* 17:7): if they observe the *mitzvoh* of circumcision, *Avrom's* descendants will inherit *Eretz Canaan*.

Changing of names:

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the rape of the *Sabines*. A part of the *Sabine* people gets united to the Romans already in *Romulus'* time (*LIVIVS*, „*Ab Urbe Condita*”, 1:9); the other part is defeated in 448 BCE, subjugated in 290 BCE, they receive finally the rights of Roman citizens in 268 BCE.

<sup>2</sup> *Portu*: Lat. *portus* 'port' (*porta* 'door'); an unidentifiable port, presumably on the Tyrrhenian coast. It can eventually be question of the building of Rome's port, *Ostia* (Lat. *ostium* 'door, entrance, estuary'; Lat. *os* 'mouth'), situated at the estuary of the Tiberis river whose former name was *Civitas Porta*. It can also be that the allusion is to *Herculis Portus*, situated effectively on Etrurian territory, North-West of Tarquinii.

<sup>3</sup> *Aritzoh*: it can be *Arretium* (today Arezzo) in *Etruria* (not situated however, on the coast); or *Aricia* (today Ariccia) in *Latium* (this town gave its name to the anti-Roman *Arician confederation*).

<sup>4</sup> The date given by my example of the „*Tzemach Dovid*”, 2046, is presumably due to a copist's error.

► *Avrom* (אברם, 'the father of his birth-place, *Aram*') > *Avrohom* (אברהם, 'father of many nations'; *Beraishis* 17:5);

► *Soray* (שרי, 'Lady, mistress of *Avrom*'s house') > *Soroh* (שרה, 'mistress of the whole world'; *Beraishis* 17:15; רש"י).

The letter *Yud* (י) of *Soray*'s name, missing from her new name, will later be compensated by the Eternal: Moshe *rabainu* changes *Hoshea*'s name (חושע) to *Yehoshua* (יהושע; *Bamidbor* 13:16; א, ב"ר מ"ז).

The Eternal promises to *Avrohom* that, in the merit of the *mitzvoh* of circumcision, he will have a child from *Soroh* (*Beraishis* 17:16).

The Eternal also orders *Avrohom*, to call the name of his future son *Yitzchok* (יצחק; *Beraishis* 17:19):

י: *Avrohom* is tested ten times by the Eternal;

צ: *Soroh* is 90 years old when she gives him birth;

ח: circumcision on the eighth day;

ק: *Avrohom* is 100 years old when he is born (פדר"א ל"ב).

*Yitzchok* receives his name already before his birth: he will be the father of the *Bnai Yisroel*, the first child born from holy parents (ב"ר מ"ה, י"א).

*Avrohom* first circumcises himself (*Beraishis* 17:26): the Eternal is keeping his sword that his hand should not tremble. According to others (ב"ר מ"ט, ב; פדר"א), *Avrohom* calls *Shem*, the latter should circumcise him.

Consequently, he circumcises the 13 years old *Yishmoel* (*Beraishis* 17:23), all the 318 members of his household (among them *Onair*, *Eshkol* and *Mamray*) and also his servants (*Beraishis* 17:23).

*Avrohom*'s tent has four doors so he can bring in guests from every direction. He

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teaches the service of the Eternal to his guests.

As long as *Soroh* is alive, the doors are continuously open.

In her merit, the *Shechinah* is always present above her tent, the candles she lits in reverence of the *Shabbos* never blow out and there is always a blessing on her dough (ב"ר ט"ו).

- **Nissan 15**, the first day of *Pessach*: on the third and critical day after the circumcision, the Eternal, accompanied by three Angels - *Michoel*, *Gavriel*, *Rephoel* (ב"מ פ"ו) - , visits *Avrohom* (*Beraishis* 18:1-2).

The *Bnai Yisroel* leave *Mitzrayim* 400 years after *Yitzchok* is born, on the first day of *Pessach*, this means that *Yitzchok* is also born in *Pessach*, and the Angels also come on *Pessach* (ש"ה ברא' י"ה, י).

*Avrohom* wants to stand up to honour the *Shechinah*, however the Eternal lets him keep sitting, saying: „I will stand the same above your descendants when they will utter the words of the *Shema Yisroel* prayer while sitting” (ב"ר מ"ח, ו).

*Avrohom*, despite of his weak state of health, performs the *mitzvoh* of hospitality:

- he asks his wife to bake *matzos* (*Beraishis* 18:6) however, as *Soroh* becomes *niddah*, *Avrohom* does not give the *matzos* to his guests, but slaughters instead a bullock (פדר"א ל"ו);
- at first, he serves to his guests, who are willing to accept the invitation of the great *tzaddik*, milk and butter and thereafter the tongue of the bullock (*Beraishis* 18:8). According to others (רש"י), he serves simultaneously but on separate tables the meat and the dairy food, leaving it to the guests to choose.

The missions of the Angels (one Angel can execute only one mission; ב"ר מ"ח, ו):

- *Michoel* announces that *Soroh*, despite of her old age, will have a child the coming year (*Beraishis* 18:10-11);
- *Gavriel* destroys the five towns - (*Sdom*, *Amoroh*, *Admoh*, *Tzevoim* and *Tzoar*

- of the Jordan Valley, 52 years after the destruction of the *Tower of Bovel*, i.e. after 51 years of existence (ס"ע), because:

- their inhabitants are idolaters, adulterers and murderers (סנהדרין ק"ט), similar to the generation of the *Mabul*;
- according to their laws, they are obliged to rob the travellers, to kill everyone who gives to eat to the poor;
- they put their guests in a „standardized” bed set up in the centre of the town: if he is longer than the bed, they cut off his feet, if he is shorter, they „stretch” him out,<sup>1</sup> etc. (פדר"א כ"ה; סנהדרין ק"ט);
- their wicked judges follow the wicked laws: the judge of *Sdom* is called *Sherek* (שרק), that of *Amoroh Sharkar* (שרקר), that of *Admoh Zabnoch* (זבנך), that of *Tzevoim Monon* (מנון).

*Eliezer*, *Avrohom*'s servant – who had earlier problems with them – gives new names to the judges: *Shikro* (שקרא, 'false, liar') instead of *Sherek*, *Shakrora* (שקרורא) instead of *Sharkar*, *Kazvon* (כזון, presumably 'liar') instead of *Zabnoch*, *Metzale Din* (מצלי דין, 'overshadows the sentence') instead of *Monon* (סה"י);

- *Lot*'s daughter, *Plotis* (פלוטיס), born during the kings' war, is burnt alive in *Sdom*, because of the only reason that she gave to eat to a hungry person. The daughter of a rich man is killed for the same „crime”, in the town of *Admo*, in a monstrous manner: she is tied naked to a tree, smeared with honey and left there until she is stung to death by the bees (סה"י); according to others (סנהדרין כ"ט), this happened to *Plotis*.

At this point the Eternal decides to destroy *Sdom* and the other towns (תנחומא ב');

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. the bed of the ill-famed Atticean robber, *Prokrustes* (Gr. 'who stretches out', called originally *Polypemon*) in the Greek mythology.

naturally after forewarning.

*Avrohom's* prayer to save the five towns of destruction (זוהר ח"א ק"ו): maybe there are fifty (five times ten) just people in them, the the towns should be saved in their merit; maybe are there forty, thirty, twenty that at least four, three, two towns could be saved (*Beraishis* 18:23-32).

But there are not even ten just persons, that at least one town could be saved: and the *Shechinah* does not rest upon less than ten persons; *Lot's* sons-in-law do not count as they are not *tzaddikim* (ב"ר מ"ט, כ"ה).

*Lot* takes the Angels into his house (*Beraishis* 19:1-3), the inhabitants of the town decide to kill him together with the Angels (*Beraishis* 19:4-5). According to others (רש"י י"ט, ה), they want to deprave the „foreigners”.

A child has seen *Lot* taking the „guests” into his house, and informed the townsmen (פדר"א כ"ה). According to others (יל"ש ח"א פ"ה), *Lot's* wife borrows some salt from her neighbour for the guests, that's how the thing gets known.

*Lot*, in order to defend the Angels, offers his two unmarried daughters to the inhabitants of the town (*Beraishis* 19:7-8): he is not risking his own life.

When *Lot* realizes that the Angels came to destroy the town, he tries to pray for its inhabitants, but it is too late.

The Angels commit an error telling *Lot* that they came to destroy the town (*Beraishis* 19:13). They were supposed to say, the Eternal will destroy it. Therefore, the Eternal exiles them from his throne for 138 years (ב"ר ע"ח, ג).

► *Rephoel* heals *Avrohom* who is still convalescent after the circumcision, then he saves *Lot* with a part of his family – his wife and two daughters (*Beraishis* 19:15), the other two daughters and their husbands are not afraid of the punishment (*Beraishis* 19:14; ב"ר נ, י"ד). Healing and saving lives is the same mission.

- **Nisssn 16:** *Lot*, who settled in *Sdom* in order to increase his wealth, escapes from the town leaving everything behind (ב"ר ג, י"ז).

They are forbidden to look behind themselves while escaping (*Beraishis* 19:17), as the *Shechinah* and 12.000 destroying Angels descend to destroy the towns (פדר"א כ"ה; מדה"ג י"ט, י"ג).

*Lot's* wife looks backwards to see her two other daughters: upon seeing the *Shechinah*, she becomes a pillar of salt (נציב מלח; *Beraishis* 19:26):<sup>1</sup> the hospitality of her husband got known in the town when she went to her neighbour to ask for some salt (יל"ש ה"א פ"ה).

In the merit of *Lot's* prayer, the Eternal spares *Tzoar*: *Lot* can run there (*Beraishis* 19:18-23; ב"ר ג, כ"א).

Contrary to the Angels' command, *Lot* does not go to *Avrohom*, he is afraid the Eternal should not compare him to his uncle (ב"ר ג, י"ט).

He does not stay in *Tzoar* either: he is afraid in the vicinity of *Sdom* (רש"י י"ט, ל). He prefers to hide himself in the mountains in a cave together with his daughters (*Beraishis* 19:30; מדה"ג י"ט, ל).

Under the impact of the events, his daughters mean that a new Flood is striking the Earth, and they are the only survivors (ב"ר נ"א, י).

They make their father drunk and – in order to preserve the human race (נזיר כ"ג) – they beget children with him (*Beraishis* 19:30-38): *Amon* (עמון)<sup>2</sup> and *Moav* (מואב).<sup>3</sup>

According to the etymologies given by the Torah, *Amon* means 'son of my people' (בן עמי; *Beraishis* 30:38) and *Moav* means 'of my father' (רש"י; מואבי).

<sup>1</sup> Cf. in Greek mythology, *Kreusa*, *Aineias'* wife – daughter of *Priamos* and *Hekabe*, mother of *Askanios* – while they are escaping from the burning Troy, drops behind her husband, and dies.

<sup>2</sup> *Amon*: people living East of the Jordan, North-East of *Moab*, between the rivers *Arnon* and *Yabbok*.

<sup>3</sup> *Moav*: Ass. *Ma'aba*, *Ma'bu*, *Mu'aba*.



*Moav's* descendant will be *Ruth*, *Dovid hamelech's* great grandmother; *Amon's* descendant will be *Naamoh*, *Shlomoh hamelech's* wife, *Rechovom's* mother.

According to the Eternal's original plan, they were anyway to be descendants of *Lot's* daughters, but of a holy and noble way (this is the reason why they were saved from *Sdom*) and not of an incestuous relation, even though not committed with wicked intentions (ב"ר מ"א, ה).

*Lot* and his family settle on the East bank of the Jordan river. His grandchildren marry *Canaanite* girls, build towns for themselves, which they name after their own names (סה"י).

#### *Lot's* descendants:

- **Moav's** children: *Or* (ער), *Moayon* (מעיון), *Torasyon* (תרסיון), *Canvil* (קנויל);
- **Ammon's** children: *Gairim* (גרים), *Isson* (עישון), *Rabos* (רבות), *Tzilon* (צלון), *Ainon* (עינון), *Moyom* (מיום; סה"י).

### **5.6 *Yitzchok* (יצחק)**

**2048:** *Avrohom* is 100 years old, he lives in *Eretz Canaan* since 25 years.

- **Tishrai 1**, *Rosh hashonoh* (ר"ה י"א). The Eternal remembers *Soroh* (*Beraishis* 21:1): she becomes pregnant and, together with her, the Eternal opens the womb of all the barren women thus making them able to have children (בעל הטורים).

Ashamed of his nephew, *Lot*, *Avrohom* goes to the land of the *Pelishtim*. Although he became rich in *Avrohom's* merit, *Lot's* heart turns to the idols and not to the Eternal.

*Avrohom* lives in *Gherar* (גרר), between *Kodesh* (קודש) and *Shur* (שור; *Beraishis* 20:1) for the coming 26 years.

The Torah says (*Beraishis* 21:34) for „many days” (ימים רבים), this means that longer than he lived in *Chevron*, where he spent 25 years: this means 26 years (ס"ע על פי ב"ר ב"ד, ס"ו).

*Avrohom* agains says that *Soroh* is his sister (*Beraishis* 20:2).

*Avimelech* (אבימלך), the king of the *Pelishtim*, takes *Soroh* to the royal palace (*Beraishis* 20:2).

- **Nissan 15**, the night of *Pessach*: the Eternal appears to *Avimelech* in a dream, and threatens him with death (*Beraishis* 20:3). The whole household and all the domestic animals are struck with barrenness (*Beraishis* 20:18).

*Avimelech* liberates *Soroh* (*Beraishis* 20:14), however he curses her to have a blind son: toward the end of his life, *Yitzchok* loses his sight (*Beraishis* 20:16).<sup>1</sup>

*Avrohom* prays to the Eternal for *Avimelech* and his household, referring himself to the divine commandment of „be fruitful and multiply” (פדר"א כ"ו): the women beget again children (*Beraishis* 20:17).

In the merit of *Avrohom*'s prayer uttered for others, the Eternal remembers him also (ב"ק צ"ב).

- **Nissan 15** midday of the first day of *Pessach*: *Yitzchok* (יצחק) is born (*Beraishis* 21:2), four months after *Avrohom*'s settling in *Gherar*, and seven months counting from *Rosh hashonoh*, when the Eternal remembered *Soroh* (*Beraishis* 21:1). According to others (ב"ר נ"ג, ו), of nine months.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. 2171.

<sup>2</sup> In case we admit *Yitzchok* is born to nine months, this means or he is not born in *Pessach*, or we have to count not from *Rosh hashonoh*.

As people have doubts about the legitimacy of *Yitzchok's* birth (because of the elderly age of his parents, and because of *Soroh's* captivity in *Avimelech's* house), the Eternal forms the baby's face perfectly similar to that of his father (ב"ר נ"ג, ז).

The Eternal makes all the women to go dry. Consequently, they bring their newborns to *Soroh*, who nurses them all (cf. *Beraishis* 21:7, בנים in plural; פדר"א נ"ב; ב"מ פ"ז).

*Avimelech* and his vizir, *Pichol* (פיכל) come to congratulate *Avrohom*. Also *Shem* and *Ever* are coming as do *Avrohom's* father, *Terach* and his brother, *Nochor* who are coming from *Choron* (סה"י).

**2049:** *Avrohom* is 101 years old, *Yitzchok* is 1.

*Serug* dies at the age of 239 years.

**2053:** *Avrohom* is 105 years old, *Yitzchok* is 5.

Following *Soroh's* demand, *Avrohom* sends away from his house *Hogor* and her 19 years old son, *Yishmoel* (*Beraishis* 21:10; סה"י). *Soroh* does not want *Yitzchok* should learn *Yishmoel's* incorrect behaviour: e. g. already at the age of fifteen, he took home idols of the *Canaanis* (שמו"ר א, א). According to others (פדר"א ל), at that moment *Yitzchok* is ten years old, what means that *Yishmoel* is 24 (according to the textual tradition preserved in an other manuscript, they are 13 and 27).

*Avrohom* gives a letter of divorce (גט) to *Hogor* (יל"ש ח"א צ"ח).

*Hogor* settles with *Yishmoel* first in the wilderness of *Poron* (פרן; *Beraishis* 21:21), later they go back to *Mitzrayim* (סה"י).

*Yishmoel* marries a *moavi* girl by the name *Isso* (עיסה / עישה).

When he sees his father being unsatisfied with her behaviour, *Yishmoel* divorces her after three years.

After that, his mother marries him to an Egyptian woman by the name *Fotomo/Fotimoh* (פטימה / פטומה),<sup>1</sup> of *Paroh*'s family (what means a relative of *Hogor* also; *Beraishis* 21:21; יל"ש ה"א צ"ה; תרגו"י). According to others (ס"ה), his mother marries him first to a *Mitzri* woman by the name *Merivoh* (מריבה 'strife'), a relative of *Paroh*, who gives him four boys and a girl.

Later, when the behaviour of this wife is also considered uncorrect by his father, *Avrohom*, after three years *Yishmoel* divorces her, and marries a Canaanite woman, by the name *Malkis* (מלכית).

From *Mitzrayim*, *Yishmoel* returns to the wilderness, together with his mother, his wife and children, living in his tents the nomad life of herdsmen: the Eternal gives him lots of cattles and big wealth (ס"ה).

*Avimelech*, being afraid of *Avrohom*, seeing how the Eternal helps the latter in everything, proposes to conclude a covenant: *Avrohom* promises not to go into war against *Avimelech*'s family (*Beraishis* 21:23-24).

They also clarify to whom belong the wells digged by *Avrohom*'s servants but used by *Avimelech*'s herdsmen: *Avrohom* gives seven lambs to *Avimelech* as a reminder to the seven *mitzvos* to be observed by the *Bnai Noach* (*Beraishis* 21:25-30).

*Beer Sheva* (באר שבע) receives its name after this event: it means 'seven wells' but also 'the well of the oath [*i.e.* of the covenant]'<sup>2</sup> (*Beraishis* 21:31).

The Eternal disagrees with this covenant: „Take heed to yourself, lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land where you go” (*Shemos* 34:12, 15-16; *Devorim* 7:2). Therefore

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<sup>1</sup> *Fotomoh / Fotimoh*: presumably, this is the Arab name *Fatimah*, first known to be the name of Mohammad's youngest (and favourite) daughter of his wife Khadidyah (Mekka, c. 616 - Medina, 633), wife of Ali, mother of Hassan and Hussain. According to tradition, the prophet's followers are her descendants.

<sup>2</sup> *Ber-Sheva*: town situated about 20 miles South of Chevron, Ar. B'ir-es-Seba.

- ▶ because of the seven lambs, the *Bnai Yisroel* can enter *Eretz Canaan* only after seven generations (from *Avrohom* to *Moshe rabainu*);
- ▶ *Avimelech*'s descendants (the *Pelishtim*) will kill seven *tzaddikim* from among *Avrohom*'s descendants: *Shimshon*, *Chophni*, *Pinchos*, *Shaul* and his three sons;
- ▶ *Avimelech*'s descendants (the *Pelishtim*) will keep the Holy Ark captive for seven months;
- ▶ seven sanctuaries of *Avrohom*'s descendants will be destroyed: the *Mishkan*, *Gilgal*, *Shiloh*, *Nov*, *Givon* and the two *Botai mikdosh* (תנחומא; ב"ר נ"ד, ה).

**2058:** *Avrohom* is 110 years old, *Yitzchok* is 10.

At the age of 180, *Terach* gets remarried: his new wife is *Peliloh*, (פלילה) who begets a son named *Tzovo* (צובא).

At the age of thirty, *Tzovo ben Terach* fathers three sons: *Aram*, *Ochliv* (אכליו) and *Merik* (מריק).

*Aram ben Tzovo*'s three wives give birth to twelve sons (*cf.* *Yaakov*'s twelve sons) and three daughters.

He becomes so rich, he will have so many cattles that will be forced to leave *Choron*.

Therefore, he and his brothers go to look for new places where to settle: they build a town, named after *Aram*, this will be *Aram Tzovo* (ארם צובא; *cf.* 2.*Shmuel* 10:6,8).<sup>1</sup>

The sons of *Kemuel ben Nochor*, *Aram* and *Rechov* also leave *Choron*. They settle alongside the *Eufrates*, build a town there and name it after *Aram*'s son, *Pessor*: this is *Aram Naharaim* (ארם נהרים).

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<sup>1</sup> *Aram Tzovo*: Aramaic kingdom in the time of *Shaul* and *Dovid*, between *Hamath* and *Damascus*, near *Hums* (Emessa), *cf.* Ass. *Subitu*.

*Kessed's* children also leave *Choron*. They go to South, to the land *Shinear*, build a town and name it after their father, *Kessed*: this is the land of the *Casdim* (סה"י; ארץ כסדים).

**2074:** *Avrohom* is 125 years old, *Yitzchok* 25.

After 26 years in the land of the *Pelishtim*, *Avrohom* returns to *Chevron* for eleven years, until the *Akaidoh*.

**2083:** *Avrohom* is 135 years, *Yitzchok* 35.

*Terach* dies in *Choron* at the age of 205 years (*Beraishis* 11:32).

*Avrohom* and the grandchildren burry him in *Choron* (סה"י).

### 5.7. The Akaidoh

**2185:** *Avrohom* is 137 years old, *Yitzchok* 37 (פדר"א ל"א).

- **Tishrai 1, Friday, Ros hashonoh** (ר"ה ט"ז): *Avrohom* sacrifices *Yitzchok* (עקידת יצחק). The exact meaning of the word is only 'binding', *i.e.* up to the altar (*Beraishis* 22:2).

According to other data (ספרי), at that moment *Yitzchok* is 2, 5, 8, 13, 26 years old. However, as *Soroh*, who is 10 years younger than *Avrohom* (*Beraishis* 17:17), dies at this moment at the age of 127 (*Beraishis* 23:1-2), this means that *Avrohom* is 137 and *Yitzchok* 37. Again others say, it happened in the month *Nissan* or on *Yom Kippur*.

*Yishmoel*, who at that moment is 51 years old,<sup>1</sup> comes home to his father's house in *Chevron*.

*Yishmoel* tries to convince *Yitzchok* about his own greatness: how big it was the sacrifice to let himself be circumcised at the age of thirteen. Of this *Yitzchok*

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<sup>1</sup> In my exemplar of the „*Pirkai deRabbi Eliezer*” the erroneous data of 50 years is given.

answers saying he is ready to let himself be sacrificed for the Eternal: thereafter the Eternal decides to test *Avrohom* this way also (סנהדרין פ"ט; סה"י).

*Avrohom* could argue against the Eternal's command, saying You promised me that my seed shall be named after *Yitzchok* (*Beraishis* 21:12); and if I sacrifice him what will Your promise become.

However, *Avrohom* does not care, he goes to accomplish the Eternal's command, leaving the solution to Him.

*Avrohom* departs early in the morning (*Beraishis* 22:3), accompanied by *Yitzchok*, *Eliezer* and *Yishmoel* (תרגו"י).

He institutes the morning prayer (*Shachris*; שחרית; cf. *Beraishis* 19:27; ברכות כ"ו; רש"י שמו"י ד, י בשם תנחומא ט ומכילתא).

The way to the Mount *Moriah* (הר המריה) takes three days (*Beraishis* 22:4): the Eternal leaves time for *Avrohom* to reconsider what he really wants to do (תנחומא וירא כ"ח).

During the way *Yishmoel* and *Eliezer* dispute over the order of inheritance instead of the sacrificed *Yitzchok*, the son of the dismissed maidservant or the true servant (פדר"א ל"א; סה"י).

*Soton* (סטן) tries to convince *Avrohom* to return home, when the latter insist in fulfilling the Eternal's *mitzvoh*, *Soton* turns into a very fast river closing their way. However, *Avrohom* enters the river to cross it.

Following *Avrohom*'s prayer - if *Yitzchok* is drawn, who will sanctify the Eternal's name (cf. *Beraishis* 21:12) –, the Eternal forces *Soton* to leave (יל"ש ח"א (צ"ט).

The Eternal appears on top of the mountain in form of a pillar of fire thus signalizing the place for the altar.

As this has been seen only by *Avrohom* and *Yitzchok*, *Avrohom* orders *Yishmoel* and *Eliezer* to wait for them in certain distance (*Beraishis* 22:5; פדר"א ל"א; סה"י).

*Avrohom* builds the altar (*Beraishis* 22:9) on the same place where the Eternal had taken the dust from to form *Odom horishon*. This is the same place where *Cain* and *Hevel* brought sacrifices; the same place where *Noach* brought sacrifices after coming out of the ark. And on this same place will stand the altar of the first and also of the second *Bais hamikdosh* in *Yerusholayim* (תרגו"י).

The Angels of mercy intervene for *Yitzchok* (פדר"א ל"א; סה"י).

Finally, *Avrohom* – following the Eternal's command – sacrifices a ram instead of *Yitzchok* (*Beraishis* 22:12-13). The ram has been prepared already on the sixth day of Creation (אבות ה, ט"ז). The sound of a ram's horn (שופר) will make the Eternal remember, on the day of *Rosh hashonoh*, the merit of the Fathers, to consider them for the sons.

When *Avrohom*'s sword touches *Yitzchok*'s neck, the soul of the latter leaves his body tied to the altar.

When the Eternal says "...Lay not your hand upon the lad..." (*Beraishis* 22:12), *Yitzchok*'s soul returns into his body: an allusion in the Torah to the resurrection of the dead (פדר"א ל"א).

The ram's left horn will be blown by the Eternal on Mount Sinai (*Shemos* 11:19), the bigger right one will be used when *Moshiach* will come (*Yishayoh* 27:13; פדר"א ל"א).

*Avrohom* calls the name of the place of the *Akaidoh* „*HaShem yireh*” (י יראה) 'the Eternal looks down from heaven, and fills the earth with goodness' (*Beraishis* 22:14).

*Noach*'s son, *Shem* also gives a name to the place: *Sholem* (שלם, 'perfect or only for perfects').



The Eternal makes one name of the two: *Yerusholayim* (יְרוּשָׁלַיִם; ב"ר נ"ו, ט"ז; (מדה"ג כ"ב, ט"ו).

*Avrohom* returns to *Beer-Shevoh* (*Beraishis* 22:19) to tell her wife about what happened.

*Soroh* however, as *Soton* already related her the news about the *Akaidoh*, left for *Chevron*.

The four giants – *Achimon* (אֲחִימָן), *Sheshai* (שֶׁשַׁי), *Talmi* (תַּלְמִי), sons of *Arba* (אַרְבַּע); according to others (רַמְבַּ"ן), sons of *Arba*'s son, *Anok* (עֲנוֹךְ) – see from the high *Yitzchok* tied upon the altar (יִצְחָק עַל פִּי זֹהָר).

Now *Soton* again appears, and – contradicting himself – tells that *Yitzchok* did not die.

From great happiness, *Soroh*'s soul departs from her body: she dies at the age of 127 (*Beraishis* 23:1-2).

Before dieing, she cries out six times: corresponding to this we blow six *tekios* on *Rosh hashonoh* (פֶּדֶר"א ל"ב).

After her death, the *Shechinah* departs from above her tent, no more blessing on the dough, the candles burning from one *Shabbos* to the next are spent (ב"ר ס, ט).

She is the model of the G-d-fearing woman, the *Aishes chayil* (אִשֵּׁת חַיִּיל), praised by *Shlomoh hamelech* in the last 22 verses of the „*Proverbs*” (משלי; *Mishlay* 31:10-31).

As she brought life to the world she merited that, contrary to *Chavoh*, her death should be mentioned by the Torah (זֹהָר).

*Avrohom* purchases, for the sum of 400 great *shekels*, the cave of *Machpeloh* (מַעְרַת הַמַּכְפֶּלֶה; 'double cave', couples had been burried there), situated at

*Kiryas Arba* (קרית ארבע = *Chevron*) from *Efron ben Tzochar the Chitti* (אפרון בן צוחר החתי), and burries *Soroh* there (*Beraishis* 23:3-20).

*Chevron* received its other name of the four giants living there, or of the four couples buried there (ב"ר נ"ח, ד).

*Avrohom* found the cave running after an ox when he wanted to prepare a meal for the Angels visiting him.

The cave is also the entrance of the *Gan Eden*; here did the Eternal bury *Odom horishon* and *Chavoh* (זוהר ח"א קכ"ז; זוהר חדש רות).

The contract about the selling of the cave is signed by four witnesses: the *Chitti Amigal ben Avishua* (אמיגל בן אבישוע), the *Chivvi Elichoron ben Eshunash* (עבדון בן אחירע), the *gomri Avdon ben Achira* (סג"י; עקדיל בן אבידיש) and the *Tzidoni Akdil ben Avidayish* (סג"י).

The *Chittis* make *Avrohom* swear an oath that his descendants will not attack their town, *Yebus*, when conquering *Eretz Canaan*.

*Avrohom's* oath is carved on several copper pillars what are erected in the town.

The town, *Yerusholayim* will be occupied only by *Dovid hamelech* when preparing to build the *Bais hamikdosh*, after removing the pillars (*2.Smuel* 5:8; פדר"א ל"ו). However, he purchases for money the site of the *Bais hamikdosh* from *Arvanah haYebussi* that the idolaters should not say they have a share in it.<sup>1</sup>

The funeral ceremony is assisted by *Shem*, his great-grandson *Ever*, *Avimelech* king of the *Pelishtim*; and also by *Onair*, *Mamray* and *Eshkol*, *Avrohom's* allies (סג"י).

*Rivkoh* (רבקה) is born.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. 2892.

She is the daughter of *Besuel*, granddaughter of *Avrohom*'s brother *Nochor* (*Beraishis* 22:23).

After the *Akaidoh*, the Eternal tells *Avrohom* the news about the birth of his grand-niece. At the same time, He tells him that she is intended for a wife for *Yitzchok* (ב"ר נ"ז, ב).

*Avrohom* sends *Yitzchok* to learn in the *yeshivah* of *Shem* and *Ever*: he spends three years there (סה"י).

*Avrohom* returns to *Beer Shebah* (סה"י).

The ten trials of *Avrohom*<sup>1</sup> (in brackets the chronological order with the year when the event took place<sup>2</sup>):

- ▶ 1./ *Ur Casdim* (cf. *Beraishis* 15:7; 1 – 1998);
- ▶ 2./ *Lech lecho* (*Beraishis* 12:1; 4 – 2023);
- ▶ 3./ hunger in *Canaan*: *Avrohom* goes to *Mitzrayim* (*Beraishis* 12:10; 5 – c. 2030);
- ▶ 4./ *Soroh* is taken to *Paroh*'s house (*Beraishis* 12:14-15; 6 – c. 2030);
- ▶ 5./ the war of the kings: *Avrohom* liberates *Lot* (*Beraishis* 14:1-2; 3 – c. 2021);
- ▶ 6./ *Bris bain habsorim*: the Eternal shows him the servitudes (*Beraishis* 15:9-21; 2 – 2018);
- ▶ 7./ *Bris miloh* (*Beraishis* 17:10-11; 7 – 2047);
- ▶ 8./ *Avimelech* takes *Soroh* (*Beraishis* 20:2; 8 – 2048);
- ▶ 9./ he has to send away *Hogor* and *Yishmoel* (*Beraishis* 21:10; 9 – 2053);

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the twelve trials of *Herakles* (son of *Zeus* and *Alkmeneh*) in the service of the physically and psychologically underdeveloped *Eurystheus* (son of *Sthenelos* and *Nikippeh*; grandson – together with *Herakles* - of *Perseus*, descendants of *Zeus*), after what he will be rewarded with immortality.

<sup>2</sup> All three lists – „*Pirkai deRabbi Eliezer*”, *RAMBAM*, *BARTENURA* – give the trials in the order of their occurrence in the Torah, and not in chronological order.

► **10./ Akaidoh** (*Beraishis* 22:2; 10 – 2085; ג, ר"ע מברטנורה אבות ה, ג).

According to others (פדר"א כ"ו-ל"ו):

- 1./ He recognizes the Eternal: he renounces idolatry;
- 2./ *Ur Casdim*;
- 3./ *Lech lecho* (from his father's house to *Choron*);
- 4./ Hunger in *Eretz Canaan*: he goes to *Mitzrayim*;
- 5./ *Soroh* is taken to *Paroh*'s house;
- 6./ The war of the kings: he liberates *Lot*;
- 7./ *Bris bain habsorim*: the servitudes;
- 8./ *Bris miloh*;
- 9./ He has to send away *Hogor* and *Yishmoel*;
- 10./ *Akaidoh*.

Again others (רמב"ם) enumerate only the trials mentioned in the Torah (that means without *Ur Casdim*):

- 1./ *Lech lecho*;
- 2./ Hunger: he goes *Mitzrayim*;
- 3./ *Soroh* is taken to *Paroh*'s house;
- 4./ The war of the kings: he liberates *Lot*;
- 5./ He marries *Hogor*;
- 6./ *Bris miloh*;
- 7./ *Avimelech* takes *Soroh*;
- 8./ He has to send away *Hogor*;
- 9./ He has to send away *Yishmoel*;
- 10./ *Akaidoh*.

**2086:** *Avrohom* is 138 years old, *Yitzchok* is 38.

*Avimelech*, king of the *Pelishtim*, dies at the age of 193.

*Avrohom* goes to *Gerar* with his people to visit the mourning family.

On the place of the deceased king, his twelve years old son, *Benmelech* (בִּנְמֶלֶךְ) is crowned. According to the laws of the country, he receives a new name: *Avimelech*, as his father (סָה"י).

**2087:** *Avrohom* is 139 years old, *Yitzchok* is 39.

*Yishmoel* with his twelve sons (cf. *Yaakov*'s twelve sons) and grandchildren go back to the wilderness of *Poron* (סָה"י). They occupy the territory from *Chaviloh* to *Shur*, from *Mitzrayim* towards *Ashur* (*Beraishis* 25:18).

**2088:** *Avrohom* is 140 years old, *Yitzchok* is 40.

Until *Avrohom*, the face of the people did not reflect their age, at the end of their lives they looked exactly the same, as in their youth. *Avrohom*'s face is made old, upon his own request, by the Eternal so people are able to differentiate between him and his son, *Yitzchok* whose face had been made exactly identical to his father's (פֶּדֶר"א נ"ב; ב"ר ס"ה, ד; ב"מ פ"ז; סְנֵה־רִין ק"ז).

*Avrohom* does not want his son should take a wife from one of the *Canaan*i peoples which were to be annihilated later (*Beraishis* 24:3). Therefore, he sends his servant, *Eliezer*, to his family in *Choron*, the latter should bring a wife for his son from there (*Beraishis* 24:4). Although the members of *Avrohom*'s family in *Choron* are idolaters, he considers them being able to do *teshuvoh* (ב"ר נ"ט, י"א; מִדָּה"ג כ"ד, ג).

*Eliezer* puts himself on way with ten camels charged with rich presents, to demonstrate the richness of *Avrohom* (*Beraishis* 24:10). He is accompanied by ten servants and two Angels.

He also takes along the document of inheritance of *Yitzchok* signed by *Avrohom*.

The journey takes, instead of seventeen days, only three hours (פֶּדֶר"א ט"ז).

One of the Angels brings *Rivkoh* before *Eliezer* at the well (*Beraishis* 24:15). She is a king's daughter who has never yet been at a well (פדר"א ט"ז).

*Rivkoh* accomplishes the *mitzvah* of *gemilus chassodim* (גמילות חסדים, 'good deed') above every expectation: not only gives she to drink to *Eliezer*, but also to the latter's camels (*Beraishis* 24:17-20).

The water comes up alone, so *Rivkoh* does not have to bow down (ב"ר ט, ו).

*Rivkoh's* father, *Bessuel*, king of *Aram Naharaim*, tries to poison *Eliezer*, to take all the wealth the latter brought from *Avrohom*, but an Angel interchanges the dishes, and it is *Bessuel* who dies.

In reality, this is a favour (חסד) of the Eternal: *Bessuel*, the king, promulgated a law about his royal right to the first night of every new couple, and as he died he has not to be afraid of any vengeance from the part of the people in connection with his own daughter (מדא"ג כ"ד, נ"ג).

*Bessuel's* son, *Lovon* is obliged to let his sister, *Rivkoh*, depart with *Eliezer* (*Beraishis* 24:59).

*Lovon* blesses his sister: „...*You are our sister, be you the mother of thousands of ten thousands, and let your seed possess the gate of those who hate them.*” (*Beraishis* 24:60).

Because of this blessing, *Rivkoh* will be barren for twenty years, the idolaters should not say ulteriorly that her seed got multiplied because of their blessing (ב"ר ט, י"ג).

*Eliezer* departs together with *Rivkoh* (*Beraishis* 24:61) and her nurse, *Devorah*, the daughter of *Utz* (סה"י).

The way back also takes only three hours, that they should not stay alone by night (פדר"א ט"ז).

*Yitzchok* goes to *Hogor* who lives near the well named *Beer leChai roi*: he wants her to be remarried – after *Soroh*'s death - by *Avrohom* (ב"ר ס, י"ג).

He stops to pray (לשוח, 'to speak, to complain') at the Mount *Moriah* (*Beraishis* 24:63): he institutes the afternoon prayer, the *minchah* (מנחה; רש"י ברכות כ"ו; רש"י (חולין צ"א).

According to the *Midrash* (שיפתי כהן דברים ג כ"ג על פי ספרי דברים כ"ו), we find ten expressions for prayer in the Torah:

- ▶ *shuoh* (שועה; *Shemos* 2:23), 'cry for help';
- ▶ *tzeokoh* (צעקה; *Beraishis* 27:34), 'outcry';
- ▶ *naakoh* (נאקה; *Shemos* 2:24), 'groaning';
- ▶ *rinoh* (רנה; *Yirmeyoh* 7:15), 'ringing cry';
- ▶ *petzur* (פצור; *Beraishis* 19:3), 'pressing upon';
- ▶ *crioh* (קריאה; *2.Shmuel* 22:7), 'calling upon';
- ▶ *niphul* (נפול; *Devorim* 9:25), 'falling down';
- ▶ *pelul* (פלול; *Beraishis* 20:7), 'prayer';
- ▶ *pegioh* (פגיעה; *Beraishis* 28:11), 'approach';
- ▶ *techinoh* (תחנה; *Devorim* 3:23), 'plead'.

However, the same *Midrash* enumerates more expressions:

- ▶ *zaakoh* (זעקה; *Shemos* 2:23), 'cry';
- ▶ *asiroh* (עתירה; *Beraishis* 25:21), 'supplication';
- ▶ *amidoh* (עמידה; *Tehilim* 106:30), 'stand before';
- ▶ *chiluy* (חילוי; *Shemos* 32:11), 'strong plead'.

An other *midrashic* place (תנחומא ואתחנן ג) gives the following expressions: עמידה, נפילה, פגיעה, רננה, שועה, זעקה, צעקה, תחנה, תפלה.

*Yitzchok* marries, at the age of forty, *Rivkoh* (*Beraishis* 24:67, 25:20) who at that moment is three years old (זוהר). Others say (סה"י), she is ten; or she is fourteen

(סה"ד). *Rivkoh* was born at the moment of the *Akaidoh*, when *Yitzchok* was 37, what means that at the moment of their marriage when, according to the Torah *Yitzchok* was forty, she had to be three years old. However, according to others, at the moment of the *Akaidoh*, *Yitzchok* was only 26, what means that *Rivkoh* – born at the moment of the *Akaidoh* – gets married at the age of  $40 - 26 = 14$  years.

In *Rivkoh*'s merit the three blessings (the *Shechinah*, the dough and the *Shabbos*-candles) which stopped at the moment of *Soroh*'s death, return and are again permanently present (ב"ר ט, ט"ו).

*Eliezer*'s reward: he is liberated by *Avrohom*. He becomes a king: he is *Og* the king of *Boshon* (עוג מלך הבשן; ד"א זוטא א; פדר"א ט"ז;<sup>1</sup>), who eats thousand oxes for one meal (מ' ספרים כ"א).

According to others (יל"ש חיי שרה כ"ט), the Eternal takes *Eliezer* alive to the *Gan Eden*, because *Yitzchok* suspected him of incorrect behaviour toward *Rivkoh* during their way back.

*Avrohom* gets remarried: his wife is *Keturoh* (קטורה; *Beraishis* 25:1) from *Eretz Canaan*. According to others (ב"ר ט"א, ד), in reality, he remarries *Hogor* who made *teshuvoh*, changing her whole personality and, consequently, the Eternal gave her a new name.

They beget six more children.

#### *Avrohom's descendants of Hogor (Beraishis 25:2-4):*

■ **Yishmoel** (ישמעל). His children are (*Beraishis* 25:12-16):

► from *Merivoh hamitzris*:

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<sup>1</sup> *Og*: (adopted) son of *Og* who survived the Flood, or *Nimrod*'s son?



● *Nevoynos* (נבית):<sup>1</sup> the Arabs (ערב; תרגו"י ישי ס, ז). According to others (תרגו"י), his name is *Nevot* (נבט), (דהי"א א, כ"ט).

His children are: *Miud* (מיעוד), *Suad* (סואד), *Mayon* (מעין);

● *Kaidor* (קדר):<sup>2</sup> the Arabs (תרגו"י; תרגו"י דהי"א א, כ"ט).

His children are: *Elyon* (עליון), *Ketzem* (קצם), *Chemed* (חמד), *Eli* (עלי);

● *Adbeel* (אדב-ל):<sup>3</sup> His children are: *Chomud* (חמוד), *Yovin* (יבין);

● *Mivsom* (מבשם). His children are: *Avadyoh* (עבדי-ה), *Eved-Melech* (עבד-מלך), *Yeush* (יעוש);

● *Bosmas* (בשמת), by her other name *Machlas* (מחלת), *Aisov's* wife;<sup>4</sup>

► from *Malkis hacanaani*:

● *Mishmo* (משמע). His children are: *Shamua* (שמוע), *Zichron* (זכרון), *Oved* (עובד);

● *Dumoh* (דומה):<sup>5</sup> His children are: *Ketzem*, *Eli*, *Machmad* (מחמד), *Amad* (עמאד);

● *Masso* (משא). His children are: *Molon* (מלון), *Muloh* (מולה), *Eved-Odon* (עבד-אדון);

● *Chadad* (חדד). His children are: *Natzur* (נאצור), *Mintzar* (מנצאר), *Eved-Melech*;

<sup>1</sup> *Nevoynos*: the *Nabateans* take their name from him; Ass. *Nabaitai*. Of Arab origin, their civilization is formed through the integration of foreign (Aramaic and Greek) elements, at the turn of the 2nd and 1st millennia BCE at the border of the Syrian-Arabian territories. The capital of the kingdom was Petra. ALEXANDER the Great liberates them from Persian rule, to be later conquered by TRAIAN. Their agriculture is based on irrigation, besides, they play an important role in the long distance trade connecting the Mediterranean with the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf (STRABO XVI:4:21 ff). PLINY (*Historia Naturalis*, V:11:65) mentions them by the name *Nabataei* and *Tzedrei*.

<sup>2</sup> *Kaidor*: nomads living in the Arabian desert, their name takes its origin from their black clothes made of a goat's skin; Ass. *Kidru*; PLINY mentions them by the same name as the Nabateans, see precedent footnote.

<sup>3</sup> *Adbeel*: cf. Ass. *Idiba'il*, name of a North-Arabic tribe.

<sup>4</sup> *Bosmas*: cf. *Beraishis* 26:34, where *Aisov's* wife, *Bosmas* is the daughter of *Ailon haChitti*, see below.

<sup>5</sup> *Dumoh*: modern opinions seek to identify him with *Dumath-al-Jandal* in Northern Arabia, in *Jof*.

- *Taimo* (תימא).<sup>1</sup> His children are *Said* (סעיד), *Sadon* (סעדון), *Yichul* (יכול);
- *Yetur* (יטור).<sup>2</sup> His children are: *Merik*, *Yiish* (יעיש), *Ilvi* (עלוי), *Pochis* (פחית);
- *Nofish* (נפיש). His children are: *Eved*, *Tomir* (תמיר), *Aviyossef* (אביוסף), *Mir* (מיר);
- *Kaidmoh* (קדמה). The *Children of the East* (בני קדם; cf. *Yirmeyoh* 49:28), who settled on *Cain's* heritage (פדר"א נ), are his descendants. His children are *Koliph* (כליף), *Tachti* (תחתי), *Amir* (עמיר);
- **Zimron** (זמרן). His children are *Avihon* (אביהן), *Molich* (מוליך), *Meriach* (מריח);
- **Yokshon** (יקשן). His children are: *Shevo* (שבא), *Dedon* (דדן). The children of the latter are: *Ashurim* (אשורים), *Letushim* (לטושים), *Leumim* (לאמים);
- **Medon** (מדן). His children are: *Amido* (אמידע), *Iyov* (יוב), *Gochi* (גחי), *Eliso* (אלישע), *Nosoch* (נותח);<sup>3</sup>
- **Midyon** (מדין). His children are:
  - *Aifo* (עיפה). His children are: *Maisach* (מיתח), *Maishor* (מישר), *Evi* (אוי), *Etzloa* (אצלע);
  - *Aifer* (עפר). His children are: *Efron* (עפרון), *Tzur* (צור), *Elyoron* (אלירון), *Maidon* (מידון);

<sup>1</sup> *Taimo*: cf. Ass. *Taima* 'Southern Land', but cf. *Beraishis* 36:11 where *Aisov's* grandson – the son of *Elifaz* – is called *Taimon*.

<sup>2</sup> *Yetur*: modern opinions seek to identify him with the *Ituraios* mentioned by STRABO (XVI:2:18) and JOSEPHUS (XIII:11:3), who gave their name to the province of *Ituraea*. According to 1.*Divrai haYomim* 5:19, the two and a half tribes which settle on the East bank of the Jordan wage war against them and the descendants of the following, *Nofish*.

<sup>3</sup> *Amido*, *Iyov* etc.: in the „*Sefer haYoshor*“, they are all enlisted as the children of *Dedon*. However, in the Torah (*Beraishis* 25:3), the children of the latter are *Ashurim*, *Letushim*, *Leumim*. Although the „*Targum Yonassan*“ renders the three names as merchants, artisans and heads of tribes, and although according to CHIZKUNI they live in camps and dispersedly, IBN EZRA and the *RAMBAN* agree that these are personal names. Besides, here we have five names, instead of the three mentioned by the Torah. Therefore it is well possible that the „*Seder haDoros*“ is right when it enlists them as *Medon's* children.

- *Chanoch* (חנך). His children are: *Reuel* (רעו-ל), *Rekem* (רקם), *Ozai* (עזי), *Elyosov* (אליושב), *Cheled* (חלד);
- *Avido* (אבידע). His children are: *Chur* (חור), *Melur* (מלור), *Karvil* (קרויל), *Milchi* (מלחי);
- *Eldooh* (אלדעה). His children are: *Yakir* (יכיר), *Reva* (רבע), *Molachjoh* (מלחי-ה), *Gevol* (גבל);
- **Yishbok** (ישבק). His children are: *Mochiri* (מכירי), *Bidua* (בידוע), *Tatur* (תתור);
- **Shuach** (שוח). His children are: *Bildad* (בלדד), *Chemdad* (חמדד), *Moshon* (מושן), *Maivon* (מיבן; סה"י).

*Avrohom* gives rich presents to *Keturoh's* children and sends them away (*Beraishis* 25:6).

They settle on the Eastern Mountain (*Beraishis* 25:6), and build six towns (סה"י). *Yokshon's* children does not stay with them: they dwell in the wilderness as wandering nomads (סה"י).

*Midyon's* children settle in the Eastern region, East of *Kush*, they build a town, and conquer the entire Land of *Midyon* (סה"י).

**2096:** *Avrohom* is 148 years old, *Yitzchok* is 48.

*Arpachshad* dies at the age of 438 years.

In *Yitzchok's* days, kings begin to rule over the island of *Kandia* (קנדיאה).<sup>1</sup>

In the same time, a woman named *Vesta* (ויסטא)<sup>2</sup> starts to surround herself with virgins never to get married only serving their g-d.

<sup>1</sup> *Kandia*: Crete, see above.

<sup>2</sup> *Vesta*: Roman equivalent of Greek *Hestia*, daughter of *Kronos* and *Rheia*, *Zeus's* sister. She is the goddess of the family *hearth*, and also of the divine force emanating from the fire and of the warmth emanating from the Earth. In her sanctuary on the *Forum* (the „*hearth*” of the state: *focus publicus*,

A woman by the name *Mandivah* (מנדיבה) invents weaving and spinning, oil-pressing, the use of armours, the science of warfare and of arithmetics.<sup>1</sup> And it is in this same time that people start to fish and to go bird-catching, to mine iron, to build houses, to mine salt, and to adore the Star *Tzedek* (צדק) called *Iupiter* (יופיטר; סה"ד בשם שה"ק).

### 5.8. Yaakov

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*Vesta populi Romani Quiritium*) fire was burning permanently, protected by six vestal virgins supervised by the *pontifex maximus*, and stired up again once a year on the 1st of *Martius*.

Outside Rome, the most important sanctuary of *Vesta* was situated in the *Latin* town *Lavinium*. According to Roman mythological tradition, it was *Aeneas*, founder of the town, who brought along the holy fire of the altar and the *penates* (the protecting g-ds of the family and of the state) when escaping together with his family from *Troy*. *Aeneas* (Gr. *Aineias*) was the son of the Trojan *Ankhises* – prince of the town *Dardanos*, situated near the Mount Ida South-East of *Troy*, second cousin of the Trojan king, *Priamos* - and *Aphrodite*). Also according to tradition, *Aeneas* named *Lavinium* after the name of his wife, *Lavinia* the daughter of *Latinus* king of *Laurentum* (son or grandson of *Faunus* and *Marica*, king of the Italian aborigines, the town was situated between *Ostia* and *Rome*) and his wife, *Amata*. *Lavinia* was originally to get married to *Turnus* (son of *Daunus* and the nymph *Venilia*) the king of the *Rutulus* people who took arms against the conquering Trojans. However, when *Aeneas* kills *Turnus*, he obtains following an oracle, *Lavinia*'s hand (VIRGIL, *Aeneis*; OVID, *Metamorphoses*). In LIVY'S version (1:1:2), *Aeneas* marries *Lavinia*, founds a town what he names *Lavinium*, he begets a son named *Ascanius*, and only after that is he attacked by *Turnus*. In the war also *Latinus* falls. Finally, *Aeneas* organizes the Trojans and the aborigines called henceforward *Latini*, and defeats *Turnus*. *Ascanius* or *Iulus* founds the town *Alba Longa* 30 years after the foundation of *Lavinium*. His successor will be his son, *Silvius*: he gives his name to the royal family of the *Silvius* ruling over *Alba Longa* for 300 years. *Romulus* and *Remus* (LIVY 1:3) were descendants of this family. According to an other tradition (DIONYSOS HALIKARNASSEUS 1:70) *Iulus* was or the second son of *Aeneas*, or the son of *Ascanius*, and *Silvius* a brother of *Ascanius*.

<sup>1</sup> HERODOTE (5:59), DIODOROS SIKULOS (1:23), APOLLODORE („*Bibliothèque*” 3:1.1, 4:1.2), PAUSANIAS *Periegetes* (9:5.1,12:1-3.) mention that when *Agenor*, king of *Syrie*, sends his sons - *Kadmos*, *Phoinix* and *Kylix* - to find his daughter *Europe*, raped by *Zeus* appearing in the form of a bull, *Kadmos* introduces in the West the writing, the use of armours, the building of fortresses and irrigation. *Agenor* was the son of *Poseidon* and *Libya* – daughter of *Epaphos* and *Memphis*, she gave her name to the land *Libya* -, the twin-brother of *Belos* king of *Egypt* (the father of *Aigyptos*); his wife was the nymph *Telephassa*. *Kadmos*, while searching for his sister, founds *Thebai* in *Boeotia*, the fortress of the town (the Thebean Akropolis) is named *Kadmeia* after him; his wife is *Harmonia* the daughter of *Ares* (their marriage is like the holy nuptials of *Melkart* – the name of *Baal* in *Tyre/Tzur* meaning 'the g-d of the town' - and *Astarte/Attart/Astarot*). *Phoinix* settles during their wandering in *Phoinikia* (Phenicia) named ulteriorly after him. *Kylix* settles in *Cilicia* named ulteriorly after him. *Kadmos*' name seems to be of Semitic origin: Hebr. *kedem* 'the beginning of sg, East'), just like the name *Europe*: Hebr. *erev* 'mixture, evening', *maarov* 'West'). The story is the mythological rewriting of the Phoenician colonisation

**2107:** *Avrohom* is 159 years old, *Yitzchok* is 59.

*Rivkoh* has not yet children (*Beraishis* 25:21), therefore she asks her husband, *Yitzchok*, to pray to the Eternal for offspring.

The Eternal listens to their prayer offered on the Mount *Moriah* (תרגו"י): *Rivkoh* becomes pregnant (*Beraishis* 25:21).

In the seventh month of the pregnancy, the quarrel of the embryos causes great pains to *Rivkoh* (*Beraishis* 25:22).

Upon her question, the Eternal answers that she will have twins, two peoples will descend from her (*Beraishis* 25:23).

**2108:** *Avrohom* is 160 years old, *Yitzchok* is 60.

*Yaakov* (יעקב) and *Aisov* (עשו) are born: they are twins.

*Yaakov*'s hand takes hold on *Aisov*'s heel (*Beraishis* 25:26): *Aisov*'s descendants will keep their power until *Yaakov*'s descendant will not come and cut his brother's heel (פדר"א ל"ב; עקב).

*Yaakov* is born circumcised, *Aisov* is born „...red, all over like a hairy garment...“<sup>1</sup> (*Beraishis* 25:25), already having all of his teeth.

*Aisov* receives his name from his parents, *Yaakov* from the Eternal (רש"י כ"ה, כ"ו).

*Seir* (שעיר; *Beraishis* 25:25): the same word is used by the Torah for the two he-goats sacrificed on *Yom Kippur*: the Eternal puts the sins of the *Bnai Yisroel* upon *Aisov*, the hairy, among whose descendants the Jews are living and because of whom they sin, the *yaitzer horoh* (ב"ר ס"ה, א; ת"צ).

Because of the lesions suffered during the birth, *Rivkoh* can no more have any children, although originally she was also to have 12: this is her punishment for

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towards the West reaching *Hellas* also.

<sup>1</sup> According to modern scientific opinion, this can be explained by the seldom occurring *hypertrichosis lanuginosa* caused by the remaining and developing *lanugo*.

regretting, under the pression of the birthpangs, being pregnant ( מֵדָא"ג כ"ה, כ"ו ; )  
 תנחומא תצא ד ; cf. the sacrifice to be brought by a woman forty or eighty days  
 after the birth; *Vayikroh* 12)

In this year, the king of *Ashkenaz* starts ruling over Bohemia and Saxony (צ"ד).

It is also in *Yaakov's* days that a woman teaches people in the East [Mesopotamia  
 ?] the „science” of farming, the use of wheat, the bakeing of bread and many  
 other useful things.

Also the great oracle and wise man, *Argo*, lives in *Yaakov's* days. He is said to  
 have had hundred eyes. He builds the first ship.<sup>1</sup>

And it is also in this period that a philosopher [?] starts to wear a ring on the  
 fourth finger of his hand where the veine of the heart passes (ס"ה ד).<sup>2</sup>

**2123:** *Yitzchok* is 75 years old, *Yaakov* and *Aisov* are 15.

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<sup>1</sup> *Argo*: in Greek mythological tradition, several person bear this name. 1./ the son of *Zeus* and *Niobe*, king of a town and of a whole province on the eastern part of the Peloponnessos peninsula, named *Argolis* after his name. He introduces the cultivation of wheat in Greece. 2./ The great-grandson of the former, who had two eyes before and two behind. According to others (OVIDIUS, *Metamorphoses* 1:624) he had hundred eyes, or even several hundreds (APOLLODOROS). 3./ The son of *Phrixos* and *Khalkiope*, builder of the ship named *Argo* (according to others, he did not build it). The building of the ship, the greatest at that moment (placing 50 oarsmen), is ordered by *Iason* (son of *Aison* and *Alkimedee*, grandson of *Kretheus* the founder of *Iolkos*), one generation before the Troyan war (c. 1200 BCE). *Iason's* intention is to travel on board of the ship with his companions – the *argonauts* – to *Kolkhis*, situated on the East coast of the Black Sea, to bring back from there the *Golden Fleece*. The latter is the fleece of the ram on whose back *Phrixos* and his sister *Hellé* tried to escape from their step-mother, *Ino* (during their flee, *Helle* fell into the sea from the back of the flying ram, hence the name of the place *Hellespontos* 'the sea of *Helle*'). After many adventures, *Iason* and his companions arrive to *Kolkhis*, bring along the *Golden Fleece*, and return to *Iolkos*. The story is presumably the mythological rewriting of the early discoveries of the Greeks on the shores of the Mediterranean and, later, of the Black Sea.

The Argolian plain is very poor in water, therefore only the irrigation introduced by *Danaos* (son of *Belos* king of Egypt and of *Ankhinoe*; brother of *Aigyptos* who gave his name to Egypt) or his 50 daughters, the *Danaides* (killers of their husbands) what made the soil cultivable (HESIODE *Frag.* 170).

<sup>2</sup> See above, where *Yefes'* son, *Tiros* is the first who, after the Flood, bears a ring. Every free Athenian citizen – with the exception of the poorest groups of the population – was bearing a seal-ring (Gr. *sfragis*), on the fourth finger of his hand (*paramessos*). Later, not only on the fourth finger and not only seal-rings, they were also wearing golden rings with precious stones. In Rome, in the beginning, people were wearing only iron rings (*annulus*, *anulus*), mainly as seal-rings. Later the right to wear golden rings (*ius annuli aurei*) was attributed to *senators* and knights. At the beginning, here also they were wearing one ring on the fourth finger of the left hand, later even more than one on every finger of both hands. The bride-groom gave also a ring to his fiancée (*annulus pronubus*). The mourners did not wear the

● **Teves:** *Avrohom* dies at the age of 175 years (*Beraishis* 25:7-8).

He lives five years less than his son *Yitzchok*, so he will not see the wickedness of *Aisov*, whose failures were not remarked by *Yitzchok* (שמו"ר א, א).

Before his death, *Avrohom* orders his son, *Yitzchok*, not to turn aside of the Eternal's way, and to order the same thing later to his sons (cf. „...*For I know him [Avrohom], that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord...*”; *Beraishis* 18:19): that the Eternal's promise concerning the inheritance of *Eretz Canaan* should be fulfilled (סה"י).

*Yitzchok* and *Yishmoel* burry *Avrohom* into the cave of *Machpeloh* by the side of *Soroh* (*Beraishis* 25:9).

All the kings of *Eretz Canaan* come to the funerals, also the members of *Avrohom's* family who stayed in *Choron* (סה"י).

The Eternal visits and blesses the mourning *Yitzchok*, thus teaching the people the *mitzvoh* of consoling of the mourners (יל"ש תתקס"ה).

During a hunting, *Aisov* kills the 215 years old *Nimrod* (ב"ר ס"ג, י"ב) and his two companions (סה"י): thus *Nimrod's* dream, according to what he will die of the hand of a descendant of *Avrohom*, is fulfilled.

His men carry him home to *Bovel* to burry him there.

*Nimrod* ruled over his country for 185 years. After his death, his empire is dissolved, even the members of his family become servants for a long time (סה"י).

*Aisov* seizes *Odom horishon's* coat (סה"י) which until then was in *Nimrod's* possession making the latter a successfull hunter.

*Aisov* arrives home tired and nervous, afraid of the vengeance of *Nimrod's* children (*Beraishis* 25:29).



*Yaakov* is cooking lentils (*Beraishis* 25:29) because of the mourning over *Avrohom*'s death (ב"ב ט"ז): the round lentils symbolize the vicious circle of life and death (ב"ר ט"ג, י"ט), and also because the kingdom, the power and the position of the first-born belong to *Aisov* (פדר"א ל"ה).

*Aisov* sells his birthright to *Yaakov* (*Beraishis* 25:33): according to *halochah*, the first-born inherits double portion, and has the right to bring sacrifices. He also sells his place in the cave of *Machpeloh*. They write a contract, signed by witnesses, and seal it (סה"י). *Yaakov* pays with gold (לק"ט), then gives lentils to *Aisov* (ב"ר ק, ה).

The Eternal ulteriorly gives His accord to the „deal”: „*Yisroel is My first-born*” (מדא"ג כ"ה, ל; *Shemos* 4:22; „בני בכרי ישראל”).

Hunger in *Eretz Canaan*: *Yitzchok* wants to go to *Mitzrayim* as his father did.

However, the Eternal does not let him to go (*Beraishis* 26:2-3): he has already been put upon the altar as a sacrifice for the Eternal, he can not be taken any more out of *Eretz Yisroel* (רש"י).

*Yitzchok* goes to *Gerar*, to the land of the *Pelishtim* (*Beraishis* 26:1).

*Avimelech* wants to take *Rivkoh*, whom *Yitzchok* presented as his sister (*Beraishis* 26:7), just like *Avrohom* did earlier with *Soroh*, but finally he realizes the truth (*Beraishis* 26:8; ב"ר ט"ז, ה).

*Avimelech* orders *Yitzchok* should be conducted all around the town, clothed in his royal garments, calling out everywhere that whoever dares to insult the guest or his wife, will be put to death (*Beraishis* 26:11; cf. *Haman* and *Mordechai*, *Megilas Ester* 6:11).

*Avimelech* gives to *Yitzchok* lands and vineyards. *Yitzchok* becomes very rich, he will have hugh flocks (*Beraishis* 26:13-14; סה"י).



In *Yitzchok's* merit there is abundance in *Gerar* (*Beraishis* 26:12; ב"ר ע"ג, ו), when he returns – following the Eternal's command - to *Chevron*, the soil only gives very poor produce.

*Yitzchok* separates tithe (מעשר) of all his belongings and distributes it among the poor (ב"ר ט"ד, ו).

Finally, *Avimelech* reaffirms with *Yitzchok* the covenant concluded earlier with *Avrohom* (*Beraishis* 26:31; סה"י): as a sign of the covenant, *Yitzchok* gives to *Avimelech* one of the birdles of his donkey, it will ultimately be taken back by *Dovid hamelech* who thus becomes able to defeat the *Pelishtim* (פדר"א ל"ו).

**2126:** *Yitzchok* is 78 years old, *Yaakov* is 18.

*Shelach ben Arpachshad* dies at the age of 433 years.<sup>1</sup>

*Yitzchok* sends *Yaakov* to learn in the *yeshivah* of *Shem* and *Ever*: he spends there 32 years.

*Aisov* does not want to go: he stays with his father (סה"י).

**2148:** *Yitzchok* is 100 years old, *Yaakov* and *Aisov* are 40.

*Aisov*, the great hunter, is hunting on the land of *Seir* for several months.

He sees there a *Canaani* woman, *Yehudis*, the daughter of *Beeri ben Efer hachitti* from *Canaan's* family (יהודית בת בארי בן עפר בן חת בן כנען), and marries her (*Beraishis* 26:34).

He returns to *Chevron*, to his parents together with his wife (סה"י).

**2158:** *Yitzchok* is 110 years old, *Yaakov* is 50.<sup>2</sup>

*Shem* dies at the age of 600 years.

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<sup>1</sup> In my exemplar of the „*Tzemach Dovid*“, the erroneous data of 2123 is given, what is presumably a copist's error.

<sup>2</sup> Several sources and authors speak about forty years, for an analysis of the problem, see the „*Seder haDoros*“.

He said prophecies to the peoples of the world during 400, years but they were not listening to him (תנודא"ר).

*Yaakov* returns to his father to *Chevron*.

*Yitzchok* and *Yaakov* hear *Shem*'s personal account about the *Mabul*.

**2170:** *Yitzchok* is 122 years old, *Yaakov* is 62.

*Lovon*'s barren wife, *Adinoh* (עדינה) gives birth to two twins: *Leoh* (לאה) and *Rochel* (רחל) are born (ס"ע; יל"ש). According to others, they are not twins: *Rochel* is born in 2161 and *Leoh* in 2163.<sup>1</sup> Again others (סה"י) say, both were born in 2164; or in 2171 (הגר"א לס"ע), on the day when *Yitzchok* blesses *Yaakov*. Again others (ר' בחיי) say, *Rochel* was born in 2180.

The good news from *Choron* arrive to *Rivkoh* to *Beer Sheva*.

### **5.9. *Yitzchok's Blessing* (ברכת יצחק)**

**2171:** *Yitzchok* is 123 years old, *Yaakov* and *Aisov* are 63.

• **Nissan 14**, *erev Pessach* (תרגו"י כ"ז, א): *Yitzchok* blesses *Yaakov* (*Beraishis* 27).

*Yitzchok* does not realize the full extension of *Aisov*'s wickedness what is concealed before him by the Eternal (so *Yaakov* receives the blessing so to say „accidentally“; זוהר).

*Yitzchok* wants to give a blessing to *Aisov* also (*Beraishis* 27:4; ס"ח): a material, this-worldly blessing (related to *Olam hazeh*), while the spiritual one (related to *Olam habo*) he reserves for *Yaakov*.

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<sup>1</sup> If they are not born in the same year they can naturally not be twins. This data, however, contradicts *Beraishis* 29:16, according to what *Leah* is the elder and *Rochel* the younger.

*Yitzchok* sends *Aisov* to catch some venison (*Beraishis* 27:3), so *Aisov* will receive the blessing in the merit of the *mitzvoh* of honouring the parents: he is preparing food for his father.

Here also, *Aisov* was consequently cheating his father, making him believe that he is not shooting the venison but catching and then slaughtering according to the *halochoh*.

*Yitzchok's* eyes became dim (*Beraishis* 27:1) from the smoke of the fire burnt by *Aisov's* wife and children on the altars of the idols (ב"ר ס"ה, ד). Also from the tear falling on his eye from *Avrohom's* (or an Angel's) eye during the *Akaidoh* harmed his seeing (ס"ה"י), and also the fact that he had seen the *Shechinah* when his father tied him upon the altar (פ"ד"א ל"ב).

*Rivkoh's* trick: while *Aisov* is hunting, *Yaakov* should enter to his father disguised in *Aisov's* clothes, should take for him food and should thus receive the blessings instead of his wicked brother (*Beraishis* 27:10).

*Rivkoh* prepares to kids of the goats as *Yitzchok* likes it (*Beraishis* 27:9): on *erev pessach* they symbolize the *chagigah*- and *pessach*-sacrifices (ח"ג"י).

*Rivkoh* gives to *Yaakov* dressed in *Aisov's* coat „which were with her in the house” (*Beraishis* 27:15): this was the same coat what the Eternal made for *Odom horishon* in the *Gan Eden*, and what *Aisov* has taken from *Nimrod* after having killed the latter.

*Yitzchok* smells on the coat the smell of the fields (*Beraishis* 27:27) of the *Gan Eden* (זוה"ר ח"א קמ"ב): a part of the *Gan* is called „the field of the holy apples”.

*Yaakov* covers his smooth hands with the skin of the goats (*Beraishis* 27:16): if *Yitzchok* touches him, he should feel as if he was touching *Aisov*.

„The voice is *Yaakov's* voice, but the hands are the hands of *Aisov*” (הקל קול, „The voice is *Yaakov's* voice, but the hands are the hands of *Aisov*”; *Beraishis* 27:22): until *Yaakov's* descendants, the *Bnai*

*Yisroel* learn and fulfill the Torah, *Aisov*'s descendants have no power over them (ב"ר ס"ה, י"ט).

„*I am – Aisov [is] your firstborn*” („*אנכי עשו בכרך*”; *Beraishis* 27:19; מדא"ג כ"ז, *Yaakov* does not lie!

*Yitzchok* blesses *Yaakov*: as the Eternal blesses the world with dew on the night of *Pessach* (תרגו"י כ"ז, א), in the same way, *Yitzchok* also blesses his son with dew (פדר"א ל"ב; „*מטל השמים*”; *Berashis* 27:28).

Ten blessings according to the ten utterances of Creation (פדר"א ל"ב):

- ▶ „...of the dew of heaven (מטל השמים),
- ▶ and the fatness of the earth (ומשמני הארץ),
- ▶ and plenty of grain (ורב דגן),
- ▶ and wine (ותירש),
- ▶ Let people serve you (יעבדוך עמים),
- ▶ and nations bow down to you (וישתחו לך לאמים),
- ▶ be lord over your brothers (היה גביר לאחיד),
- ▶ and let your mother's sons bow down to you (וישתחו לך בני אמך),
- ▶ cursed be every one who curses you (ארריך ארור),
- ▶ and blessed be he who blesses you” (ומברכיד ברוך) (*Beraishis* 27:28-29).

*Yitzchok* blesses *Aisov* also (*Beraishis* 27:39-40): the latter receives his whole reward in this world, so he will be excluded from the blessings of *Olam habo* (מדרש פליאה).

*Aisov*, decided to take revenge, wants to kill his father and also his brother (Beraishis 27:41) to rule over the whole world (ב"ר ע"ה, ט).

*Yaakov* goes into hiding in *Ever*'s *yeshivah* (founded by the late *Shem*) in *Eretz Canaan*: he learns there for 14 years (ב"ר ס"ה, ה; מגילה י"ז).

The computation:

- ▶ *Yishmoel* is 74 years elder than *Yaakov*: he is 14 years elder than *Yitzchok* + *Yitzchok* was 60 when *Yaakov* was born;
- ▶ *Yishmoel* dies at the age of 137 years, when *Yaakov* is  $137 - 74 = 63$  years old;
- ▶ *Yaakov* spends 14 years in the house of *Lovon* until *Yossef* is born;
- ▶ *Yossef* is 39 when *Yaakov* – at the age of 130 – goes to *Mitzrayim* with his children;
- ▶  $63 + 14 + 39 = 116$ ;  $130 - 116 = 14$  (רש"י כ"ה, ט).

Although during these 14 years he does not fulfill the *mitzvoh* of honoring his parents, he will not be punished in the merit of learning the Torah (מגילה י"ז).

*Aisov* goes to the land of *Seir* together with his wives.

He marries a new wife: *Bosmas*, the daughter of *Elon hachitti* (בשמת בת אילון (החתי).

Her name is an allusion of her burning incenses to idols (רש"י).

Therefore *Aisov* gives her a new name: *Odoh* (עדה).

*Aisov* stays in *Seir* for six months, thereafter he returns to his parents to *Eretz Canaan*.

His wives continue their idolatrous customs even in *Yitzchok*'s house: they bring sacrifices to their idols (סו"א).

To his wives, he marries again a new one: *Machlas*, *Yishmoel*'s daughter (מחלת (בשמת = ישמע-ל; *Beraishis* 28:9).

Her name is an allusion to the fact that her sins will be pardoned (רש"י).

The Torah does not mention the fact that *Machlas* is *Nevoyos*' sister (*Beraishis* 28:9) because, after their father's death, *Nevoyos* the eldest sister, takes care of *Machlas*, and also sees to marry her.

*Aisov* wants to use his father-in-law against his father and brother, in this way he will have later a pretext „to take vengeance of him”: to kill him and take his wealth also (ב"ר ט"ז, ה).

However, *Yishmoel* dies still before the wedding at the age of 137 years (*Beraishis* 25:17), so *Aisov*'s plan is aborted (רש"י כ"ה, ט).<sup>1</sup>

**2172:** *Yitzchok* is 124 years old, *Yaakov* and *Aisov* are 64.

*Aisov*'s wife, *Odoh* gives birth to a boy, *Elifaz* (ס"ה"י; אליפז).<sup>2</sup>

### 5.10. The Twelve Tribes

**2185:** *Yitzchok* is 137 years old, *Yaakov* is 77.

After 14 years, *Yaakov* returns to his parents to *Beer Sheva*.

*Aisov*'s furor gets again kindled against *Yaakov*, therefore *Rivkoh* sends the latter, still on the same day, to *Choron*, to *Padan Aram* (פדן ארם; i.e. *Aram Naharaim*)<sup>3</sup> to her brother, *Lovon*, in the hope that, time passing, *Aisov* will calm down (*Beraishis* 27:42-45).

<sup>1</sup> The „*Sefer haYoshor*” connects *Aisov*'s third marriage to the warning given by *Yitzchok* to *Yaakov* not to marry a *Canaani* women. This, however, means a switch of two years.

<sup>2</sup> The „*Seder haDoros*” queries the data given by the „*Sefer haYoshor*” considered erroneous, pretending that *Elifaz* was born in the same year when *Yishmoel* died i.e. in 2171. This, however can difficultly be accepted. *Yitzchok* blessed *Yaakov* on *Pessach* 2171. In the same year *Yaakov* escapes, *Aisov* goes to *Seir*, spends six months there, and gets remarried. Supposing that the year begins in autumn, it is almost impossible that *Elifaz* should be born in the same year, more precisely in the same six months. On the other hand, the „*Seder haDoros*” corrects justly the „*Sefer haYoshor*” when the latter pretends that *Yaakov* is 65 years old at *Yishmoel*'s death. If *Yishmoel* was born, according to the Torah, in the 86th year of *Avrohom* (born in 1948), i.e. in the year 2034, and lived 137 years, this means that *Yaakov* (born in 2108) is only 63 years old at the moment of *Yishmoel*'s death, in 2171.

In the next paragraph, the „*Seder haDoros*” again corrects the „*Sefer haYoshor*” according to which *Elifaz* is 13 years old when *Aisov* sends him to kill *Yaakov*. Consequently, the data have to be corrected as follows: *Elifaz* is born in the year 2172, one year after *Yishmoel*'s death when his father, *Aisov* is 64; and he, *Yishmoel*, is 13 when – in the year 2185 – his father send him to kill *Yaakov*.

<sup>3</sup> *Padan Aram*: the expression presumably means 'Aram's field or garden', cf. Ass. *padanu* 'road, garden'. It is supposed to be *Paddana* near *Harran*, mentioned by Arab geographers by the name *Tell Faddán*.

However, it is a well-known *halochoh* that *Aisov* hates *Yaakov* (הלכה היא): if *Yaakov*'s children observe the Torah, *Aisov*'s children have no power of them, but in case they do not, antisemitic hatred becomes manifest.

*Yitzchok* warns *Yaakov* not to marry a *Canaani* woman but to take a wife of *Avrohom*'s family living in *Choron*: one of *Lovon*'s daughters, his nieces (*Beraishis* 28:1-5), and also he should not forget to observe the Eternal's covenant with and *Avrohom* (סה"י).

*Yaakov* departs from *Beer Sheva* (*Beraishis* 28:10).

*Aisov* sends his son, *Elifaz*, the latter should kill *Yaakov*.

*Elifaz* departs together with his ten uncles, the brothers of his mother, to find *Yaakov* (סה"י).

They reach *Yaakov* on the border of *Eretz Canaan*, in front of the mountain of *Schem*. However, following *Yaakov*'s supplications, they do not kill him, they only take the presents *Yaakov* was carrying for *Lovon*, and return to *Beer Sheva* (סה"י).

When *Yaakov* arrives to *Choron*, he reminds himself of having forgotten to stop at the Mount *Moriah* to pray (רש"י סנהדרין צ"ה).

When he wants to return, a miracle happens and the mountain is coming before him (חולין צ"א).

The Sun goes down earlier than the proper time (*Beraishis* 28:11), so *Yaakov* has to spend the night on the Mount *Moriah* (תרגו"י כ"ה, י; ב"ר ס"ה, י"ב) near the town *Luz* (לוז).

The way from *Beer Sheva* to the Mount *Moriah* took him two days (פדר"א ל"ה).

„And he lighted upon a certain place” (ויפגע במקום), literally means 'He met the place...'; *Beraishis* 28:11), i. e. the Mount *Moriah*; however the word *Place*

(מקום) means here the Eternal: *Yaakov* institutes the *Maariv* (מעריב) prayer (ברכות כ"ו; רש"י ברא' כ"ח, י"א).

*Yaakov* takes twelve stones of the altar erected by *Avrohom* to sacrifice *Yitzchok*: he puts one under his head, and the others around himself for a protection (*Beraishis* 28:11; י"ג, כ"ח, י"ג): an allusion to his 12 sons (פדר"א ל"ה).

Until the next morning, the twelve stones form one great stone (*Beraishis* 28:18; י, תרגו"י ברא' כ"ח, י): all of his sons will be equally great *tzaddikim*.

*Yaakov* dreams: the Eternal speaks to him, guaranteeing to be with him even outside *Eretz Canaan*, and to conduct him back to the Land promised to his fathers (*Beraishis* 28:13-15).

He also sees in his dream „...a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.” (*Beraishis* 28:12). This is a prophetic vision of the four empires later to subdue the *Bnai Yisroel*:

- *Bovel's* Angel ascends 70 steps, and descends;
- the Angel of *Modai* and *Pras* ascends 52 steps and descends;
- *Yovon's* Angel ascends 180 steps and descends;
- *Edom's* Angel ascends and does not descend. However, the Eternal says to him: „*Though you soar aloft like the eagle, and though you set your nest among the stars, from there will I bring you down...*” (*Ovadyah* 1:4; ויקר"ר; פדר"א ל"ה; יקר"ר). (כ"ט, ב).

In his dream, *Yaakov* also sees the *Bais hamikdosh*, the giving of the Torah, and the Angels who accompany him inside *Eretz Canaan* and outside it (ב"ר ט"ז-י"ח; (ס"ט, ב-ו).



In the morning, *Yaakov* sets up the stone from under his head for a pillar (מצבה; *Beraishis* 28:18), and renames the place called until then *Luz*: he calls its name *Bais Kel* (בית קאל; *Beraishis* 28:19).

*Yaakov*'s prayer-vow at the pillar consecrated with oil received from heaven (פדר"א ל"ה):<sup>1</sup> if the Eternal will help him and he will return home in peace, he will give tithe of all of his belongings to the Eternal, and he will also bring sacrifices on the same place (*Beraishis* 28:20-21).

The Eternal sink the stone deep into the Earth, so to say supporting the Earth with it.

Later, in the *Bais hamikdosh* in *Yerusholayim*, the *Holy Ark* will be seated on this stone called *Even haShsiyoh* (אבן השתי-יה; ב"ר כ"ח, ה; פדר"א כ"ח; רד"ל; זוהר ברא'; אבן השתי-יה) (רל"א).

*Yaakov* sets out for *Choron* and, as he is carried by the Eternal's Angel, he arrives the same day (*Beraishis* 28:10, 29:1; מדרש תהילים; פדר"א ל"ה; י; תרגו"י כ"ח, י; פדר"א ל"ה; מדרש תהילים).

*Lovon* has no sons, only daughters: it was only his wife by the name *Adinoh* who gave birth to two girls, *Leoh* and *Rochel*, his other wives and concubines are barrens (סה"י).

An epidemic ravages *Lovon*'s cattles and flocks (פדר"א ל"ו): he sends away his herdsmen, and it is only *Rochel* who takes care of the remaining animals (*Beraishis* 29:9; תרגו"י).

*Yaakov* and *Rochel* meet each other at the drinking fountain (*Beraishis* 29:9-12).

*Yaakov* gives three signs to *Rochel* by what he would recognize her at their wedding (מגילה י"ג): the three *mitzvos* specific to women, *challoh* (חלה), *niddoh* (נדדה), *chadlokas nair* (הדלקת נר; רוקח). According to others, the signs are the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. according to the French chroniclers' tradition, CHLODVIG I (481/2-511) king of the Franks had been baptized with holy oil of the Holy Ampoule brought by a pigeon (an angel) descending from heaven.

three points where the *kohanim* were later to be ointed: the right ear, the right thumb, the right big toe (*Vayikroh* 8:23). Again others (איכ"ר פתיחתא) say, it is *Rochel* who gives the signs to *Yaakov*.

*Yaakov* stays as a guest in *Lovon*'s house for a whole month (*Beraishis* 29:14).

After a month, he enters in *Lovon*'s service to obtain, in return for seven years of work, the hand of the latter's younger daughter, *Rochel* (*Beraishis* 29:18; סה"י).

**2187:** *Yitzchok* is 139 years old, *Yaakov* is 79, he works for *Lovon* since two years.

*Ever ben Shelach* dies at the age of 464 years.<sup>1</sup>

**2188:** *Yitzchok* is 140 years old, *Yaakov* is 80, he works for *Lovon* since three years.

*Yishmoel*'s daughter, *Bosmas* gives birth to *Aisov*'s son: *Reuel* is born (רעו-ל; סה"י).

**2189:** *Yitzchok* is 141 years old, *Yaakov* is 81, he works for *Lovon* since four years.

In *Yaakov*'s merit, the Eternal blesses *Lovon*: not only his wealth is growing (*Beraishis* 30:30), he also begets three sons, although not of the mother of *Leoh* and *Rochel*: *Adinoh* died in between (ב"ר ע, י"ג).

*Lovon*'s sons are: *Beor* (בעור), *Eliv* (אליב), *Morosh* (מורש; סה"י).

**2190:** *Yitzchok* is 142 years old, *Yaakov* is 82, he works for *Lovon* since five years.

*Aisov*'s wife, *Yehudis bas Beer* dies in *Eretz Canaan*.

She gave birth only to girls: *Martzis* (מרצית) and *Puis* (פועית).

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<sup>1</sup> My exemplar of the „*Tzemach Dovid*” has here the erroneous data of 804 years, what has to be considered being a copist's error.

After *Yehudis*' death, *Aisov* again goes to the land of *Seir*, and stays there for a longer time (סה"י).

**2191:** *Yitzchok* is 143 years old, *Yaakov* is 83, he works for *Lovon* since six years.

*Aisov*, to his precedent wives, marries *Oholivomoh* the daughter of *Anoh* and of *Tzivon haChivvi* (אהליבמה בת ענה ובת צבעון החוי ; *Beraishis* 36:2): *Anoh* was *Tzivon*'s son but, as *Tzivon* violated his daughter-in-law, it was impossible to know whose daughter was *Oholivomoh* (רש"י; תנחומא וישב א; רש"י). (ב"ר פ"ב, ט"ו; תנחומא וישב א; רש"י).

His new wife gives birth to three sons in *Eretz Canaan*: *Yeush* (יעוש), *Yalom* (יעלם), *Korach* (קרח).

*Aisov's descendants of his different wives (Beraishis 29:14):*

► of *Bosmas* (= *Odo bas Elon haChitti*): **Elifaz**.

The children of *Elifaz*: *Taimon* (תימן), *Omor* (אומר), *Tzepo* (צפו) / *Tzepi* (צפי);  
1. *Divrai haYomim* 1:36), *Gasom* (געתם), *Kenaz* (קנז).<sup>1</sup>

Of his concubine, *Timno* (תמנע),<sup>2</sup> he also had a son: *Amolek* (עמלק).

*Timno* was born to *Elifaz* of *Seir*'s wife (תנחומא וישב א), she was *Lotan*'s sister (*Beraishis* 36:22).<sup>3</sup> Becoming adult, she wanted to convert herself to Judaism, but all three - *Avrohom*, *Yitzchok* and also *Yaakov* - rejected her demand. Therefore did she become her father's concubine. They would not have to reject her although they surely had good reasons to do so (רש"י ל"ו, י"ב) (סנהדרין צ"ט; רש"י ל"ו, י"ב).

<sup>1</sup> *Kenaz*: cf. *Osniel ben Kenaz*, the first Judge (*Yehoshuah* 15:17; *Shoftim* 1:13, 3:9, 11; 1. *Divrai haYomim* 4:13,15) and also the denomination of *Kolev 'the kenizi'* (הקנזי; *Bamidbor* 32:12; *Yehoshuah* 14:6,14). He is not to be confounded with the oonymous tribe mentioned among the Canaani peoples (*Beraishis* 15:19).

<sup>2</sup> *Timno*: cf. the town *Timna* North of *Aden* in Southern Arabia, on the actual territory of *Yemen*.

<sup>3</sup> According to the *RAMBAN* (to *Beraishis* 36:22), *Lotan* is born of the same father and mother as *Timno*, but only a stepbrother of the others. According to *RASHI* (*Beraishis* 36:12), *Lotan* and *Timno* were born of the same mother, but not of the same father.

According to others, there were two different persons called *Timno*.

► of *Oholivomoh* the daughter of *Anoh* and of *Tzivon hachivvi* (=Yehudis, the daughter of *Beeri ben Efer hachitti*; רש"י ל"ן, ב).<sup>1</sup> In case the two women are the same just mentioned by different names, she can be at the same time of a *Chitti* family and of a *Chivvi* family in two ways. 1./ Her father and mother are not of the same family and so the Torah is connecting her once to this and again to the other (שפתי חכמים). 2./ A *Chitti* man and a *Chivvi* man, one of them violates the other's wife and, consequently, it is impossible to know who is the father of the child, just that he is a *bastard* (ממזר; ר"א מזרחי):

- **Yeush**. His children are: *Timno*, *Alvoh* (עלוה), *Yeses* (יתת);
- **Yalom**. His children are: *Aileh* (אלה), *Phinon* (פינון), *Kenaz*,
- **Korach**. His children are: *Taimon*, *Mivtzor* (מבצר), *Magdiel* (מגדי-ל), = Rome; (פדר"א ל"ה), *Irom* (עירם);

► of *Machlas bas Yishmoel* (= *Bosmas*): **Reuel** (רעו-ל). The children of this latter are: *Nachas* (נחת), *Zerach* (זרח), *Shamoh* (שמה), *Mizoh* (מזה).

A war breaks out in *Eretz Canaan* between the sheperds of *Aisov*'s hugh flocks and the local *Canaani* inhabitants.

Therefore *Aisov* goes, together with his family, his servants and flocks, to live in the land of *Seir*, however, he regularly visits his parents in *Eretz Canaan*.

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<sup>1</sup> What *RASHI* says here, can difficultly be conformed to what the „*Sefer haYoshor*” – and following this, also the „*Seder haDoros*” – pretend that *Aisov* marries *Yehudis* in the year 2,148 and *Oholivomoh* in the year 2191, what means that 2191 - 2148 = 53 years later. More than that, *Yehudis* dies one year before *Aisov* marries *Oholivomoh*. Two possible ways to solve the contradiction: *Aisov* repudiates *Yehudis* (she „dies”) and, later, he remarries her; or *Yehudis* gives birth to a child after such a long time, after 53 years.

*Aisov* marries his daughters to the sons of *Seir hachori*: the eldest, *Martzis* becomes the wife of her uncle, *Anoh ben Tzivon*; while the younger one, *Puis*, is married to *Bilhon ben Etzer* (בלהן בן אצר; סה"י).

**2192:** *Yitzchok* is 144 years old, *Yaakov* is 84.

*Yaakov*, after having served *Lovon* for seven years, gets married (*Beraishis* 29:21-22): the wedding takes place on *Shabbos hagadol* (יל"ר ויצא נ"י, ד).

*Lovon* cheats *Yaakov*: he changes *Rochel* for *Leoh* (*Beraishis* 29:23-24), he does everything possible the twelve tribes should not be born.

*Rochel*, to avoid that her sister should be ashamed, tells *Yaakov*'s signs to *Leoh* (מגילה י"ג).

One week after the wedding with *Leoh*, *Lovon* marries *Rochel* also to *Yaakov*, with the condition that the latter will serve him for again seven years (*Beraishis* 29:27-28).

Together with the two wives, *Yaakov* receives two maidservants also: *Lovon*'s two daughters of one of his concubines (פדר"א ל"ו). The eldest, *Bilhoh* (בלהה), is *Rochel*'s maidservant (*Beraishis* 29:29), the younger one, *Zilpoh* (זלפה), is *Leoh*'s (*Beraishis* 29:24).

*Yaakov* liberates the two maidservants, and marries them also (לק"ט).

At the moment of their wedding, the twins, *Rochel* and *Leoh* are 22 years old (ס"ע ; יל"ש). According to others (הגר"א לס"ע), they are 21 or 28 (סה"י). Again others say, the wedding took place in the year 2193.

*Yaakov* begets 12 sons with his four wives (*Beraishis* 29:31-30:24): these are the twelve tribes (י"ב שבטים).

With the exception of *Binyomin*, all the boys are born during the seven years what follows the two weddings, even their sister, *Dinoh* (ב"ר פ' נשא).

All the children are born to the seventh month (ס"ע; ר' בחיי). According to others (פדר"א ל"ו), this is true only to *Leoh*'s children.<sup>1</sup>

A twin-sister is born together with each boy: „*His sons, and his grandsons with him, his daughters, and his sons' daughters...*” (*Beraishis* 46:7; ט, ב"ר פ"ב).

According to others (פדר"א ל"ו), the future wife is also born together with them.

Each boy marries the twin-sister of one of his brothers or half-brothers (פדר"א ל"ו), with the exception of *Yehudoh* and *Yossef* (the latter was to marry later *Dinoh*'s daughter, *Osnas*). According to others (סה"י), only *Shimon*

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<sup>1</sup> Apart of *Laivi*'s and *Yossef*'s age (*Shemos* 6:16, *Beraishis* 50:26), the data about the birth and death of the twelve tribes given in the following table do not figure in the Torah. One can find the different computations about in the *Talmud* and the different *Midrashim* (פדר"א; סה"י; סע"ז; ר' בחיי; יל"ש). The sources and the analysis of the differences among the sources can be found in the „*Seder haDoros*” beginning with the year 2193.

However, there are several problems with the data. From *Shabbos hagadol*, when *Yaakov*'s wedding took place, until the 14th of *Kislev*, **Ruvain**'s birth there are 7 monthes. According to the „*Pirkai deRabbi Eliezer*” (פדר"א מ"ח), **Laivi** is 6 years older than *Yossef*, according to this he would have to be born in the year 2193 what can go together with the other data only with difficulties.

The year 2195, given by the „*Seder haDoros*” relying himself on several sources, as the year of **Yehudoh**'s birth, is also difficult because, in this case, he would have to be born only two monthes after *Laivi*! Consequently, or he did not live 119 years, or he did not die in the year 2314, although several *Midrashim* agree that he died 18 years before *Laivi*! More than that, according to the „*Midrash Rabboh*” (*P. Nosso*), all the children except *Binyomin* were born during the second seven years and, according to *Rabainu BACHYAH*, they were born to the seventh month, what again causes new problems (see the commentary „*Seder haZmanim*” to the „*Seder Olam*”). According to this, the year of *Yehudoh*'s birth has to be emended to 2,196.

The date of **Zevulun**'s birth is also problematic, because from the 10th of *Av* 2197 until the 7th of *Tishrai* 2198 there is less than two monthes! Accordingly, the year of his birth has also to be emended with one year, to 2199.

The same problem is posed in connection with the date of **Naftoli**'s birth: from *Elul* 2194 until *Tishrai* 2195 there is only one month!

marries his (half)sister, while the others or they marry *Canaani* women, or they marry their distant relatives from *Terach*'s family. Again others say, that the *posuq* on which this *Midrash* is based is only related to *Dinoh* or to *Yocheved* or *Serach*, *Osher*'s daughter.

Wife's name	Name of the tribe	Born	Died	Lives ... years
<b>Leoh</b>	<i>Ruvain</i> (ראובן)	<b>2193</b> <i>Kislaiv</i> 14	2317 (2318)	124 (125) <sup>1</sup>
	<i>Shimon</i> (שמעון)	<b>2194</b> <i>Taives</i> 28	2314 (2313)	120 <sup>2</sup>
	<i>Laivi</i> (לוי)	<b>2195</b> <i>Nissan</i> 16 <sup>3</sup>	2332 (2331)	137
	<i>Yehudoh</i> (יהודה)	<b>2196</b> <i>Sivan</i> 15	2314 (2324)	119 (129)
	<i>Yissochor</i> (יששכר)	<b>2197</b> <i>Av</i> 10	2319 (2318)	122 (110)
	<i>Zevulun</i> (זבולון)	<b>2198</b> <i>Tishrai</i> 7	2322 (2321)	124
<b>Bilhoh</b>	<i>Don</i> (דן)	<b>2194</b> <i>Elul</i> 9	2318 (2321)	124 (125)
	<i>Naftoli</i> (נפתלי)	<b>2195</b> <i>Tishrai</i> 5	2327	132 (133)
<b>Zilpoh</b>	<i>God</i> (גד)	<b>2196</b> <i>Cheshvan</i> 10	2321	125
	<i>Osher</i> (אשר)	<b>2197</b> <i>Shvat</i> 4 (20)	2320	123
<b>Rochel</b>	<i>Yossef</i> (יוסף)	<b>2199</b> <i>Tamuz</i> 27(1)	2309	110
	<i>Binyomin</i> (בנימין)	<b>2208/7</b> <i>Cheshvan</i> 11	2318	109(110,111,115)

**2198:** *Yitzchok* is 150 years old, *Yaakov* is 90.

*Dinoh* (דינה), *Leoh*'s daughter is born.

She was *Zevulun*'s twin-sister. According to others (ברכות ט), she was born without a twin-brother: she was supposed to be a boy, but following *Leoh*'s prayer her sexe was changed still in her embryonal state.

<sup>1</sup> According to the apocryph „*Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*” (I:1:1), *Ruvain* dies at the age of 125, two years after *Yossef*'s death, but the latter died in the year 2309!

<sup>2</sup> According to the apocryph „*Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*” (II:2:1) *Shimon* dies at the age of 120 years, at the same year with *Yossef* who, according to the Torah (*Beraishis* 5:26) lived 110 years.

<sup>3</sup> According to the Dead Sea scroll named „*Biblical chronology*” (4Q559: frg. 2.:3), *Yaakov* was 65 years old when he begot *Laivi*. *Yaakov*, born in the year 2108, was, according to the Torah, 63 when he obtained his father's blessing and had to escape. Even if we do not take into consideration the 14 years spent in the *yeshivah*, he served in *Lovon*'s house 7 years before marrying the latter's daughter. Besides, *Laivi* was *Yaakov*'s third son!



**2199:** *Yitzchok* is 151 years old, *Yaakov* is 91.

*Yossef* is born circumcised (ב"ר פ"ד, ה).

The Eternal remembers *Rochel* on *Rosh hashonoh* (ר"ה י"א).

*Rivkoh* sends her nurse, *Devorah* – the daughter of *Utz* – to *Yaakov* calling him home (סה"י).

According to the Torah (*Beraishis* 30:25-26), *Yaakov*'s intention is to return home, after he served in *Lovon*'s house for fourteen years, together with his children.

Finally, following *Lovon*'s request, he works for six more years in *Lovon*'s house for his wages, the dowry (*Beraishis* 31:41).

*Devorah* stays with him (סה"י). According to others (מדה"ג ל"ה, ח), *Rivkoh* sends her nurse, *Devorah*, to call *Yaakov* home, and she meets him under way, so they return home together.

*Yaakov* becomes very rich (*Beraishis* 30:43): *Lovon*'s sons accuse him of having obtained his wealth of their father's (*Beraishis* 31:1).

**2205:** *Yitzchok* is 157 years old, *Yaakov* is 97.

During the twenty years he stayed in the house of the fraudulent *Lovon*, the Eternal did not speak to him (פדר"א ל"ו), and He did not permit him to make leap years outside *Eretz Canaan* (פדר"א ח).

Now, following the Eternal's command, *Yaakov* returns to *Eretz Canaan* (*Beraishis* 31:3) with great riches, flocks (5.500 animals; פדר"א ל"ו), servants and his wives and children (*Beraishis* 31:17-18).

*Rochel* steals *Lovon*'s idols, the *terophim* (תרפים; *Beraishis* 31:19). With the help of these idols, people were able to predict the future. Cutting the head of a first-born man, they put a golden plate with the idol's name under his tongue, than they light a candle and bow to it. Consequently, the *teroph* speaks („...the *terophim* have spoken vanity...”; *Zecharyoh* 10:2). *Rochel* steals them in order

to clean her father's house of the idols, and also that these should not tell *Lovon* about *Yaakov's* escaping (פדר"א ל"ו).

When *Yaakov* leaves *Choron*, the wells dry out: the twenty years of abundance (lasting in the merit of *Yaakov*) are over (תרנ"ג"א, כ"ב); even *Beor*, *Lovon's* son was born in *Yaakov's* merit.

*Aisov's* son, *Amolek*, tells *Lovon* about *Yaakov's* escaping (מכילתא שמות י"ד, ה). *Lovon* goes after his son-in-law in order to kill him with arms and with sorcery (זוהר ח"א קס"ז).

After seven days of pursuit, *Lovon* reaches *Yaakov* at the Mount *Gilod* (*Beraishis* 31:23; סה"י).

● **Nissan 15**, the night of *Pessach*: the Eternal appears to *Lovon* in a dream and orders him: „Take heed that you speak not to *Yaakov* either good or bad.” (*Beraishis* 31:24).

*Yaakov*, not knowing that it was *Rivkoh* who has stolen *Lovon's* idols, curses the unknown thief (*Beraishis* 31:32) with premature death (פדר"א ל"ו).

The blessing or the curse pronounced by a *tzaddik* is accomplished by the Eternal: this is the reason why *Rochel* dies when she gives birth to *Binyomin* (פדר"א ל"ו; ב"ר ע"ד, ג).

*Yaakov* and *Lovon* conclude a covenant (*Beraishis* 31:44): *Yaakov's* descendants will not occupy the land of *Lovon's* descendants, *Aram* (פדר"א ל"ו).

As a witness of their covenant, they bring together stones thus making a heap: *Lovon* calls the heap in Aramaic *Yegar Sochaduso* (יגר שהדותא), while *Yaakov* calls it *Galed* (גלעד 'heap of witness'; *Beraishis* 31:45-48).

The land of *Lovon's* descendants, *Aram* will only be occupied by *Dovid hamelech*, after having broken the stones of that heap (2.Shmuel 8:3; פדר"א ל"ו).

Upon returning home, *Lovon* sends his son, the seventeen years old *Beor*, together with *Avichoref ben Utz* and ten more people, to *Aisov*. He sends with them the following message: *Yaakov* – who became rich in *Lovon*'s house but have stolen from *Lovon* – is on his way home and, if *Aisov* will, now he can settle the old bill on the border of *Eretz Canaan*, at the river *Yabbok* (יַבֶּק; סה"י).<sup>1</sup>

*Aisov* arms his sons, servants and all his men: sixty persons, and also all the 340 men of *Seir haChori*, and with the 400 men, he goes against *Yaakov* (סה"י).

*Lovon*'s messengers continue their way to *Eretz Canaan*: they inform *Rivkoh* that *Aisov* is preparing to attack *Yaakov*.

*Rivkoh* sends 72 people from *Yitzchok*'s servants to help *Yaakov*. They meet him on the other side of the river *Yabbok* (סה"י).

When *Yaakov* sees them, he cries out from happiness: this camp has been sent by the Eternal to help me. Therefore, he calls the name of the place *Machnayim* (מַחֲנִיִּם 'camps'; *Beraishis* 32:3).

They give to *Yaakov* the message sent to him by his mother: he should try to reconcile *Aisov* with nice words (סה"י).

Arriving near to the border of *Eretz Canaan*, *Yaakov* sends „truce-bearers” (מַלְאָכִים 'Angels') to *Aisov* (*Beraishis* 32:4).

This results to be a faulty step: through this, he directs *Aisov*'s attention to himself, reawakens the latter's sleeping hatred (ב"ר ע"ה, ב): it is better to serve the Eternal in silence, than to draw the world's attention to ourselves.

*Yaakov* sends a message to *Aisov* saying that he obtained his wealth not in the merit of the paternal blessing, but only due to the Eternal's grace, as *Lovon* not only made him work hard but also changed his wages several times.

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<sup>1</sup> *Yabbok*: river joining the Jordan from the East, Ar. Wady Zerqa.

*Aisov*, however, answers arrogantly to the messengers saying that it was *Yaakov* who acted fraudulently to *Lovon* (just as he did to him, to *Aisov*), and who treats his wives – *Lovon*'s daughters – as maidservants. This means, *Aisov* simply repeats to the messengers what he has heard from *Lovon*.

Consequently, he will do to *Yaakov* as it only pleases him (סה"י).

*Yaakov* prepares himself to meet *Aisov* in three different ways:

- ▶ with prayer: „*I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which you have shown to your servant...*” (*Beraishis* 32:11). He asks the Eternal to help him not in his own merit, but in the merit of his fathers, *Avrohom* and *Yitzchok*;
- ▶ with presents: he „...took of that which came to his hand a present for *Aisov* his brother” (*Beraishis* 32:14). As he did not observe his vow made when he had to escape (*Beraishis* 28:20-21), he did not give tithe to the Eternal, now he has to give 550 animals to *Aisov* (*Berashis* 32:15-16). Hence we know, he had altogether 5.500 animals (פדר"א ל"ז);
- ▶ preparing himself to a battle (in the circumstances of an eventual *diaspora*, this can only mean escaping and hiding and in no way military actions; כתובות (קי"א; רמב"ן ברא' ל"ב, ד; ר' בחיי ל"ב, ז).
  - He divides his camp into two (*Beraishis* 32:8; וישב ב' ו תנחומא ב' וישב ו); through this he makes it sure for his descendants, they will never be completely annihilated (ב"ר (ע"ו, ג): „If *Aisov* comes to the one company, and attacks it, then the other company which is left shall escape.” (*Beraishis* 32:9).
  - He places the two camps under the care of the two sons of *Avrohom*'s servant, *Eliezer*: *Damesek* (דמשק) and *Elyonos* (אלינוס; סה"י).

The Eternal sends legions of Angels to frighten *Aisov* (סה"י וישב ז; וישב ב' ו תנחומא ב' וישב ז) who effectively gets terrified when seeing them: he means to have met *Yaakov*'s

armies (סה"י).

On the border of *Eretz Canaan*, at the shallows of the river *Yabbok*, on the night of *Pessach* (לק"ט), *Yaakov* fights with the Angel of *Aisov* (ב"ר ע"ז, ג; *Beraishis* 32:25). According to others (סה"ד בשם רש"ל), this happened on the night of *Tisho beAv*.

The dust shaken by their feet during the fight goes up to the Eternal's throne (חולין צ"א): the *gematrioh* of the word **ויאבק** ('wrestled') is identical to the *gematrioh* of the expression **כסא הכבוד** ('the heavenly throne'; בעל הטורים).

The Angel can not prevail against *Yaakov*, he can only touch the hollow of the latter's thigh, so that „...*Yaakov's thigh was out of joint*” (*Beraishis* 32:26).

At dawn, the Angel wants to leave (*Beraishis* 32:27): it is now his turn to sing *shiroh* in honour of the Eternal (פדר"א ל"ז; ב"ר ע"ח, ג).

*Yaakov* receives from the Angel the name *Yisroel* (ישר-ל): this means the confirmation of the paternal blessing (*Beraishis* 32:29; לק"ט).

Later, the Eternal confirms this new name (*Beraishis* 35:10).

At the Angel's behest, *Yaakov* designates thite, *maasser*, even of his children: he consecrates *Laivi* to the Eternal.

The Archangel *Michoel* takes *Laivi* to heaven, before the Eternal's throne: the Eternal blesses him that his children should serve in the *Bais hamikdosh*, similar to the Angels in heaven (פדר"א ל"ז).

Finally, *Yaakov* meets *Aisov* (*Beraishis* 33:1-15).

*Aisov* wants to kill *Yaakov* not with his arm but with his mouth: he tries to bite his brother's throat, but the Eternal makes it hard like a stone so *Aisov* breaks his teeth (*Beraishis* 33:4; פדר"א ל"ז).

The Eternal also changes *Aisov's* heart filling it suddenly with good intentions toward *Yaakov* (סה"י), therefore *Aisov* recognizes that the paternal blessing

effectively comes to *Yaakov*: „keep what you have to yourself” (*Beraishis* 33:9; (ב"ר ע"ה, י"ז).

*Yaakov* humiliates himself before *Aisov*: he calls him „my Lord” eight times (*Beraishis* 32:5, 6, 19; 33:8, 13, 14, 14, 15), although he could have recognize only the Eternal as his Lord.

Therefore, *Aisov*’s descendants will reign in this world, however *Yaakov*’s descendants will rule in the world to come (פדר"א ל"ז).

For the same reason, there will be eight kings of *Aisov*’s descendants before the *Bnai Yisroel* – the descendants of *Yaakov* – will elect a king (*Beraishis* 36:31-39; (רש"י) *Shaul* (רשב"ם; ספורנו) *Moshe rabainu* (ב"ר ע"ה, י"א).

The eight kings of *Edom* are:

- *Bela ben Beor* (בלע בן בעור) from *Dinhovoh* (דנהבה);<sup>1</sup>
- *Yovov ben Zerach* (יבב בן זרח) from *Botzroh* (בצרה);
- *Chusom* from the South (חשם מארץ התימני);
- *Hadad ben Bedad* (הדד בן בדד) from *Avis* (עוית) who defeated *Midyon* on the field of *Moav*;
- *Samloh* (שמלה) from *Masrekoh* (משרקה);
- *Shaul* (שאול) from *Rechovos haNohor* (רחבות הנהר);
- *Baal Chonon ben Akbor* (בעל חנון בן עכבור);
- *Hadar* (הדר) / *Hadad* (הדד; 1.Divrai haYomim 1:50-51) from *Pou* (פעו) / *Poi* (פעי; 1.Divrai haYomim 1:50). The name of his wife is *Mehaitabel bas Matraid bas Mai Zohov* (מהיטב-ל בת מטרד בת מי זהב).

*Aisov* settles in the South, near the Arabian Sea, on the Mount *Seir* = *Edom* (*Beraishis* 33:16),<sup>2</sup> what is named after him. *Seir* the *Chori* (*Beraishis* 36:20) is

<sup>1</sup> *Dinhovoh*: according to modern opinions, it is presumably *Tennib*, or *Thenib* at the Belka. See, however, the next chapter where it is rendered as Africa, Carthago.

<sup>2</sup> *Edom*: its name was later, in Roman times *Idumaea*, the South-Eastern neighbour of *Eretz Yisroel*.

named after the place, but only later, in the Torah, when *Aisov* already occupied the region, named after him *Seir* (רמב"ן).

*Yaakov* stays for a year and a half (ס"ע) in *Sukkos* (סככות; *Beraishis* 33:17) on the Eastern side of the Jordan (*Yehoshuah* 13:27). According to others (תרגו"י), for one year.<sup>1</sup>

After eighteen months in *Sukkos*, *Yaakov* settles in the central region of *Eretz Canaan*, in the surroundings of the towns *Shchem* (שכם; *Beraishis* 33:18)<sup>2</sup> and, later, of *Bais-Kel* (*Beraishis* 35:1).<sup>3</sup>

### 5.11. *Yaakov in Eretz Canaan*

<sup>1</sup> The interpretation given by *RASHI* and together with him the greatest part of the commentators is very difficult to accept. Why would *Yaakov* stop in *Sukkos*, on the Eastern side of the Jordan for a year and a half, where it was definitely less safe for him as in the house of his parents in *Eretz Canaan*? And also, why was he not hurrying home to his parents, taking in consideration that his mother had called him home already six years earlier through *Devorah*?

<sup>2</sup> *Shchem* (Hebr. 'shoulder', Egyptian *Sha-ka-ma*, Ar. Nablus < Roman *Neapolis*) is already mentioned by an Egyptian inscription of around 1850 BCE. The rapport of *Chu-Sebek*, general of *SESOSTRIS III* (Senusert Hakaure, 1878-1842 BCE, 12th Dynasty), about a military expedition to *Eretz Canaan* (in Egyptian texts *Retenu*) against the nomads who were continuously disturbing the border-region, speaks of the occupation of the town.

<sup>3</sup> *Yaakov's* stay in *Schem* is explained by *SEFORNO* with the fact that, arriving to *Eretz Canaan*, he wanted to fulfill immediately his vow, and erected an altar to the Eternal, buying a piece of land from *Chamor's* sons outside the town.

The *RASHBAM* tries to solve the problem interpreting the word *sholem* – rendered generally as 'intact, integral' – as a proper name, the name of *Shchem's* town, whose name has later been changed to *Shchem* because of the events which happened there. Besides, he also draws the attention to an other, grammatical problem. In the Torah, a construction like „*Ir Shchem*“ 'Shchem's town' never means the name of the town, in that case the word „*ir*“ 'town' is supposed to be placed *after* the name of the town. Consequently, we have to do simply with a possessive construction: 'the town of a man called *Shchem*'. On the other hand, *Sholem* = *Yerusholayim*, but it is well possible that there were other towns also with the same name.

According to the „*Sefer haYoshor*“, *Yaakov* spends only days (eventually two days) on the border of *Eretz Canaan*, than „he arrived to the land of *Sholem*, what is *Shchem's* town [see the *RASHBAM*], in *Eretz Canaan*. And he rested before the town. And he bought the piece of land there from the sons of *Chamor*, the inhabitants of the region, for five shekels. And *Yaakov* built there a house for himself, and camped there, and for his flocks he made tents, therefore he called the name of the place *Sukkos*. And *Yaakov* was sitting in *Sukkos* for one year and a half.“ This means that the „*Sefer haYoshor*“ places *Sukkos* into *Eretz Canaan*.

**2207:** *Yitzchok* is 159 years old, *Yaakov* is 99.

*Dinoh*, *Yaakov*'s nine years old daughter, goes, together with her mother and aunts, to see the festival of the girls in *Shchem* (*Beraishis* 34:1; פדר"א ל"ה). According to others (סוף מ' ספרים), at that moment *Dinoh* is five years old. Again others say, she is seven, eight (צ"ד; according to the latter, this happened in the year 2206) or ten years old.

It is there, that *Shchem*, the son of the *Chivvi Chamor ben Chedkem ben Pered* (חמור בן חדקם בן פרד החוי), the king of *Shchem* sees her, rapes her and violates her (*Beraishis* 34:2).

The whole affair happens because of *Yaakov*: he has hidden *Dinoh* from his circumcised brother, *Aisov*, although it is possible she could have influenced the latter to do *teshuvoh*. As a punishment, an uncircumcised rapes and violates *Yaakov*'s daughter (ב"ר ע"ו, ה).

*Yaakov* tries in vain to get back his daughter.

On his son's bequest, *Chamor* goes to *Yaakov* asking from him *Dinoh* for a wife for his son. At the same time, *Chamor* proposes that the two peoples should intermarry (*Beraishis* 34:8-12).

The answer comes from *Yaakov*'s sons: this is only possible if the inhabitants of *Shchem* circumcise themselves (*Beraishis* 34:13-17).

*Shchem* and *Chamor* convince the inhabitants of their town to let themselves circumcised (*Beraishis* 34:20-22), it is only *Chamor*'s father, *Chedkem* and his six brothers who are unwilling to do so (סה"י).

*Shimon* (who is thirteen years old) and *Laivi* (twelve years; נזיר כ"ט) take vengeance of the inhabitants of the town (*Beraishis* 34:25-29): they kill about 600 men (being convalescent on the third day after their circumcision), together

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with their wives, and they free *Dinoh*.<sup>1</sup>

*Shchem* and his father deserve death-punishment because of transgressing one of the *Noachide mitzvos*: the prohibition to rape others, but not for violating *Dinoh*, as she was not yet married.<sup>2</sup> The others deserve the same punishment because they did not do anything to avoid bad things should happen (אור החיים). *Yaakov* does not agree with what his children have done: he is afraid of the *Canaanis*' eventual revenge (*Beraishis* 34:30).

They take 85 girls and 47 boys as hostages apart of the many flocks: the prisoners will be the servants of *Yaakov*'s children until the *Exode of Mitzrayim* (ס"ה").

Two boys escape from *Shchem*, they alert *Yoshuv* (ישוב), the king of *Tapuach* (תפוח) who, together with seven other *Emori* kings, with an army of tens of thousands of soldiers, depart against *Yaakov*'s camp, this latter counting – even together with *Yitzchok*'s men – only 112 men.

*Yaakov* and *Yitzchok* pray to the Eternal. The enemy's soldiers finally get frightened and go home, the kings are also afraid to enter into battle alone, without their armies (*Beraishis* 35:5; ס"ה").

*Yaakov* – following the Eternal's comand – goes to *Bais Kel*, to accomplish his vow made when he departed: he erects an altar and bring on it sacrifices (*Beraishis* 35:6-7).

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<sup>1</sup> According to the apocryph „*Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*” (III:2:2), *Laivi* was at that moment *ca.* twenty years old. Later, the text (12:5) clarifies the reckoning exactly: *Laivi* was eight years old when he came to *Eretz Canaan*, he was eighteen when he killed *Shchem*, nineteen when received priesthood instead of *Ruvain*, he got married at the age of 28, and he arrived to *Mitzrayim* at the age of 48. According to the same text (*ibid.* 5:3), an Angel came to *Laivi* in dream, and ordered him to take vengeance of what had happened to *Dinoh*. At first, *Laivi* kills *Shchem*, after what *Shimon* kills *Chamor* (*ibid.* 6:4), finally the brothers kill the inhabitants of the town (*ibid.* 6:5).

<sup>2</sup> According to the apocryph „*Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*” (III:6:8), they deserved death as they wanted to do the same to *Soroh* and *Rivkoh* also, as they have done to *Dinoh*. They were continuously pursuing *Avrohom*, they tried to seize his flocks (*ibid.* 6:9), and they did the same to every foreigner, taking their wives and expulsing them from their country (*ibid.* 6:10). It was for this reason that the Eternal became enraged against them, to destroy them (*ibid.* 6:11).

He spends six months in the town: the way from *Chevron* to his parent's house took two years.

*Devorah* dies in *Bais Kel*; *Yaakov* buries her (*Beraishis* 35:5; מדה"ג ל"ה, ח; לק"ט).

*Rivkoh* dies at the age of 122 years (סה"ד). According to others (סה"י), at the age of 133 years.

*Yitzchok* buries her into the cave of *Machpeloh*.

*Lovon* dies: the Eternal punishes him, as he violated the covenant with *Yaakov* (סה"י).

The Eternal appears to *Yaakov*, and blesses him confirming the name *Yisroel* (*Beraishis* 35:10).

*Yaakov*, together with his family and his people, departs from *Bais Kel* (*Beraishis* 35:16) to go to his father to *Chevron* (סה"י).

**2208:** *Yitzchok* is 160 years old, *Yaakov* is 100.

*Binyomin*<sup>1</sup> and his two twin sisters are born, under way, near *Bais Lechem* (בית לחם; *Beraishis* 35:16-18): therefore the *Bais hamikdosh* will stand on his territory. Others say, he was born in the year 2,207.

*Rochel* dies during the birth (*Beraishis* 35:19), at the age of 37 years: cf. *Yaakov*'s curse because of the stealing of *Lovon*'s idols. According to others (סה"י), she dies at the age of 43 years. Again others say (הגר"א לס"ע), at the age of 37 years but in the year 2208.<sup>2</sup>

She is buried there, near *Bais Lechem* (קבר רחל; *Beraishis* 35:19): when *Yossef* is taken to *Mitzrayim*, and when the *Bnai Yisroel* are later taken to the Babylonian exile, they can pray on her tomb, and she can intercede for them

<sup>1</sup> Governmental texts found at Mari on the upper course of the Euphrates, already in the 19th century BCE speak about nomads of the deserts called *Benyamini*, who menace the kingdom and against whom the kings have to wage war: one of the years of *Iahdulim*'s reign, and two of the last king, *Zimri-Lim*'s reign have been named after the war with the *Benyaminis*.

<sup>2</sup> For an analysis of the different opinions, see the „*Seder haDoros*”.

before the Eternal (פס"ר ג, ט"ט).

In the same year, *Dinoh* gives birth to a girl: *Osnas* (אסנת).

*Dinoh* will later marry her brother of the same father and same mother, *Shimon*, begetting five children with him: she is the mother of *Shaul ben haCanaanis* (שאול בן הכנענית). According to others (סה"ד בשם עיר בנימן), she will marry her twin-brother, *Zevulun*. Again others say (סה"ד בש"ם יל"ר), *Dinoh* - at the age of 63, seven years after *Yaakov*'s death, in the year 2262<sup>1</sup> - gets married to *Iyov*. Again others say (סה"ד בש"ם מדרש וישלח ויל"ר), she was already *Iyov*'s wife when raped by *Shchem* and, later, after having killed *Shchem*, *Shimon* marries her, still before descending to *Mitzrayim*, and *Shaul ben hacanaanis*, mentioned in the Torah, was her son of a *Canaani* man.

On his sons' bequest, *Yaakov* sends away *Dinoh* from his house: she gives her an amulette with the Eternal's Name.

The Archangel *Michoel* takes the forty years old (?) *Dinoh* and her daughter to *Mitzrayim*.<sup>2</sup>

They come to the house of *Potifar*, whose barren wife brings up *Osnas* as her own daughter, until she finally gets married to *Yossef* (פד"ר א"ל"ה).

After *Rochel*'s death, *Yaakov* moves from *Rochel*'s tent to the tent of *Bilhoh*, who was earlier *Rochel*'s maidservant (שבת נ"ה).

*Ruvain* is vexed seeing that *Yaakov* does not consider his mother properly: he takes *Yaakov*'s bed into *Leoh*'s tent (שבת נ"ה). According to others (תנחומא ב' י"א), he lies himself on his father's bed: naturally he does not sin with *Bilhoh*

<sup>1</sup> The data quoted by the „*Seder haDoros*” is definitely inexact: *Dinoh*, born in the year 2208, is 63 years old in 2271, this however is not seven but sixteen years after *Yaakov*'s death!

<sup>2</sup> If the data given by the „*Pirkai deRabbi Eliezer*” is not simply a copist's error, it would mean that, according to this, *Dinoh* and her daughter arrive to *Mitzrayim* in the year 2238, the same year when *Yaakov* and his family. However, *Yossef* has already children with *Osnas* when his family arrive!

(שבת נ"ה). However, as he touched his father's bed, this is already considered as if he would have sinned (תרגו"י).<sup>1</sup>

Consequently, the Eternal takes away from him:

- the right of the firstborn to inherit two portions (*Devorim* 21:17; ה, ב"ר פ"ז), and gives it to *Yossef*: the two sons of *Yossef* born in *Mitzrayim* will be recognized by *Yaakov* as autonomous tribes (*Beraishis* 48:5);
- the kingship, and gives to *Yehudoh* (*Beraishis* 49:10);
- the priesthood what He gives to *Laivi*.<sup>2</sup>

**2211:** *Yitzchok* is 163 years old, *Yaakov* is 103.

*Yaakov* goes to his father to *Chevron* (*Beraishis* 35:27).

The Greek sea inundates many towns, killing many people (צ"ד).

**2213:** *Yitzchok* is 165 years old, *Yaakov* is 105.

From *Chevron*, *Yaakov* moves, together with his children, to *Shchem* what has been rebuilt in the meantime. The town has at that time about 300 inhabitants and excellent fields for the flocks (סה"י).

Upon hearing this, *Yoshuv*, the king of *Tapuach* calls the six kings of the towns surrounding *Shchem* to attack together *Yaakov*. The six kings are: *Ailon* (אילון)

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<sup>1</sup> In the apocryph „*Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*” (I:1:6), *Ruvain* speaks in the first person of singular about his immoral act, the desecration of his father's bed. Later, he relates the details also (3:11-15): he has seen *Bilhoh* taking her bath, and the desire awakened in him. When *Yaakov* went to visit *Yitzchok*, and *Bilhoh* was sleeping drunken and uncovered in her tent, *Ruvain* has seen her nudity, and thus he committed the immoral act, while she did not feel anything. An Angel unveiled to *Yaakov* what had happened, who consequently did not touch her any more.

According to the same source (*ibid.* 1:8), *Ruvain* was at that moment thirty years old, what contradicts the abovementioned data about his birth and death.

<sup>2</sup> According to the apocryph „*Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*” (I:1:7), the Eternal wanted to punish *Ruvain* first with death but, following *Yaakov*'s prayer, He only punishes him with a sickness of his virility, lasting seven months. Consequently, *Ruvain* is continuously doing *tesuvoh* during seven years (*Ibid.* 9-10). At the end of his *Testament* (6:7), *Ruvain* speaks about the Eternal giving to *Laivi* the reign (*i.e.* not only the priesthood), what modern commentators consider being an allusion to the reign of the *Chasmoneans*. However, together with the reign, the text (6:8), also speaks about the bringing of sacrifices, what will be entrusted to the tribe of *Laivi* only after the *Golden Calf*.

the king of *Gaash* (געש),<sup>1</sup> *Aihori* (איהורי) king of *Shiloh* (שילה), *Piroson* (פרעתון) king of *Chesser* (חסר), *Sussi* (סוסי) king of *Sarton* (סרטן),<sup>2</sup> *Lovon* (לבן) king of *Bais Choron* (בית חורון), *Sochir* (שכיר) king of *Machnaymoh* (מחנימה).

*Yaakov* prays to the Eternal, while his sons – together with their servants numbering only 112 men – take the battle against the huge armies of the kings. *Yaakov's* sons not only defeat the kings, they also destroy their towns, killing many of their inhabitants.<sup>3</sup>

Upon hearing this, *Yophia* (יפיע) king of *Chevron* calls the kings of *Ay* (עי),<sup>4</sup> *Givon*<sup>5</sup> (גבעון), *Sholem* (שלם), *Adulom* (עדלם),<sup>6</sup> *Lochishoh* (לכישוה)<sup>7</sup> and *Chatzor* (חצור)<sup>8</sup> together with their vassals, altogether 21 *Canaan* kings, and they decide to ask for peace. They do not want the *Bnai Yaakov* should do to them as they did to the seven kings of the *Shchem*-region.

When *Yaakov's* sons get convinced that they seriously mean peace, make a covenant with them. Henceforward, *Yaakov's* sons live in peace with the *Canaan* until the occupation of the Country (סה"י).

<sup>1</sup> *Gaash*: according to the apocryph „*Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*” (IV:7:1-8), *Gaash* attacks *Yaakov's* sons later, on the third day after the battle at *Chatzor*. When *Yehudoh* and *Don* fight with them, the inhabitants of the town run to *Yaakov* to ask for peace. Not only they make peace, they also help them to rebuild the town.

<sup>2</sup> *Sarton*: according to the apocryph „*Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*” (IV:5:1-5), *Sarton* is destroyed on the other day of the attack against *Chatzor*.

<sup>3</sup> According to the apocryph „*Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*” (IV:3:2), *Yehudoh* himself kills the king of *Tapuach*, while *Yaakov* kills *Belissoh*, the twelve *amoh* high giant, the king of all the kings (according to certain opinions, the name is a distorted form of *Bais Shiloh* or *Baal Shiloh*).

<sup>4</sup> *Ay*: *Canaan* town South-East of *Bais-Kel*, its exact place is still unidentified.

<sup>5</sup> *Givon*: *Canaan* town inhabited by *Chivvis* before the arriving of the *Bnai Yisroel*, later one of the towns of the *Laivis* on the territory of *Binyomin*.

<sup>6</sup> *Adulom*: old *Canaan* town, presumably 'Id-el-Míye ('Aid-el-Ma), ca. 13 miles West-South-West of *Bais Lechem*.

<sup>7</sup> *Lochishoh*: *Canaan* (*Emori*) town, on the Amarna-tablets *Lakisha*, *Lakisi*, Ass. *Lakisi*, presumably Ar. Tell el-Heshy, 33 miles South-West of *Yerushalayim*, *Umm el-Lakish*.

<sup>8</sup> *Chatzor*: town in the North of *Eretz Canaan*. According to the apocryph „*Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*” (IV:4:3), *Chatzor*, situated in the South, is destroyed like the towns around *Shchem*.

**2214:** *Yitzchok* is 166 years old, *Yaakov* is 106.

*Yaakov*'s sons move back to their father to *Chevron*. Their flocks, however, remain in *Shchem* where the fields are good. They go regularly to look after the flocks (סה"י).<sup>1</sup>

*Leoh* dies at the age of 44 years (ס"ע). According to others (סה"י), at the age of 51 years (this means, she was born in 2163). Again others say (ס"ע; יל"ש ר, קל"ד), in 2216.

*Yaakov* burries her to the cave of *Machpeloh*.

**2215:** *Yitzchok* is 167 years old, *Yaakov* is 107.

*Kehos* (קהת), *Laivi*'s son is born (סה"ד בשם שה"ק). According to others (סה"ד בשם), *Kehos* was born in the year 2236, as he is two years old when *Yaakov* and his children descend to *Mitzrayim*.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> According to the apocryph „*Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*” (III:9:5-14), *Yitzchok* regularly teaches the rules of the sacrifices to his son, *Laivi*.

<sup>2</sup> According to the apocryph „*Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*” (III:11:1), *Laivi* gets married at the age of 28, the name of his wife is *Milkoh*. The name of his first-born is *Gershom*. The etymology of the name is given by the text after the etymology given by the Torah for the name of *Moshe rabainu*'s son: „*I have been a stranger in a strange land*” (*Shemos* 2:22). According to the Qumran fragment named „*Biblical Chronology*” (4Q559: frg. 2:3), *Laivi* was 34 years old when he begot *Kehos*. According to the chronology of the text, this would mean 2208/9. However, at that moment, *Laivi* – according to the „*Seder haDoros*” – was twenty years old.

## CHAPTER SIX: EGYPT (מצרים)

### 6.1. Yossef in Mitzrayim

**2216:** *Yitzchok* is 168 years old, *Yaakov* is 108, *Yossef* is 17.<sup>1</sup>

*Yaakov* makes a silk coat with long sleeves for his favourite son, *Yossef* (*Beraishis* 37:3), to show that he is exempted from work (ב"ר פ"ד, ח).

*Yossef* tells *loshon horoh* ('slander') to his father concerning his brothers (*Beraishis* 37:2): he misinterprets their deeds, considering they transgress the *halochoh*:

- ▶ they eat meat cut of a living animal. In reality, they eat the embryos of the slaughtered animals, what needs not to be slaughtered (ש"ח ברא' ל"ז, ג);
- ▶ they call the sons of *Bilhoh* and *Zilpoh* servants. In reality, they are only making allusion to the original status of the mothers;
- ▶ they do business with *Canaani* women. According to *Yossef*, this is inadmissible.

According to the *halochoh*, this slander could cost the life of the brothers: in case any of *Yossef*'s charges result just, they would merit death penalty for transgressing one of the seven *mitzvos* of the *Bnai Noach* (ב"ר פ"ד, ט"ז).

*Yossef* is punished *midoh keneged midoh* (מידה כנגד מידה, 'measure for measure'):

- ▶ his brothers slaughter the goat according to the *halochoh*, before dipping his coat in its blood (תנחומא ב' וישב ו);

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<sup>1</sup> In my exemplar of the „*Tzemach Dovid*”, the year 2245 is given, what has to be considered a copist's error.

- ▶ they sell him for a slave;
- ▶ *Potifar*'s wife tries to seduce him (תנחומא ב' וישב ו; ש"ח ברא' ל"ז, ג).

*Yossef*'s prophetic dreams:

- ▶ the brothers' sheaved dry up, his remain fresh (*Beraishis* 37:7): the seven years of abundance (ב"ר פ"ד, ט);
- ▶ the brothers' sheaves bow to his (*Beraishis* 37:7): the brothers will bow to him (as to the Viceroy of *Mitzrayim*, without recognizing him);
- ▶ the Sun, the Moon and the stars bow to him (*Beraishis* 37:9): his father, his mother – viz. *Bilhah*, his foster-mother – and his brothers will bow to him (when they know already that he is *Yossef*).

*Yaakov* knows that these are prophecies, and secretly awaits their fulfilment (ב"ר (פ"ד, י"א).

Openly, before his sons, however, he rebukes *Yossef*, to draw off of him the anger of the rest of his sons (*Beraishis* 37:10-11; רש"י ברא' ל"ז, י).

*Yaakov* sends *Yossef* to his brothers (*Beraishis* 37:14).

Under way, *Yossef* gets lost, therefore the Archangel *Gavri-l* conducts him to his brothers (פדר"א ל"ח).

Filled with envy towards *Yossef*, the brothers (wrongfully) suspect him of intending to become his father's sole heir.

Because of this, and also because of the *loshon horoh*, they decide to kill *Yossef* (*Beraishis* 37:18-20).<sup>1</sup> However, they change mind and, upon *Ruvain*'s counsel, they throw him into a pit (*Beraishis* 37:21-24).<sup>2</sup> Later, they want to sell him to an Arab caravan (*Beraishis* 37:25-27). Finally, they sell him for twenty silvers to

<sup>1</sup> According to the apocryph „*Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*” (VI:2:1), it was *Shimon*, *Don* and *God* who wanted to kill *Yossef*.

<sup>2</sup> According to the apocryph „*Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*” (VI:4:4), *Yossef* stays in the pit for three days.



seven *Midyon*i merchants passing by (*Beraishis* 37:28; סה"י).<sup>1</sup>

With the money, the brothers buy shoes for themselves (תרגו"י בראשית ל"ז, כ"ח) *cf.* *Amos* 2:6).<sup>2</sup>

The *Midyon*is, on their turn, resell him to the aforementioned Arab caravan (*Beraishis* 37:28),<sup>3</sup> again for twenty silvers, while they continue their way to *Gilod*.

The *Yishmoelim* sit *Yossef* on a camel, and take him to *Mitzrayim* (*Beraishis* 37:28).

During the way, they make fun of him, they beat him. *Yossef*, desperated because of his fate, stops at *Bais Lechem*, on the tomb of his mother, *Rochel*, to ask her to intercede with the Eternal for him.

The Eternal listens to *Yossef*'s pray: the *Yishmoelim* and also their animals loose all their force, and fall to earth. Besides, a great tempest befalls them.

Finally, they ask for *Yossef*'s pardon, and decide to sell him immediately upon arriving to *Mitzrayim* (סה"י).

The whole issue – *Yossef*'s selling and his arriving to *Mitzrayim* – was but the Eternal's plan in order to bring *Yaakov* and his family to *Mitzrayim* (ב"ר פ"ו, ב).

<sup>1</sup> According to „*Jubilees*”, the brothers sold *Yossef* on *Yom Kippur*.

<sup>2</sup> See also the *piyyut* „*Aileh ezkeroh*” in the *Machzor* of *Yom Kippur*. According to the apocryph „*Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*” (VI:3:2), with the money, *Shimon*, *Don* and *God* buy shoes for themselves and their families: when selling *Yossef*, their intention was to humiliate their brother not to kill him. *Zevulun* connects this to the *chalitzoh*-ceremony: according to the Torah-rule (*Devorim* 25:7-9), if the brother of a dead man „...refuses to raise to his brother a name in Israel...”, the widow shall „...pull his shoe off from his foot, and spit in his face...”. When the brothers go to buy food in *Mitzrayim*, before entering the Viceroy's palace, the servants make them pull off their shoes (*Ibid.* VI:3:6).

<sup>3</sup> According to the apocryph „*Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*” (II:2:6), *Shimon* hated and, consequently, wanted to kill *Yossef*, because of the paternal favouritism. Therefore, the Eternal punished *Shimon*: his right arm became paralyzed for a whole week (*Ibid.* 2:12). *Ruvain* and *Shimon* being absent, *Yehudoh* sold *Yossef* to the *Yishmoelim* (*Ibid.* 2:9). Because of this, *Shimon* was angry at *Yehudoh* for five months (*Ibid.* 2:11). Later, however, *Shimon* made *teshuvoh*: he was fasting for two years (*Ibid.* 3:4) and, thereafter, he permanently withheld himself from every kind of envy (*Ibid.* 2:13). More than that, in his *Testament* (*Ibid.* 6:2-7), he speaks about withholding oneself of envy as one of the conditions of the

The brothers swear with an oath to keep the affair for a secret even before their father, *Yaakov*: whoever transgresses the oath, should be put to death.

At the moment of swearing, *Ruvain* is not with them, therefore they associate the Eternal for the tenth. It is for this reason, that the Eternal does not unveil anything to *Yaakov* (פדר"א ל"ה).

Upon *Yissochor*'s counsel, they slaughter a kid of a goat, dip *Yossef*'s coat in the goat's blood, and send the coat with *Naphtoli* to their father saying „...*an evil beast has devoured him...*” under way, they have only found the bloody coat (*Beraishis* 37:31-33; סה"י).

This is *Yaakov*'s punishment *midah keneged midah*: he had cheated his father when covering his hand with the goat's skin (זוהר וישב פ"ה, ג).

*Yaakov* mourns for his (living) son for 22 years: when he stayed in *Lovon*'s, house he failed to fulfill the *mitzvoh* of honouring one's parents also for 22 years (20 + 2 years the way; ב"ר פ"ד, ב).

The fourteen years he learned earlier in the *yeshivoh*, naturally does not count from this point of view: learning Torah is even more important than honouring one's parents (רש"י מגילה י"ז).

The brothers blame *Yehudoh* for what had happened, and they exclude him from among themselves (שמו"ר מ"ב, ב).

Instead of marrying one of his (half)sisters, *Yehudoh* marries the daughter of the *Canaani Shua* (שווע; *Beraishis* 38:2), *Illis* (עלית; סה"י).<sup>1</sup>

*Shua*'s name is rendered in the *Targums* and the Talmud (פסחים ג) as 'merchant'. According to others (רמב"ן), the name means 'immigrant', not from the

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coming of *Moshiach* and the resurrection of the dead.

<sup>1</sup> According to the apocryph „*Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*” (IV:8:2), *Yehudoh*'s wife was *Sovo* (סבא), daughter of *Barsova* (ברסבא), the king of *Adulom*. According to the story, they made first *Yehudoh* drunk, then presented to him the girl dressed into gold. It was for that reason that he married her without consulting his father (*Ibid.* 13:4-7).

*Canaan* tribes. Let us remember that *Avrohom* took an oath from *Eliezer*, that the latter would not marry *Yitzchok* to a *Canaan* woman (*Beraishis* 24:3).

Upon arriving to *Mitzrayim*, the *Yishmoelim* sell *Yossef* for five silvers to *Medonim* (*Beraishis* 37:36; the descendants of *Avrohom*'s son, *Medon*, born from *Keturoh*), who resell him for 400 silvers to *Potifar* (פּוֹטִיפָר), officer of *Paroh*'s Guards (*Beraishis* 37:36). Altogether, *Yossef* is sold four times (סֵה"ד). He stays in *Potifar*'s house for one year: six months he works around the house and six on the fields (*Beraishis* 39:5; יל"ש ר, קמ"ו).

In *Yossef*'s merit, the Eternal's blessing rests upon *Potifar*'s house (*Beraishis* 39:1-6).

Like *Yehudoh*, *Ruvain* also marries a *Canaan* women: *Elyorom* (אֱלִיּוֹרֹם), the daughter of *Avi* (עֹוִי) from *Timnoh* (סֵה"י).

The children of the eleven brothers are all born still in *Eretz Canaan*, before descending to *Mitzrayim*.

## 6.2. Yossef in Jail

**2217:** *Yitzchok* is 169 years old, *Yaakov* is 109 (צ"ד; סֵה"ד), *Yossef* is 18.

*Potifar*'s wife, *Zelicho* (זִלְיִכָּה)<sup>1</sup> tries to seduce *Yossef*. However, her efforts repeated during several months result unsuccessful (*Beraishis* 39:7-10).<sup>2</sup>

When people come together on the Nile-bank to celebrate the rise of the river, *Zelicho* stays at home, to make a new attempt with *Yossef* (*Beraishis* 39:11). Being *Shabbos*, *Yossef* does not work: he is reading the weekly portion of the Torah (מִדְרַשׁ אַבְנִיר; יל"ש רֵא"א).

<sup>1</sup> *Zelicho*: cf. Arab Zuleica.

<sup>2</sup> According to the apocryph „*Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*” (I:4:9), *Potifar*'s wife even turned to sorcerers trying also to make *Yossef* drink some kind of love-philtre, but everything was in vain.

When *Yossef* tries to run away, his mistress seizes his garment and tears it while *Yossef*, leaving his clothes behind, escapes (*Beraishis* 39:12).

The best defense is to attack: *Zelicho*, afraid of being called to account, accuses *Yossef* before her husband that the Hebrew slave wanted to rape her (*Beraishis* 39:13-19; סה"י).<sup>1</sup>

The Eternal Himself comes to witness *Yossef*'s innocence and, what is even more, his holiness: He adds a letter of His Name (ה) to *Yossef*'s: naming him *Yehossef* (י-הוֹסֵף; *Tehilim* 81:6; ט, ג, ויקר"ר כ"ג).<sup>2</sup>

*Potifar* knows about *Yossef*'s innocence: *Osnas*, who is raised in his house, relates him the truth (י"ל"ש ה"א קמ"ו). According to others (סה"י), the Eternal makes *Potifar*'s one year old baby to speak and tell his father what actually happened.

However, *Potifar* brings *Yossef* into court, where again „the Hebrew slave's” innocence becomes clear.<sup>3</sup> This notwithstanding, in order to save the fame of *Potifar* and of his wife, *Yossef* is put into jail (*Beraishis* 39:20; י, ב"ר פ"ז).

*Yossef* is in jail for ten years (פדר"א ל"ח): he spoke slander of his ten brothers (שמר"ר ז, א).

He is let out every night for some hours to continue managing *Potifar*'s estate.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. the Cananite story of *Ashertu*, and also the story about *Bellerophon(tes)* in the sixth book of the *Iliade*. *Proitos*' wife, *Stheneboia* (according to others *Anteia*) falls in love with *Bellerophon(tes)*, whose name means 'Belleros' murderer', the son of *Glaukos* or of *Posseidon* and *Eurymede*. By misadventure, he killed the Corinthian *Belleros* (or the latter's brother, *Peiren*), and was looking for purification. When *Bellerophon(tes)* refuses her, she accuses him of rape. As *Proitos* may not kill his guest, he sends the latter to his father-in-law, *Iobates*, king of *Lykia*, with a letter asking for the murder of the bearer of the letter (cf. the „*Uriah*-letter”, 2911). *Iobates* sets *Bellerophon(tes)* tasks which could cause him death, however he overcomes all the difficulties with the help of his hippogriff, the *Pegasus*. When *Iobates* realises that only a man of heavenly origin can be able of all this, he marries his daughter, *Philonoe*, to *Bellerophon(tes)*. *Stheneboia* commits suicide or, according to others, she tries to escape on the *Pegasus*, but the horse throws her down, and she dies.

<sup>2</sup> See below, p. 186.

<sup>3</sup> According to the variant given in the *Quran*, the shirt had been teared behind, thus proving *Yossef*'s innocence.

**2226:** *Yitzchok* is 178 years old, *Yaakov* is 118, *Yossef* is 27.

*Tomor* (תמר), *Shem*'s daughter (ב"ר פ"ה, י"א) – or, according to others the daughter of *Elom ben Shem*<sup>1</sup> - gets married to the eight years old *Er* (ער), *Yehudoh*'s firstborn. When her husband dies, she gets married to his brother-in-law, *Onan* (אוןן) who in the meantime reached the age of eight. The latter is thus supposed to accomplish the *mitzvoh* of *yibum* (יבום 'levirate'; *Beraishis* 38:6-8; פסדר"כ ק).

*Onan*, however, is unwilling to accomplish the *mitzvoh*: he does not want the child to be born should bear his brother's name. Therefore, he also refuses – as his brother did (רש"י) – to consume the marriage (*Beraishis* 38:9). Consequently, the Eternal kills him too (*Beraishis* 38:10).

After the death of his two sons, *Yehudoh* sends *Tomor* back to the house of her parents: he is unwilling to marry her to his third son, *Sheloh* (שלה; *Beraishis* 38:11), who is anyway only six (or seven) years old (סה"ד).

**2228:** *Yitzchok* is 180 years old, *Yaakov* is 120, *Yossef* is 29.

*Yehudoh*, on his way to fleece his sheep, sleeps with *Tomor*, not recognizing her and thinking, she is a prostitute. He even gives her presents (*Beraishis* 38:14-19). When *Yehudoh* gets acquainted with the fact that *Tomor* is pregnant, he convokes a *Bais Din* where she is condemned to be burnt alive (*Beraishis* 38:24). As it is written in the Torah: „...and the daughter of any priest, if she defiles herself by playing the harlot, she defiles her father; she shall be burned with fire.” (*Vayikroh* 21:9): *Tomor* was the daughter of (the son of) *Shem ben Noach*, *Shem* – as a firstborn (פדר"א ל"ה); although the Torah mentions *Shem* at the first place from among *Noach*'s sons, the firstborn was actually *Yefes*!) -

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<sup>1</sup> *Tomor*: according to the apocryph „*Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*” (IV:10:1), she was *Aram*'s daughter.

functioned as a *kohen*, and she has been destined for *Yehudoh*'s son (תרגו"י (ל"ח, י; ב"ר פ"ה, י).

*Tomor*, however, proves her innocence presenting the objects she received from *Yehudoh* (*Beraishis* 38:25-26).

*Tomor* begets twins of *Yehudoh* (*Beraishis* 38:27) - *Illis*, *Yehudoh*'s wife has died in the meantime (*Beraishis* 38:12) -: *Peretz* (פרץ; *Beraishis* 38:29; the ancestor of *Dovid hamelech* and of *Moshiach*) and *Zorach* (זרח; *Beraishis* 38:30).<sup>1</sup>

The chief of the butlers, by the name *Merod* (מירוד; סה"י), and the chief of the bakers of *Paroh* are put in custody (*Beraishis* 40:1-2), because a fly was found in *Paroh*'s cup, and a small stone in his bread (ב"ר פ"ה, א-ב). According to others (תרגו"י מ, י), they wanted to poison *Paroh*, but the thing became known.

They are put in the same prison where *Yossef* was confined already 10 years ago (*Beraishis* 40:3).

As the Eternal gave *Yossef* „...*favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison*”, the latter „...*committed to Yossef's hand all the prisoners who were in the prison...*” (*Beraishis* 39:21-23); he also charges *Yossef* with the two new prisoners (*Beraishis* 40:3).

Both dream a dream during the same night (*Beraishis* 40:5).

► the chief of the butler's dream: „...*in a vine were three branches; and it was as though it budded, and its blossoms shot forth; and its clusters brought forth ripe grapes;... and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Paroh's cup, and I gave the cup into Paroh's hand.*” (*Beraishis* 40:9-11);

► the chief of the baker's dream: „...*I had three white baskets on my head; And*

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<sup>1</sup> According to the apocryph „*Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*” (IV:11:2), *Yehudoh* beeing drunk, sleeps with her. After two years (*Ibid.* 12:1-4), *Tomor* hears that *Yehudoh* goes to fleece his sheep: she dresses herself for a fiancée, and stands waiting at the gate of her town (it was customary by the *Emoris*, a fiancée had to pass seven days before her wedding as a prostitute). There is she seen by the drunken *Yehudoh* who sleeps with her and even gives her several presents.

*in the uppermost basket there were all kinds of baked food for Paroh; and the birds ate them out of the basket upon my head.” (Beraishis 40:16-17).*

Both of them see the interpretation of the other's dream also in their dream (ב"ר (פ"ה, ג).

*Yossef* interprets the dreams:

► prophecies for the *Mitzris*:

- after three days, the chief of the butlers will be restored to his former dignity (*Beraishis* 40:12:13): only a living person can give the cup to *Paroh*;
- the chief of the bakers will be hanged up (*Beraishis* 40:18-19): the birds dare to eat only of a basket put on the head of a dead person who does not move;

► prophecies for the *Bnai Yisroel*:

- slavery in *Mitzrayim*,
- the three branches are *Moshe-Aharon-Miryam*;
- redemption, three new exiles and an even harsher fourth one (ב"ר פ"ה, ד-ה).

*Yossef* asks for the help of the chief of the butlers: „...**make mention of me to Paroh, and bring me out of this house.**” (*Beraishis* 40:14).

His punishment for the two words (והזכרתני והצאתני) are two additional years in prison (*Beraishis* 41:1; תנחומא ב' מקץ ב): he was supposed to rely himself only and exclusively upon the Eternal and not upon a human being (ב"ר פ"ט, ב).

When his first child is born, *Paroh* celebrates a festivity of eight days for his entire Empire: *Tzoan* (צֶעַן) and *Mitzrayim* (מִצְרַיִם).<sup>1</sup>

On this occasion, *Paroh* restores the chief of the butlers to his butlership (*Beraishis* 40:21). The latter, however, does not remember *Yossef*, but forgets about what he had promised (*Beraishis* 40:23): he does not intercede for the liberation of his ex-prison-mate (מִצְרַיִם).

<sup>1</sup> In this context, *Tzoan* and *Mitzrayim* presumably mean Upper- and Lower-Egypt (see above),

At the same time, *Paroh* orders the chief of the bakers be hanged, as *Yossef* has interpreted the dream (*Beraishis* 40:22).

*Yitzchok* dies at the age of 180 years in *Chevron* (*Beraishis* 35:29). According to certain opinions (ס"ע), this happens in the period when *Yossef* stands before *Paroh*: this has to be understood only approximately, because actually *Yitzchok* dies a year earlier (הגר"א לס"ע).

*Yaakov* and *Aisov* bury their father to the cave of *Machpeloh*.

After their father's death, *Yaakov* and *Aisov* divide their inheritance: upon the counsel of *Yishmoel*'s son *Nevoyos* - according to others (פדר"א ל"ח), of *Yishmoel* himself<sup>1</sup> - *Aisov* takes all the wealth of *Yitzchok*. On the other hand, they put it into a contract and they have it signed by witnesses, that *Yaakov* and his descendants inherit the entire of *Eretz Canaan*, all the lands and towns of the seven *Canaani* peoples from the river of *Mitzrayim*<sup>2</sup> to the river *Pras*, with the cave of *Machpeloh* included (יל"ש ח"א קל"ח).

After the burial, *Aisov* returns to the land of *Seir* (*Beraishis* 36:6): he has to leave *Yaakov*'s land, *Eretz Canaan*.

As a reward, *Aisov* receives hundred countries from *Seir* to *Magdiel*, what is Rome (פדר"א ל"ח): after the eight kings which reign over *Edom* (see 2,205), there are heads of tribes ruling, the tenth in Rome, from where their rule extends over the whole world (רמב"ן ברא' ל"ו, מ"ג).

### 6.3. *Yossef Viceroy of Mitzrayim*

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although elsewhere one can find the name *Patros* also designating Upper-Egypt (or at least a part of it).

<sup>1</sup> The data given by the „*Pirkai deRabbi Eliezer*” is problematic, as *Yishmoel* died already 57 years earlier! He was born 14 years before *Yitzchok*, and lived 137 years;  $137 - 14 = 123$ ,  $180 - 123 = 57$ . It can, however, well be that he gave a counsel earlier *pro futuro*.

<sup>2</sup> The expression „the river of *Mitzrayim*” has to be interpreted here as meaning the *Wadi el-Arish*, being



**2229:** *Yaakov* is 121 years old, *Yossef* is 30 (*Beraishis* 41:46).

● **Tishrai 1:** *Paroh*'s dreams *Rosh hashonoh* by night (ר"ה י"א).

*Paroh*'s name is *Dion ben Walid* (דיאן בן וליד; סה"ד בשם יוחסין מאמר ה' זמן ב).

During the two additional years *Yossef* has to stay in prison, *Paroh* dreams every night the same dream, but he can not remember his dream in the morning. After this night, however, he remembers the dream in the morning (מדה"ג מ"א, א).<sup>1</sup>

*Paroh*'s dubble dream:

- ▶ standing by the river of *Mitzrayim*, the *Shichor* (שיחור),<sup>2</sup> *Paroh* sees seven cows, gaunt and thin, coming up from the river and eat seven other cows, sleek and fat which came up earlier from the river (*Beraishis* 41:1-4);
- ▶ seven lump and full ears are devoured by seven thin ears what sprung on the same stalk (*Beraishis* 41:5-7).

In his dreams, *Paroh* sees the interpretation of his dreams also, but he forgets them also until the morning (מדה"ג מ"א, א).

There is no one to interpret *Paroh*'s dreams among all the wise men, interpreters of dreams and sorcerers (חרטומים) of *Mitzrayim* (*Beraishis* 41:8).

*Paroh* wants to have them all executed, all the sorcerers of all the provinces of the land: of *Mitzrayim*, *Goshen* (גושן), *Ramses* (רעמסס),<sup>3</sup> *Tachpanches*

once the border between *Eretz Mitzrayim* and *Eretz Canaan* (see above).

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Daniel* 2:1-12, where the interpreters of dreams have to relate the dream itself also together with its interpretation, as to justify their interpretation.

<sup>2</sup> The expression „the river of *Mitzrayim*” is related here, in opposition to the Torah's usage, naturally to the Nile.

<sup>3</sup> *Ramses*: according to the „*Targum Yonassan*”, this is *Pelusion*, on the East branch of the delta of the Nile. According to *RASHI* (*Shemos* 1:11), the towns which according to the Torah were built by the *Bnai Yisroel*, existed already, at this time they only had to fortify them and made them usable for storage. See below.

The name of the town also involves chronological problems. The *RAMSES* were reigning later, being the Pharaohs of the last two Dynasties of the New Empire in Thebes: of the 19th (1306-1186 BCE) and the 20th (1186-1070 BCE). For a discussion of the dating, see below.

Modern opinions identify the town (and the province) with *Avaris*, the capital of the *Hyksos* in the delta: Egypt. *Ramses*, *Pa-Ramses*, *Per-Ramses*; today near *Tell el-Mashkhuta* (*Pisom*), but it is still not

(תחפנחס),<sup>1</sup> *Tzoan*.

Upon this, the chief of the butlers remembers his ex-prison-mate, *Yossef* (*Beraishis* 41:9-13): upon his proposal, *Yossef* is taken before *Paroh* (*Beraishis* 41:14; סה"י).

In prison, *Yossef* observes *nazirus* (נזיר): he does not drink wine, nor cuts his hair (cf. *Bamidbor* 6:3-5; כ"ה, ב"ר צ"ח).

Now, in honour of the king, he lets his hair be cut (*Beraishis* 41:14; י"א, ב"ר פ"ט).

There are seventy steps leading to *Paroh*'s throne: common people can climb only to the third step, the noblemen only to the thirty-first step; to the seventieth, near *Paroh*, only those privileged can arrive who speak all the seventy languages: on the throne of *Mitzrayim* there can sit only someone who speaks all the seventy languages (סה"י).<sup>2</sup>

To can stand near *Paroh*, *Yossef*, who speaks only the *Ivris* language (לשון עברית), has to learn all seventy languages.

The Eternal adds one letter (ה) of His Name to that of *Yossef* (יוסף) > *Yehossef* (יהוסף), thereafter an Angel teaches him all the seventy languages (מדא"ג נ, א).

*Yossef* interprets *Paroh*'s dreams: seven years of rich produce will be followed by seven years of poor produce,<sup>3</sup> the two dreams mean the same thing, and the

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exactly located, in any case, South-West from *Pelusion*. The town has been reconstructed and named after his own name by RAMSES II (19th Dynasty) who, according to his own words, was also of *Hyksos* origin. The dating of his reign is discussed; according to KAKOSY 1290-1224/3 BCE, but according to earlier dating about 15 years earlier, 1304/01- 1238/35 BCE; according to MORBY – following BAER – 1279-1212 BCE.

<sup>1</sup> *Tachpanches*: according to the generally accepted modern identification, the Greek *Daphnai* (the first military base of Greek mercenaries in Egypt), today *Tell Defenneh* about 18 miles South-South-East of *Taanis*, about 9 miles West of *El-Kantara*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the members of the *Sanhedrin* were supposed to know all the seventy languages (*bMenachos* 65a).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. in the Greek mythological tradition, Egypt is struck by nine years of hunger. An oracle, *Phrasios*, proposes to the cruel king of the country, *Busiris* (son of *Posseidon* and *Lysianassa*), to sacrifice every year a foreigner to *Zeus*. *Busiris* first sacrifices the oracle himself. Finally, *Busiris* and his son are killed

repetition means that the Eternal had already decided the things what will soon become reality (*Beraishis* 41:25-32).

*Yossef's* counsel: in the years of rich produce, a fifth part of the produce should be put into storage for the poor years (*Beraishis* 41:33-36; ל"ד, מ"א, ל"ד).

To justify his interpretation, *Yossef* even gives a sign to *Paroh*: the same day the queen will give birth to a boy, and his two years old firstborn son will die. Both thing come to happen (סה"י).

*Yossef* is named viceroy (משנה למלך, vizir) of *Mitzrayim* at the age of thirty (*Beraishis* 41:40).

*Paroh* gives him a new name: *Tzofnas Paneach* (צפנת פענח) 'the unveiler of hidden things' (*Beraishis* 41:45).<sup>1</sup>

*Yossef* is taken around in the town on the king's charriot as of a triumphal march (*Beraishis* 41:43; רש"י מ"א, מ"ב-מ"ג).

The girls standing on the roofs of the houses, throw their jewelleries into the charriot in order to draw upon themselves the attention of the exceptionally beautiful Viceroy<sup>2</sup> (פדר"א ל"ט; ב"ר צ"ה, ג).

*Osnas*, *Dinoh's* daughter (cf. 2207),<sup>3</sup> throws into *Yossef's* charriot the amulet given to her by her grandfather *Yaakov*. On the amulet there was the Name of the Eternal, and an inscription: who will marry this girl, will marry a member of *Yaakov's* family.

*Osnas* had earlier been taken to *Mitzrayim* by the Archangel *Michoel*.

by *Heracle*. According to an other tradition, *Busiris* was the son of *Aigyptos*.

<sup>1</sup> *Tzofnas Paneach*: according to modern interpretation, *Tzapneteph 'ónh* 'g-d speaks and he lives'; Egypt. *D(d)-pnt(r)-ef-'nh* (*De-pnute-ef-ónh*).

<sup>2</sup> According to the apocryph „*Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*” (II:5:1), *Yossef* was especially beautiful, because he had not been governed by bad characteristics (inclination to immorality; *Ibid.* II:5:3).

<sup>3</sup> *Osnas*: according to modern interpretations, the name of Egyptian origin means 'belonging to the goddess *Neth*', or takes its origins of the expressions *Ash-Neth* 'Neth's beloved' or, eventually, 'Isis-Neth'.

She was grown up in the house of *Poti-Fera* (פּוֹטִי-פֶּרָע),<sup>1</sup> the priest of *On* (אֹן 'Taanis'; תַּרְגוּם)<sup>2</sup> (*Beraishis* 41:45), as his adopted daughter (פֶּדְרָא ל"ה).

The son of *Achirom* (אֲחִירָם; פֶּדְרָא ל"ה), *Poti-Fera* is *Potifar* who wanted to commit immorality with *Yossef* (סוֹטָה י"ג). When this became known, he – ashamed – had to hide himself among the priests, changing the palace for the sanctuary.

*Paroh* marries *Osnas* to *Yossef* (*Beraishis* 41:45).<sup>3</sup>

*Yossef* has a palace built for himself: the construction takes three years (סֵה"י).<sup>4</sup>

The war of the inhabitants of *Tarshish*,<sup>5</sup> descendants of *Yovon ben Yefes*, against the descendants of *Yishmoel*, inhabitants of the land *Chavilah*.<sup>6</sup> The latter ask for *Yossef*'s help.

*Yossef*'s *Mitzri* army defeats the *Tarshishim*, who withdraw to the surroundings of *Yovon*,<sup>7</sup> while their country is occupied by the *Yishmoelim* (סֵה"י).

<sup>1</sup> *Poti-Fera*: cf. Egypt. *P'-di-p'-R'* 'he whom *Ra* has given'. It has to be remarked that, according to the BDB, the form *Potifar* is an abbreviation of the more complete form *Poti-Fera*.

<sup>2</sup> *On*: in the case of *Shemos* 1:11, however, the *Targums* render *Pisom* as *Taanis*, and in *Bamidbor* 13:22, *Tzoan* is rendered the same (see above)! Consequently *Pisom* = *Tzoan* = *On* = *Taanis*!? It can also be that there have been several towns named *Taanis*, or that earlier an other town had been called by the same name?

According to *RASHI* (to *Bamidbor* 13:22, following *Yeshayoh* 30:4), *Taanis*, the royal capital (although, according to the commentary „*Metzudas Dovid*“, this was *Tachpanches*) was situated on the Nile-bank. It was there that *Moshe rabainu*'s parents lived, it was also there that *Batyah* went to the river to take her bath. And it was also there that *Moshe rabainu* spoke to *Paroh*, and also the first of the ten plagues took place there.

Modern opinions identify it with *Bais Shemesh*, mentioned in *Yirmeyoh* 43:13, which received its name after the cult of the sun-g-d *Ra*: Gr. *Heliopolis*, with its Old Egyptian name *Yunu*, *Án*, it can be identical with *Unu* mentioned in Assyrian texts. Today Matariyeh on the right bank of the Nile.

<sup>3</sup> According to the apocryph story „*Yossef and Assenath*“, *Osnas* was really *Potifar*'s daughter, originally the fiancée of *Paroh*'s son. Later she has converted to Judaism, and became *Yossef*'s wife. The story, although conserved only by a Christian variant in Greek, takes its origins from Egyptian hellenistic Jewish milieu, and shows the influence of antique romans.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Shlomoh hamelech*'s palace was completed in thirteen years (1*Melochim* 7:1).

<sup>5</sup> *Tarshish*: because of geographical considerations, the war with *Yishmoel*'s descendants, has presumably to be connected to *Tarsos* in Asia Minor and not to the Hispanian *Tartessos*.

<sup>6</sup> The land of *Chavilah* presumably means here a part of Arabia and not of Egypt.

<sup>7</sup> *Yovon*: in a broader sense, *Yovon* means Greece. Here, however, it is used presumably in the stricter sense, meaning Asia Minor or the Ionian towns of Asia Minor. See above at *Noach*'s descendants.

*Yossef* is one of the ten kings who rules over the whole world (פדר"א י"א).<sup>1</sup>

**2232:** *Yaakov* is 124 years old, *Yossef* is 33.

*Yissochor* gets married.<sup>2</sup>

**2236:** *Yaakov* is 128 years old, *Yossef* is 37.

*Osnas* gives birth to twins: *Efroim* (אפרים) and *Menashe* (מנשה) are born (*Beraishis* 41:50-52; סה"ד). According to others (סה"י), they were born in the year 2233. Again others say (צ"ד), in the year 2234.<sup>3</sup>

The seven years of abundance come to an end.

The eight years old *Peretz* (*Yehudoh*'s son of his ex daughter-in-law, *Tomor*) begets a son, *Chetzron* (חצרון; סה"ד).

**2237:** *Yaakov* is 129 years old, *Yossef* is 38.

„And the seven years of famine began to come” in *Mitzrayim*<sup>4</sup> and in the nearby countries (*Beraishis* 41:54; ב"ר צ, י): Syria, Arabia and *Eretz Canaan*. According to others (צ"ד), the seven years of famine started in the year 2236. Again others say (סה"ד בשם סה"י) in the year 2238.

*Eretz Canaan* is stricken by the famine because of the selling of *Yossef* (פדר"א (ל"ה).

Upon *Yossef*'s order, in the government's warehouses the wheat is stocked covered by sand: in this way it cannot be rotted. The peasants, on the other hand, does not cover their wheat with sand, so that it becomes entirely rotted. At the end, they see themselves obliged to turn to *Yossef* to ask for wheat (סה"י).

<sup>1</sup> See 1908, *Nimrod*.

<sup>2</sup> The data, unknown by other sources, is only given by the apocryph „*Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*”.

<sup>3</sup> According to my exemplar of the „*Tzemach Dovid*”. The „*Seder haDoros*” quotes here the „*Tzemach Dovid*” what, according to him, has 2235.

<sup>4</sup> According to an inscription found on the Sehel Island, carved into the rock by the priest of the g-d *Hnum* in the 2nd century BCE, there had been seven consecutive years of famine beginning with the 18th year of Pharaoh *Joser*'s reign (c. 2700 BCE). This again connects the *Bnai Yisroel*'s stay in *Mitzrayim* to the Old Empire.

*Yossef* is willing to give wheat to the peasants only if they have themselves circumcised (ב"ר צ, ו): later, in *Mitzrayim*, the *Bnai Yisroel* will not be ashamed because of their *bris miloh* (מדה"ג מ"א, ו"י).

*Yossef* promulgates new laws for the selling of wheat: in virtue of the new laws, foreigners can also come and buy. Thus, his brothers will surely come to *Mitzrayim* to buy wheat, and he will surely meet them. His son, *Menasshe*, named royal commissioner for the selling of wheat, presents every night to *Yossef* the list of the foreigners who entered the country and the names of their fathers (ב"ר צ"א, ד).

People come continuously to *Mitzrayim* from the neighbouring countries to buy wheat (*Beraishis* 41:57): gold and silver is flowing in to the country.

This is also part of the Eternal's plan to fulfil His promise made to *Avrohom*: after 400 years of slavery, „...shall they come out with great wealth.” (*Beraishis* 15:13).

*Yossef* hides all the wealth coming from abroad or taken from the peasants in exchange for food – gold, silver (*Beraishis* 47:14), *shoham*-stones, *bedollach* and expensive clothes – on three different places.

- one will be found by *Korach* who thus becomes the wealthiest man of the world;
- the second will be discovered by the Emperor *Antoninus*, who uses the money to help with it the *Bnai Yisroel*;
- the third will come into the possession of the *Bnai Yisroel* only after the coming of *Moshiach* (פסחים קי"ט).

According to others (סה"י), *Yossef* hides about 72 *kikkar* gold, silver and precious stones on four places: one is in the desert, near the Sea of Reeds (the *Yom Suf*), in the sanctuary of the idol called *Baal Tzephon*; one is near the river *Pras* (the

Eufrates); two are in the desert, in front of the desert of *Poras* and *Modai* (Persia and Media). From the remaining wealth, he gives rich presents to his brothers and to the women of his father's family. The still remaining twenty *kikkars* of gold and silver he gives to *Paroh* who deposits everything in the royal treasury.

When all the money is spent in the whole country, nor had the people more valuables, flocks, cattles of herds, *Yossef* purchases for *Paroh* the ownership of all the lands in *Mitzrayim*. Henceforward, the peasants are *Paroh's* tenants, working on *Paroh's* fields, and they have to give a fifth part of the produce to *Paroh* (*Beraishis* 47:15-26). However, the priests are allowed to keep their lands, and they are also exempted from giving the fifth part of the produce to *Paroh* (*Beraishis* 47:22).

„And as for the people, he moved them to cities from one end of the borders of *Mitzrayim* to the other end of it.” (*Beraishis* 47:21):<sup>1</sup> he moves the inhabitants of the towns to the villages, they should cultivate the fields (ראב"ע).

*Yossef's* intention is that through this, the *Mitzriim* should understand the situation of those living in a foreign place, and they should take this into consideration when treating the *Bnai Yisroel* upon their arriving to *Mitzrayim* (תרגו"י; כלי יקר). He also wants to make the province of *Goshen* „free” for *Yaakov* and his family.

*Yaakov* also sends his ten sons to *Mitzrayim* to buy food (*Beraishis* 42:1-3).

The brothers consider this as a good occasion to find *Yossef* (ב"ר צ"א, ב).

They are brought before *Yossef* (*Beraishis* 42:6) who recognizes his brothers. The latters, however, do not recognize him (*Beraishis* 42:7): when they have seen their brother for the last time, *Yossef* was still a child (ב"ר צ"א, ז); and now he

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<sup>1</sup> As *Sancheriv* will later do, see 3210.



receives them as the *Viceroy* of *Mitzrayim*, clothed in rich garments and surrounded by servants (סד"י).

*Yossef*'s son, *Menasshe* is functioning as an interpreter (ב"ר צ"א, י).

*Yossef* accuses his brothers of being spies (*Beraishis* 42:9): he orders they should be imprisoned for three days (*Beraishis* 42:17).

He withholds *Shimon* as a hostage (*Beraishis* 42:24), while he sends home the others charged with enough food for their families (*Beraishis* 42:25): he is willing to free *Shimon* only after *Binyomin* is brought to him (*Beraishis* 42:20).

The brothers return to *Yaakov* to *Eretz Canaan* (*Beraishis* 42:29).

When the food brought previously from *Mitzrayim* is finished, *Yaakov* is obliged to let *Binyomin* go together with his brothers to *Mitzrayim* (*Beraishis* 43:11-14).

*Yaakov* sends rich presents (*Beraishis* 43:11) and a letter to the *Viceroy* of *Mitzrayim*. In his letter, *Yaakov* clears his sons of the accusation of being spies. At the same time, he menaces the *Viceroy*, in case the latter is unwilling to let his sons return home, he might have the same fate as the kings of *Eretz Canaan* defeated by the brothers, as the Eternal, G-d of *Avrohom* and *Yitzchok* listens to their prayers and helps them (סד"י).

*Yaakov* also gives money to his sons to buy again food. He even sends back the money hidden into their bags by *Yossef* the precedent time, the price of the wheat bought on the earlier occasion (*Beraishis* 43:12).

*Yossef* eats lunch together with his brothers in his own palace (*Beraishis* 43:16-17). He orders his son, *Efroim*, to prepare the *Shabbos* meal still on Friday.

*Efroim*'s reward: his descendant, *Elishomo ben Amichud* (אלישמע בן עמיחוד), the *nossi* ['prince'] of the tribe *Efroim*, can bring his sacrifice to the consacration of the *Mishkan* (במדב"ר י"ד, ט; ח"צ).

During the meal, with the aid of his pretended „miraculous” cup, a silver cup



decorated with precious stones, he enumerates his brothers' order of birth. He also sits them accordingly, placing *Binyomin* – who „has no brother” – near to himself.

During the meal, he unveils himself to *Binyomin*, asking the latter should not unveil the secret to the others, as *Yossef*'s intention is to test them (ס"ה"י).

The next morning, *Yossef* lets his brothers go: his „miraculous” cup is hidden in *Binyomin*'s bag (*Beraishis* 44:2).

*Yossef* accuses *Binyomin* with theft, and orders him to be brought back to the palace (*Beraishis* 44:12-13).

Together with *Binyomin*, all the brothers return (*Beraishis* 44:14).

*Yehudoh* enters into dispute with *Yossef* (*Beraishis* 44:18-34), and even threatens the latter with the destruction of the entire land *Mitzrayim*.

Enraged, *Yehudoh* cries with such a force that *Paroh* sitting on his throne in his palace, falls to earth, and all the pregnant women in town abort (ס"ה"י).

Upon this, *Paroh* offers to *Yossef* two alternatives: or he gives back *Binyomin* to his brothers and, through this, he saves *Mitzrayim* of being destroyed by the *Hebrews*' (עבריים) anger, or he renounces to the kingship, and in this case he can also go together with the *Hebrews* wherever he wishes (ס"ה"י).

Finally, *Yossef* unveils himself to his brothers (*Beraishis* 45:3-4): he ensures them of his pardon, promising them he would not take revenge of them. Rather, he explains to his brothers, that everything happened according to a heavenly „plan” (*Beraishis* 45:8): the Eternal wanted that he, *Yossef*, should be able to feed them in *Mitzrayim* (*Beraishis* 45:5-7).

*Yossef* sends charriots (עגלות) – a reminder to the Torah-portion he learned for the last time with his father: 'a heifer whose neck has been striked off' (עגלה) (ב"ר צ"ג, ג; *Devorim* 21:1-9; ערופה

his father and to the whole family (*Beraishis* 45:21-23).

*Serach*, *Osher*'s daughter (סרח בת אשר) brings the good news to *Yaakov* singing and accompanying herself with a fieddle, *Yaakov* should not die from sudden happiness.

22 years earlier, upon having lost *Yossef*, the *ruach hakodesh* (רוח הקודש 'holy inspiration') departed from *Yaakov*. Now, it returns to him (*Beraishis* 45:27; פדר"א ל"ח).

Therefore *Yaakov* blesses his granddaughter, *Serach*, with eternal life (סה"י).

*Serach* will be still alive in the days of *Dovid hamelech* (תרגו"י מ"ו, י"ז). She is one of those who were taken alive to the *Gan Eden* (ד"א זוטא א).

The Eternal speaks to *Yaakov* in a prophetic dream, and promises him to stay with him in *Mitzrayim* also (*Beraishis* 46:2-4). The Eternal also ensures *Yaakov* that *Yossef*, even after having spent long years in *Mitzrayim*, remained the same *tzaddik* as he had been in the paternal house (סה"י).

#### **6.4. *Yaakov and his Family in Mitzrayim***

**2238:** *Yaakov* is 130 years old (*Beraishis* 47:9), *Yossef* is 39.<sup>1</sup>

• **Nissan 15, Pessach:** *Yaakov*, together with his family, their flocks, and all their belongings descend to *Mitzrayim* (*Beraishis* 46:6-7).

The family consists of seventy persons (*Beraishis* 46:27): in reality only 66 go (*Beraishis* 46:26), as *Yossef* and his two sons were already in *Mitzrayim* (*Shemos* 1:5), this means 69 + the Eternal (פדר"א ל"ט).<sup>2</sup>

The Torah says (*Beraishis* 46:26), the members of *Yaakov*'s family descending

<sup>1</sup> In my exemplar of the „*Tzemach Dovid*“, the erroneous data of 2251 is given what has presumably to be considered being a copist's error.

<sup>2</sup> The *Septuagint* has 72 persons, cf. its traditional number of *Noach*'s descendants.

together with him to *Mitzrayim* are 66 peoples. However, according to the next *possuq* (*Beraishis* 46:27), they are seventy.

*Yocheved* (יֹכְבֵד), *Laivi*'s daughter, *Moshe rabainu*'s mother, does not figure in the list of those descending to *Mitzrayim*. We also find that, according to an other place of the Torah (*Bamidbor* 26:59), she was born in *Mitzrayim*. However, as we know that all the seventy members of *Yaakov*'s family were born still in *Eretz Canaan*, we must say *Yocheved* was born at the moment of their arrival to *Mitzrayim*, so to say „in the gate” of *Mitzrayim* (ס"ע; ב"ר צ"ד, ה; ). This means that the number of the members of the family is seventy upon their arrival to *Mitzrayim*, but it is only 69 upon their departure, and three from among them (*Yossef* and his two sons) are already in *Mitzrayim*.

*Yaakov's descendants* (תולדות יעקב; *Beraishis* 46; those among the seventy are marked with the sign °):

► **Ruvain** (רְאוּבֵן)°. His wife is *Elyorom* (אֱלִיורם), daughter of *Avi haCanaani* (עוי) from *Timnoh*.

His children are: *Chanoch* (חֲנוּךְ)°, *Palu* (פְּלוּא)°, *Chetzron* (חֲצִרֹן)°, *Karmi* (כֶּרְמִי)°.

► **Shimon** (שִׁמְעוֹן)°.

His first wife is his half-sister, *Dinoh*° (דִּינָה).

His children are: *Yemuel* (יֵמֹר)°, *Yomin* (יִמִּין)°, *Ohad* (אֶחָד)°, *Yochin* (יֹכִיָן)°, *Tzochar* (צַחֲרִי)°.

His other wife is a *Canaani* women, *Bunoh* (בּוֹנָה), *Dinoh*'s maidservant, brought as a prisoner from *Shchem*. Her son is *Shaul* (שָׁאוּל בֶּן הַכְנַעֲנִית); *Beraishis* 46:10)°.

► **Laivi** (לוי)°. His wife is *Adinoh* (עדינה), *Yovov ben Yokton ben Ever's* elder daughter.

His children are (*Shemos* 6:16-25):

□ *Gershon* (גרשון) / *Gershom* (גרשם; 1.*Divrai haYomim* 6:1, 6:28, 15:7)°.

His children are: *Livni* (לבני), *Shimi* (שמעי).

□ *Kehos* (קהת)°. His children are:

▣ *Amrom* (עמרם). His wife is *Yocheved*. His children are:

◎ *Aharon* (אהרן). His wife is *Elisheva* (אלישבע), *Aminodov's* (עמינדב) daughter.

His children are: *Nodov* (נדב), *Avihu* (אביהוא), *Elozor* (אלעזר), *Issomor* (איתמר);

◎ *Moshe* (משה). His wife is *Tzipora* (צפרה), *Yisro's* daughter.

His children are: *Gershon* (גרשון), *Eliezer* (אליעזר);

◎ *Miryam* (מרים);

▣ *Yitzchor* (יצחור). His children are:

◎ *Korach* (קרח). His children are: *Assir* (אסיר), *Elkonoh* (אלקנה), *Aviossof* (אביאסף);

◎ *Nefeg* (נפג);

◎ *Zichri* (זכרי);

▣ *Chevron* (חברון);

▣ *Uzziel* (עזי-ל). His children are: *Mishoel* (מיש-ל), *Eltzofon* (אלצפן), *Sisri* (סתרי);

□ *Merori* (מררי)°. His children are: *Machli* (מחלי), *Mushi* (מושי);

□ *Yocheved*°: born „in the gate” of *Mitzrayim*, she will enter *Eretz Canaan*.

► **Yehudoh** (יהודה)°. His wife is *Illis* (עלית), daughter of *Shua* (שוע) *hacanaani*.

His children are: *Air* (ער), *Onon* (אונן), *Shailoh* (שלה)°.

His (twin) children born of *Tomor* (תמר בת שם), his ex daughter-in-law, the ex-wife of *Air* and thereafter of *Onan*:

- *Peretz* (פרץ)°. His children are: *Chetzron* (חצרן)°, *Chomuel* (חמו-ל)°;
- *Zorach* (זרח)°. His children are: *Zimri* (זמרי), *Aison* (איתן), *Haimon* (הימן), *Chalkol* (כלכל), *Dora* (דרע; 1.Divrai haYomim 2:6).

*Shailoh*'s sons are enlisted in 1.Divrai haYomim 4:21-23. From among them, *Yoosh* (יואש) and *Sorof* (שרף) are the same with *Machlon* (מחלון), husband of the *Moavi Ruth* and *Kilyon* (כליון), husband of *Ruth*'s sister, *Orpoh* (תרגור"י), the two sons of *Elimelech* and *Noomi* (*Ruth* 1:2).

► **Yissochor** (יששכר)°. His wife is *Aridoh* (ארידה), *Yovov ben Yokton ben Ever*'s younger daughter.

His children are: *Tolo* (תולע)°, *Puoh* (פוח)°, *Yov* (יוב)°, *Shimron* (שמרון)°.

► **Zevulun** (זבולון)°. His wife is *Mairoshoh* (מרושה), the daughter of *Molad ben Avido ben Midyon* (מולד בן אבידע בן מדין).

His children are: *Sered* (סרד)°, *Ailon* (אלון)°, *Yachleel* (יחל-ל)°.

► **Don** (דן)°. His wife is *Eflolas* (אפללת), daughter of *Chamudon* (חמודן) *hamoavi*.

His child, born long after his wedding: *Chusim* (חשים)°.

► **Naftoli** (נפתלי)°. His wife is *Merimas* (מרימת), the elder daughter of *Amorom ben Utz ben Nochor* from *Choron*.

His children are: *Yachtzeel* (יחצ-ל)°, *Guni* (גוני)°, *Yaitzer* (יצר)°, *Shilaim* (שלם)°.

► **God** (גד)°. His wife is *Utzis* (עוצית), the younger daughter of *Amorom ben Utz ben Nochor* from *Choron*.

His children are: *Tzifyon* (צפיון)°, *Chagi* (חגי)°, *Shuni* (שוני)°, *Etzbon* (אצבן)°, *Airi* (ערי)°, *Arodi* (ארודי)°, *Araili* (אראלי)°.

► **Osher** (אשר)°. His wife is *Adun* (עדון), *Eflol* (אפלל) *ben Chadad ben Yishmoel*'s daughter. She dies childless.

Later *Osher* marries *Hadoroh* (הדורה), *Avimoel* (אבימ-ל) *ben Ever*'s daughter. She was earlier *Malkiel* (מלכי-ל) *ben Ailom ben Shem*'s wife, but her husband died and she remained alone with her three years old daughter, *Serach* (סרח)°.

Her children of *Osher*: *Yimnoh* (ימנה)°, *Yishvoh* (ישוה)°, *Yishvi* (ישוי)°, *Berioh* (בריעה)°. The latter's children: *Chever* (חבר)°, *Malkiel*°.

► **Yossef** (יוסף)°. His wife is *Osnas*, *Dinoh*'s daughter.

His children are: *Efroim*°, *Menasshe*°.

► **Binyomin** (בנימין)°. His wife is *Mochalyo* (מחליא), *Aram ben Covo ben Terach*'s daughter (at that moment *Binyomin* is ten years old).

His children are: *Bela* (בלע)°, *Becher* (בכר)°, *Ashvail* (אשביל)°, *Gairo* (גרא)°, *Naamon* (נעמן)°.

Later, at the age of eighteen, *Binyomin* marries a new wife: *Orvas* (ערבת), *Zimron ben Avrohom*'s daughter.

Her children are: *Aichi* (אחי)°, *Rosh* (ראש)°, *Mupim* (מפים)°, *Chupim* (חפים)°, *Ord* (ארד)° (סה"י).

Before departing, *Yaakov* goes to *Beer Sheva*, and brings sacrifices to the Eternal (*Beraishis* 46:1).

Descending to *Mitzrayim*, he takes along from the cedar trees planted there by *Avrohom*: the *Bnai Yisroel* will need them for the construction of the *Mishkan* (ב"ר צ"ד, ד).

Also before departing, *Yaakov* sends *Yehudoh* to *Yossef*, the latter should prepare place for them (*Beraishis* 46:28): in case *Yossef* did not do so yet, he should now clean the land of *Goshen* of idols left behind by the *Mitzriim*, and establish a *Bais hamidrosh* (תנחומא י"א; ב"ר צ"ה, ג).

From the royal residence in *Taanis*,<sup>1</sup> *Yossef* goes to *Ramses* – situated in the land *Goshen*, near the *Canaani* border - accompanied by the *Mitzris*, to receive his father in his royal garments (*Beraishis* 46:29).

Upon seeing his father arriving, *Yossef* descends from his charriot and comes nearer by foot: the *Mitzriim* follow him also by foot (ס"ה").

Upon seeing his son – whom he have not seen for 22 years (ס"ע) - *Yaakov* thanks the Eternal: he recites the prayer *Shema Yisroel* (שמע ישראל) 'the Lord, our G-d is One'; (*Devorim* 6:4; רש"י מ"ו, כ"ט).

With *Paroh*'s permission (*Beraishis* 47:6), *Yossef* settles his father and the whole family in the land *Goshen* (*Beraishis* 47:6), on the *Ramses* territory (*Beraishis* 47:11): this is the name of a part of the land *Goshen* (רש"י מ"ז, י"א), the *Pilusin* territory (תרגומי; ארעא דפילוסין).<sup>2</sup> This is the land which has been given earlier by *Paroh* to *Soroh* (מדה"ג מ"ו, ל"ד).

In this way, they are separated from the *Mitzriim*, on the Eastern side of the delta of the Nile, between the *Pelusion*-branch of the delta and the lake *Timsoh*. The land is far from the alluvial territory, not good for agriculture, but excellent pasture for the flocks and cattles.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Placing the royal residence to *Taanis*, which is thought to be *Avaris* in the Delta, would suggest to connect the *Bnai Yisroel*'s stay in *Mitzrayim* to the *Hyksos* occupation of the country. This notwithstanding, I prefer to enter it into the period of the Old Kingdom.

<sup>2</sup> *Pilusin*: *Pelusion* (Gr. *pelos* 'mortar'), at the mouth of the Eastern branch of the delta. The *Targum* renders *Ramses* as *Pilusin* in *Shemos* 1:11 also.

<sup>3</sup> Later canalization has been excavated there and – presumably during the reign of *RAMSES II* - *Goshen* also became irrigated. Also hughes stocking-towns are constructed for the military stationed on the Sinai-peninsula to guard the borders and the copper-mines.

At first, *Yossef* presents five of his brothers (*Beraishis* 47:2) to *Paroh*: *Ruvain*, *Shimon*, *Laivi*, *Yissochor* and *Binyomin*, whose name will not be repeated by *Moshe rabainu* during the blessings (*Devorim* 33; (ב"ר צ"ה, ד). According to others (ספרי; רש"י ב"ק צ"ב), he presents first *Zevulun*, *God*, *Don*, *Naftoli* and *Osher*, whose names will be repeated (*Devorim* 33:6-25). According to both opinions, *Yossef* chooses the weak ones, hoping that *Paroh* would not find them fit for military commanders (רש"י מ"ז, ב).

Later, he presents his father also to *Paroh* (*Beraishis* 47:7).

*Yaakov* blesses *Paroh* (*Beraishis* 47:7, 47:10): the famine stops after only two years (במדב"ר י"ב, ב).

In *Paroh*'s court, *Yaakov* meets *Og*, *Paroh*'s friend.

*Paroh* presents *Yaakov* to *Og* saying that he is the grandson of *Avrohom*, about whom *Og* has said that will not beget children. Consequently, *Og* looks upon *Yaakov* and his sons with an evil eye. Therefore, the Eternal repeats that *Avrohom*'s descendants will one day defeat *Og* (דבר"ר א, כ"ב).

**2255:** *Yossef* is 56 years old, *Yaakov*'s sons are in *Mitzrayim* since 17 years.

*Yaakov* dies at the age of 147 year (*Beraishis* 47:28).<sup>1</sup>

He lived seventeen years in *Mitzrayim* (*Beraishis* 47:28): this corresponds to the seventeen years *Yossef* was together with his father before having been sold. ויחי יעקב means 'Yaakov lived': the gematrioh of the word ויחי is 34, i.e. two times 17 (בעל הטורים).

As *Yaakov* complained before *Paroh* about his life with 33 words (*Beraishis* 47:8-9), the Eternal makes *Yaakov*'s life 33 years shorter than that of his father, *Yitzchok*:  $180 - 147 = 33$  (מדא"ג מ"ז).

He is the first man who becomes seriously ill before dieing (סה"י): this was his

<sup>1</sup> My exemplar of the „*Tzemach Dovid*” has 144 years, presumably a copist's error.



own demand to the Eternal in order to have time enough to make his will, etc. (פדר"א נ"ב; ב"ר ה, ד; סנהדרין ק"ז).

Before his death, *Yaakov* accepts *Yossef*'s two sons, *Efroim* and *Menasshe* as his children (tribes) with equal rights (*Beraishis* 48:5): they will have their own flag, their own *nossi* (נשאי) and their own territory (מדה"ג מ"ח, ג). However this is only valid to these two. *Yossef*'s other children, to be born later, will not have the same rights (*Beraishis* 48:6).

*Yaakov* blesses *Yossef*'s sons, *Efroim* and *Menasshe* (המלאך הגאל; *Beraishis* 48:15).

He puts his right hand on the head of *Efroim*, the younger one, while the right hand on the head of *Menasshe*, the elder one (*Beraishis* 48:14). He foresees *Efroim* will be greater (*Beraishis* 48:19): *Yehosuah* will be his descendant (מדה"ג מ"ח, י"ג).

The Eternal gives the firstborn's right to *Efroim* (*Beraishis* 48:20) in the merit of his humbleness (ב"ר ו, ו).

Before his death, *Yaakov* makes *Yossef* swear with an oath that the latter will bury him in *Eretz Canaan*, to the cave of the *Machpeloh* (*Beraishis* 47:29-30). When *Moshiach* will come, the first to stand up (תחית המתים) will be those buried in *Eretz Yisroel*. For those buried outside *Eretz Yisroel* (חוץ לארץ), the Etrnal will prepare underground channels through which their corpses could reach *Eretz Yisroel* where they will also stand up.

He orders his sons, they should carry his coffin and not his grandsons.

He also orders them, which one of the brothers should go on which side of the coffin when carrying the coffin:

- ▶ on its Eastern side: *Yehudoh*, *Yissochor*, *Zevulun*;
- ▶ on its Southern side: *Ruvain*, *Shimon*, *God*;

► on its Western side: *Efroim, Menasshe, Binyomin*;

► on the Northern side: *Don, Osher, Naftoli*.

*Laivi* and *Yossef* will not carry the coffin: *Laivi* will carry one day the *Holy Ark*, the *Aron hakodosh* (אֲרוֹן הַקֹּדֶשׁ), and *Yossef* because of the royalty, the dignity of *Viceroy* (בַּמֶּדְבָּר ג', י"ב).

Later, during their wandering in the wilderness, the tribes will march and camp according to the same order (ב"ר צ"ט, ב).

*Yaakov* orders his sons, they should serve the Eternal, and to teach this to their children and grandchildren (ס"ה).

He prophesizes about the coming slavery and also about the future redemption (ס"ה).

He gives three signs to his children how to recognize the true redeemer:

- 1./ he will use the word *onochi* (אֲנֹכִי),
- 2./ he will nominate Torah-sages as leaders of the people,
- 3./ he will repeat the words *pokod pokodti* (פִּקְדָּה פִּקְדֹתַי; *Shemos* 3:16; ה, ז, ב"ר צ"ז).

Before his death, *Yossef* transmits these signs to *Osher's* daughter, *Serach*, who will still be alive when *Moshe rabainu* returns from *Midyon* to *Mitzrayim*, and it will be precisely according to her instructions that the people will recognize *Moshe rabainu* as their leader (שְׂמוֹרָה ה', ט"ז; cf. 2,447).

When *Yossef* promises his father to bury him in *Eretz Canaan*, as a reward, *Yaakov* gives *Yossef Shchem* as a burial place (*Beraishis* 48:22; רש"י), and also the right of the firstborn to double inheritance (cf. *Devorim* 21:17; ע"י, ז, ב"ר צ"ז). *Yaakov* wants to unveil the exact date of *Moshiach's* coming to his children (*Beraishis* 49:1), but the Eternal does not let him to do so: the *Shechina* departs from him (פסחים נ"ו; ב"ר צ"ה, ג).

Before blessing his sons, *Yaakov* wants once more to get convinced about the

stability of their belief: they recite together the prayer „*Shema Yisroel*”.

*Yaakov* answers: „*Boruch Shem Kevod Malchusso*” (ברוך שם כבוד מלכותו)

‘let the name of the glory of His kingdom be blessed’ (תנחומא ב"פ"ט): as these words do not figure in the Torah, during the prayer we say them in a low voice.

According to others (דבר"ר ב, ל"ו), *Moshe rabainu* heard in heaven the Angels saying this, and he taught it to the *Bnai Yisroel*.

Before his death, *Yaakov* blesses his sons (*Beraishis* 49:1-28):

- ▶ **Ruvain**, the firstborn, was deserving of priesthood (כהונה) and kingdom (מלכות) but, motivated by an ill-considered indignation, he touched his father's bed;
- ▶ **Shimon**'s territory will be dispersed within that of *Yehudoh* (מדא"ג מ"ט): cf. the destruction of *Shchem* because of what had been done to *Dinoh*;
- ▶ **Laivi** receives the priesthood – taken back from *Ruvain* - but he does not receive any territory (ב"ר צ"ח, ה; מדא"ג מ"ט);
- ▶ **Yehudoh** receives the kingdom taken back from *Ruvain* (ב"ר צ"ח, ה).
- ▶ **Zevulun** (mentioned before his brothers despite the order of their birth) will be a seaborne trader, and will support *Yissochor* that the latter could learn Torah in tranquillity (י"ל"ש ה"א קס"א). His territory will be on the sea-shore: the mollusc called *Chilozon* (חלזון) will be caught in his waters (ירושלמי שבת א, ג; מגילה ו; דבר"ר ז, י"א) and it is from this mollusc that the blue dye is obtained for the *tzitzis* (תוספתא מנחות ט, ו; ציצית);
- ▶ **Yissochor** will receive a territory whose soil is especially fertile, so the work will not retain him from Torah-learning (רש"י מ"ט, ט"ו);
- ▶ The great Judge, *Shimshon* will be a descendant of **Don** (ב"ר צ"ח, י"ז);
- ▶ **God**'s tribe will give excellent combattants: although they fight the entire war

of occupying *Eretz Canaan*, no one will fall from among them (ב"ר צ"ח, כ"א);

► On **Osher's** lands there will be olive oil in abundance (מנחות פ"ה). His daughters will marry *kohanim*, and their descendants will even be high priests. *Osher* will provide the oil for the *Bais hamikdosh* to the anointing (יל"ש ח"א (קס"א);

► **Naftoli's** descendant, the prophetess *Devorah* will sing a *shiroh* in praise of the Eternal (ב"ר צ"ח כ"ב; ת"צ);

► In **Yossef's** merit – putting himself before his mother, he has hidden her from *Aisov's* evil eye – *Bilom* cannot harm the *Bnai Yisroel* (י"ג; זוהר רמ"ו). As he did not lift his head to see the women throwing their jewellery into his charriot, a special chapter of the Torah deals with the problems of inheriting in relation with the daughters of *Tzelofhod*, a descendant of his tribe (*Bamidbor* 27:1-11; ב"ר צ"ח, כ"ג);

► The *Bais hamikdosh* will stand on **Binyomin's** territory: he did not take a part in *Yossef's* selling (ב"ר צ"ח ט, א).

*Yossef*, without the Eternal's permission, orders his father should be embalmed (*Beraishis* 50:2-3).

His punishment: he will die at the age of 110 years (instead of 120). According to others (מסילת ישרים פ"ד), he receives this punishment because he heard  $2 \times 5 = 10$  times from *Yehudoh* (more exactly five times from *Yehudoh's* mouth and five times from the interpreter *Menashe's*) „our father / my father your servant” (עבדך אבי, עבדך אבינו; *Beraishis* 43:28, 44:24, 44:27, 44:30, 44:31), thus ten times transgressing the *mitzvoh* of honouring one's parents. Again others say (פדר"א ל"ט), his punishment will be that he will also be embalmed (*Beraishis* 50:26).

The embalming takes forty days (*Beraishis* 50:3).

The twelve brothers, the whole family, even the entire *Mitzrayim* are mourning for *Yaakov* for seventy days (*Beraishis* 50:3), even people from *Eretz Canaan* come to express condolences with the mourners (סה"י).

After the seventy days, they depart to burry *Yaakov* into the cave of *Machpeloh* (*Beraishis* 50:7-9).

*Paroh* not only gives them permission to do so, he even orders under death penalty the entire *Mitzrayim* should accompany the funeral procession (*Beraishis* 50:4-6; סה"י).

*Aisov* does not want to let *Yaakov* be burried into the cave of *Machpeloh* near to *Leoh*: According to him, the remaining place is his, *Aisov*'s and not *Yaakov*'s.

Thereupon, the fast-moving *Naftoli* runs down to *Mitzrayim* to bring the contract, where *Yaakov* and *Aisov* divided their inheritance after *Yitzchok*'s death. According to the contract, certified by witnesses, *Aisov* inherited all the wealth of *Yitzchok* while *Yaakov* received the land of *Eretz Canaan* with the cave of *Machpeloh* included (פדר"א ל"ט; ב"ר צ"ח, כ"ב, ת"צ; סה"י).<sup>1</sup>

Upon this, *Aisov* and his sons attack *Yaakov*'s sons and the *Mitzriim* who accompany them. In the battle, about forty of *Aisov*'s men fall (סה"י). According to others (ר' בחיי), it is *Aisov*'s grandson, *Tzepo ben Elifaz*, who attacks *Yossef* and his brothers when the latters go to burry *Yaakov*.

*Don*'s deaf-mute son, *Chushim*, cuts *Aisov*'s head with his sword: the head rolls into the cave (פדר"א ל"ט; סוטה י"ג). Accorddding to others (שוה"ט י"ח, ל"ב; ספרי), this happened during *Yitzchok*'s funeral: *Aisov* wants to kill *Yaakov* who prays alone in the cave, but *Yehudoh* cuts *Aisov*'s head (according to this *Aisov* lived for only 120 years). Again others (תוספות גיטין נ"ג) seem to try

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 2228. According to my exemplar of the „*Sefer haYoshor*“, the division of the inheritance took place thirty years earlier, i. e. in the year 2230. But *Yitzchok* died in 2228! Presumably, this is not an error but an approximative expression: 25 is a round number.

to „conciliate” the two former opinions: during *Yaakov*’s funeral, *Chushim ben Don* strikes *Aisov* with his stick and, finally, it is *Yehudoh* who kills *Aisov*.<sup>1</sup>

*Aisov* also lived 147 years, the same as *Yaakov*.

**2256:** *Yossef* is 57 years old, *Yaakov*’s children are in *Mitzrayim* since 18 years.

• **Tishrai 15, the first day of *Sukkos*** (this is already a new year): *Yaakov* is finally buried into the cave of *Machpeloh* (סה"ד).

His children mourn for seven days (שבועה; *Beraishis* 50:10; סה"י): it is from this that we learn the *mitzvoh* of mourning for seven days (פדר"א י"ז).

Thereafter, *Aisov*’s children attack again *Yaakov*’s children. However, they are defeated: eighty of *Aisov*’s men are killed, *Tzepo ben Elifaz* with fifty others are taken captives to *Mitzrayim* (סה"י).

*Aisov*’s body is taken by his children to *Seir* to be buried there (פדר"א ל"ט).

*Aisov*’s children - allied to the children of *Seir hachori* and the Children of the East (בני קדם)<sup>2</sup> - attack again *Yaakov*’s children in *Mitzrayim* with a huge army (סה"י).

*Yossef* and his brothers with *Yossef*’s *Mitzri* army defeat them: they kill about 600.000 enemy soldiers (סה"י).

When *Yaakov* arrived to *Mitzrayim*, the famine, already striking the land since two years, ceased. Now, after his death, it continues.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> According to the apocryph „*Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*” (IV:9:1-3), *Yaakov* and *Aisov* live for eighteen years peacefully in *Eretz Canaan*. Then, *Aisov* with his men attack *Yaakov* and his family. *Yaakov* blesses mortally *Aisov*, who is taken home by his servants to Mount *Seir*, where he dies in the town of *Anonirom*. The name of the town can be identical with *Adoroh* mentioned by JOSEPHUS (*Antt.* XIII:9:1); cf. the variant in „*Jubilees*”: *Adorom*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. 2323, where the „*Sefer haYoshor*”, speaking about the Children of the East, adds that these are the children of *Keturoh*. Even if it would seem more comfortable to render the expression as inhabitants of Mesopotamia, it seems that tradition really has meant by it the descendants of *Keturoh* (the *Yishmoelim*?) cf. 1.*Melochim* 5:10.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. around the year 1200 BCE many fertile territories became deserts, what was, together with the following famines, among the main reasons which provoked the wandering of the so-called „peoples of the sea”. „Supposingly, the series of wanderings had been provoked by a Central-European civilization

After *Yaakov*'s death, the situation of the *Bnai Yisroel* living in *Mitzrayim* starts to deteriorate: although they are not yet enslaved, however, they are forced to pay taxes.

*Amrom ben Kehos* (עמרם בן קהת), *Moshe rabainu*'s father is born.

He has still seen *Yaakov* (ב"ב קכ"א). This means, he is had to be born the latest in the year of *Yaakov*'s death, in 2255. According to the Torah (*Shemos* 6:20), he lived 137 years, what means he died the latest in the year 2392. According to others (שה"ק י"א, ט"ז), *Amrom* dies in the thirtieth year of *Moshe rabainu*'s life, in the year  $2368 + 30 = 2398$ . Now, discounting 137, we arrive to 2261: he was thus born in 2261, and died in 2398.

His wife is his aunt, *Kehos*' younger sister, *Laivi*'s daughter, *Yocheved*.<sup>1</sup>

**2258:** *Yossef* is 59 years old, *Yaakov*'s children are in *Mitzrayim* since 20 years.

As so many of them fell in the war against *Yaakov*'s children, *Seir*'s children seek to get rid of *Aisov*'s children sending them back to their own land, to *Eretz Canaan*.

However, *Aisov*'s children, being unwilling to do so, ask secretly for the help of *Angias* (אנגיאס),<sup>2</sup> the king of *Dinhovoh* (דנהבה 'Africa'),<sup>3</sup> who sends 500

characterized by urne-graves fields." HEGYI *et al.*, *Görög Történelem* [Greek History], p. 106.)

<sup>1</sup> *Yocheved*: according to the apocryph „*Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*” (III:12:4), *Yocheved* was born on the same day with *Amrom*. According to the same source, *Laivi* was 64 years old, when *Amrom* (*Laivi*'s grandson) married *Yocheved* (*Laivi*'s daughter).

<sup>2</sup> *Angias*: he is *Aineias* (Lat. *Aeneas*) of the Greco-Roman mythological tradition. Trojan hero, son of *Ankhises* and *Aphrodite* who, together with his family and people, leaves the burning Troy and goes Westward. After long wandering through the *Mediterraneum*, they reach Italy at the mouth of the river *Tiberis*. Allied to *Euandros*, an Arcadian Greek who came to Italy some sixty years earlier, he wages war against the autochthonous people, the *Rutuli* and their king, *Turnus*. There is nothing strange in that the „*Sefer haYoshor*” speaks about *Aineias* as the king of Africa, as – according to Roman tradition – *Aeneas* arrived to Italy coming from Carthago, from the queen *Dido*.

<sup>3</sup> *Dinhovoh*: the town is mentioned in the Torah (*Beraishis* 36:32, repeated in *1Divrai haYomim* 1:43) as the place where *Bela ben Beor* – the first of the eight kings who ruled over *Edom* before there was a king over the *Bnai Yisroel* – came from. The name of the town is connected by the *Zohar* (*Bamidbor* 135a) through popular etymology with the word *hovoh* ('let's go'; *Shemos* 1:10). The identification of *Dinhovoh* with Africa / Carthago can only be found, as far as I know, in the „*Sefer Yosippon*” and the

footsoldiers and 800 cavalymen. Together, they attack the joint army of *Seir*'s children and their allies, the *Midyonim* and the Children of the East.

The war ends with the definitive victory of *Aisov*'s children, despite the fact that many of their soldiers go over to the enemy. They kill almost everyone of *Seir*'s children, leaving alive only fifty young boys and girls, enslaving the formers and making their concubines the latters.

They also pursue the allies of *Seir* until their respective countries.

Finally, *Aisov*'s children occupy the land of *Seir*'s children with all their wealth left behind, their flocks, herds etc. From that moment on, this is the land of *Aisov*'s children: *Edom* (ס"ה"). The region is named after *Aisov*: Mount *Seir* (*Beraishis* 33:16) = *Edom*.

*Seir hachori* (*Beraishis* 36:20) had been named after the region, but only in the Torah, retroactively, afterwards, when *Aisov* had already occupied the region, named after him *Seir* (רמב"ן).<sup>1</sup>

Thereafter, *Aisov*'s children decide to elect a king but, because of the traitors during the war, not someone from among themselves: they elect the bravest warrior from among *Angias*' men sent by the latter to help them.

*Bela ben Beor* (בלע בן בעור), reigns as the king of *Aisov*'s children for thirty years. He will fall in a new war against *Yaakov*'s children in 2288 (ס"ה").

*Aisov*'s five sons divide *Seir*'s land among themselves (ס"ה").

**2270:** *Yossef* is 71 years old, *Yaakov*'s children are in *Mitzrayim* since 32 years.

*Paroh* dies.

His 41 years old son, *Migron* (מגרון) follows him on the throne. From then on –

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parallel „*Sefer haYoshor*”.

*Africa*: here means the ancient town Carthago, on the actual territory of Tunis, see 2329, the Punic wars.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 2205.



according to the laws of the country -, he is called *Paroh* as his father.

He rules for forty years.<sup>1</sup>

According to *Paroh*'s will, *Yossef* is named *Migron*'s guardian (סה"י). According to others (פדר"א י"א), *Yossef*, after having reigned for forty years as a *Viceroy*, after *Paroh*'s death he reigns for an other forty years as the king of *Mitzrayim*<sup>2</sup>, until his death in 2309. This would mean, the „new king” (מלך חדש) mentioned in the Torah (*Shemos* 1:8) was *Yossef* himself (see below).

*Yossef* extends his sovereignty over the surrounding countries: the land of the *Pelishtim*, *Eretz Canaan*, *Tzidon*, the East bank of the *Yarden* until the river *Pras*. *Paroh* reigns only in *Mitzrayim* itself, the conquered territories come under *Yossef*'s rule (סה"י).

**2283:** *Yossef* is 84 years old, *Yaakov*'s children are in *Mitzrayim* since 45 years.

The land *Schwaben* is named after the king *Schwab* (צ"ד).

**2288:** *Yossef* is 89 years old, *Yaakov*'s children are in *Mitzrayim* since 50 years.

*Aisov*'s children attack again *Yaakov*'s children and *Mitzrayim* which is under *Yossef*'s rule. They want to take revenge for their previous defeat, and also to liberate *Tzepo ben Elifaz*.

They make peace with their former enemies, they even ally themselves to the *Children of the East* (who earlier helped *Seir*). They also ask for the help of

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. 2340, where it is written that *Migron*'s son ascends to the throne after his father's death in the year 2340. If *Migron* ascends to his father's throne in 2270, and reigns for forty years, we have to admit he reigned until 2310! The apparent contradiction can be solved in three possible ways. 1./ The data had been mixed up due to copist's error(s); 2./ or *Migron* did not reign for forty years but for seventy years, or we have to admit that there was a Pharaoh reigning between father and son (cf. the above second opinion according to which *Yossef* was ruling for forty years after *Paroh*'s death). 3./ A different solution is offered by the „*Sefer haYoshor*”: after *Yossef*'s death in the year 2309, *Paroh* takes in his own hand the competence of the *vizir* also, exercised until then by *Yossef*, thus he reigns forty years together with *Yossef* and, after the latter's death, another 31 years alone.

<sup>2</sup> This tradition can eventually be connected to certain modern ideas which try to identify *Yossef* (and, in an other variant, even *Moshe rabainu*!) with Pharaoh EKHATON (Amenhotep IV Noferheperuré Uaenré, 1364-1347 BCE, 18th Dynasty) of Amarna, who introduced the monotheistic cult of the Sun-g-d in

*Angias* and of *Yishmoel*'s children. Together, they attack the *Mitzri* province of *Ramses*, with an army of 800.000 soldiers.

*Yossef* with his brothers and army – only 600 men (!) – go to battle against them, defeating the enemy and killing about 200.000 (!) soldiers and making the others to escape. From *Yossef*'s army, there are only twelve *Mitzri* soldiers killed.

The king of *Aisov*'s children, *Bela ben Beor* also falls in the battle.

*Tzepo* and his men stay in prison in *Mitzrayim*.

Thereafter, *Aisov*'s children elect a new king from among the *Children of the East: Yovov ben Zerach* (יבב בן זרח) from *Botzroh* (בצרה)<sup>1</sup> reigns for ten years in *Edom*.

*Aisov*'s children do not dare to attack *Yaakov*'s children any more. Consequently, because of this, they hate them even more strongly (סה"י).

In the same year, geometry is invented (צ"ד).

**2298:** *Yossef* is 99 years old, *Yaakov*'s children are in *Mitzrayim* since 60 years.

After *Yovov ben Zerach*'s death, *Aisov*'s children elect a new king, this time from the *Southern Land* (ארץ תימן):<sup>2</sup> *Chushom* (חושם) reigns in *Edom* for twenty years (סה"י).

**2309:** *Yossef* is 110 years old, *Yaakov*'s children are in *Mitzrayim* since 71 years.

*Yossef* dies at the age of 110 years (*Beraishis* 50:26), *Shabbos* afternoon at *minchah*-time (זוהר). According to others (סה"ק), he dies in the year 2308.<sup>3</sup>

Egypt.

<sup>1</sup> *Botzroh*: according to the „*Sefer haYoshor*“, *Aisov*'s children elect their kings not from *Edom*, and *Yovov* came from among the *Children of the East*, from *Botzroh*. Nevertheless, in the *TANACH*, several places (*Yeshayoh* 63:1, *Yirmeyoh* 49:13, 22) seem to indicate that *Botzroh* is in *Edom*.

<sup>2</sup> Presumably one of the kingdoms of Southern Arabia, on the actual territory of Yemen (as Ar. *al-Yaman* / *yaman* 'right side', and *yumn* 'fortune, success' sound similarly, this gave birth to the Latin expression *Arabia Felix* 'Happy Arabia').

<sup>3</sup> According to my exemplar of the „*Tzemach Dovid*“, in the year 2330, what has to be considered being a copist's/printer's error.

He lives ten years less than 120 years, because he heard  $2 \times 5 = 10$  times from his brothers the words „*our father your servant*” and he did not protest not willing unveil who he really was (פדר"א ל"ט).

He lives in *Mitzrayim* for 93 years and rules for eighty years (סה"י).

Before dieing, he makes his family to swear with an oath that, upon leaving *Mitzrayim*, they will carry along his bones (*Beraishis* 50:25), and will burry them again in *Shchem* where he had been sold, and what his father had given to him.

His brothers and the inhabitants of *Mitzrayim* mourn for Yossef seventy days, as they had done earlier for his father, *Yaakov* (סה"י).

His body is embalmed (*Beraishis* 50:26): this is his punishment for having embalmed his father's body (*Beraishis* 50:2; בעל הטורים).

He is burried in a metal coffin covered with tin (*Beraishis* 50:26) on the Nile-bank (ג"ס):<sup>1</sup> the *gematrioh* of *Yossef's* name (יוסף) - 156 – is identical to that of the river Nile (נילוס; בעל הטורים). According to others (ג"ס), he is burried in the grave of the kings.<sup>2</sup>

In this way, *Paroh's* sorcerers want to tie the *Bnai Yisroel* forever to *Mitzrayim*: unable to find *Yossef's* body, they will be unable to fulfil their oath sworn to him and, consequently, they will have to stay until finding his grave.

At the same time, they hope *Yossef's* remnants will secure blessing for the waters of the Nile (דבר"ר י"א, ה).

After the funeral, his children and the whole family of his father mourn for seven days (סה"י).

After *Yossef's* death, the *Mitzris* start to subyugate the *Bnai Yisroel* (סה"י).

<sup>1</sup> Cf. speaking about the funeral of Attila, king of the Huns, Hungarian Medieval chroniclers relate that his body was put into a triple coffin of three different metals, and burried into the river Tisza.

<sup>2</sup> According to the apocryph „*Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*” (II:8:3) also, *Yossef* was burried in the grave of the kings, as the magicians said to them (*Ibid.* 8:4) that, in case *Yossef's* bones will be taken out of the country, this will provoke darkness and great plagues for *Mitzrayim*.

After *Yossef's* death, the wells are dried out in *Mitzrayim*: the *Bnai Yisroel* start to feel the weight of the exile, the *golus* (גלות; זוהר ח"ב קנ"ו).

*Paroh* - who until then reigned under *Yossef's* guardianship – now concentrates the whole power in his own hand (סה"י).

**2310:** *Yaakov's* children are in *Mitzrayim* since 72 years.

*Tzepo ben Elifaz* escapes from his prison in *Mitzrayim* together with his men. He goes to *Angias* to *Dinhovoh*, Africa (סה"י).

*Angias* names *Tzepo* for his *vizir* (סה"י).

*Tzepo* tries to convince *Angias* to restart the war against *Yaakov's* children and *Mitzrayim*. *Angias*, however, under the impact of his defeat in the precedent war, is unwilling to do so (סה"י).

In the same year, *Angias*, king of Africa and *Turgos* (תרגוס),<sup>1</sup> king of *Bevinto* (בבינטו),<sup>2</sup> both ask for the hand of *Yonnia* (יאני-ה),<sup>3</sup> orphaned daughter of *Utzu* (עוצו), a chieftain of the *Kittim* [*Yovon's* son = *Magna Graecia*] from the town *Potzaymana* (פוצימנא).

The *Kittim* are unwilling to give *Yonnia* to both of them. To *Turgos* they say she is already engaged to *Angias*, while they send a message to the latter saying,

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<sup>1</sup> *Turgos*: presumably a copist's error instead of *Turnus* (ט / ת). *Turnus*, the king of the Italian aborigines, the *Rutuli*, son of *Daunus* and the nymph *Venilia*. Coming from Illyria, *Daunus* founds three kingdoms in Italy, named after his brother, *Iapyx*, the Land of the *Iapyx*. He is the principal enemy of *Aineias* / *Aeneas*, ancestor of the Romans, when the latter comes to Italy in search for a new homeland.

<sup>2</sup> *Bevinto*: presumably the Italian town *Beneventum* (today Benevento). The town's earlier name, *Maleventum* / *Maluentum* has been interpreted as 'bad fate', and hence altered embellishing it euphemistically to *Beneventum*. The etymology of the name is still unclear, it can take its origins of a Pre-Indo European root \**mal* 'elevated point, mountain'.

<sup>3</sup> *Yonnia*: it can be a Latin (or a Latin-sounding) women's name, made as a feminine form for *Ianus*. The person of *Iutunia*, the daughter of *Daunus* has also to be taken into consideration, despite the fact that she was *Turnus's* sister. More probably, she is *Lavinia* of the Roman tradition. Daughter of *Latinus*, king of the aborigines and his wife, *Amata*, *Lavinia* had been promised to *Turnus*, king of the *Rutuli*. *Aineias* / *Aeneas*, allied to *Latinus*, defeats *Turnus* who wanted to impede the settlement in Italy of the escapees of Troy. Following an oracle, *Aineias* can marry *Lavinia*. The conflict of *Angias* and *Turgos* reflects the conflict of *Aineias* in search for a new homeland and *Turnus*, king of the *Rutuli*, defender of his kingdom.

*Turgos* comes with an army against him and, under way, he wants to attack *Lokosh* (לוקוש), king of *Sardonia* (סרדוניה),<sup>1</sup> *Angias*' brother.

Consequently, *Angias*, with his army, goes to *Sardonia*, to his brother, to confront *Turgos* with joined forces.

The first battle takes place in the *Kampania*-Valley: *Turgos* wins, *Lokosh* loses the major part of his army, even his son, *Givlosh* (גבלוש) falls.

In the second battle, however, *Angias* kills *Turgos*, killing even his entire army.

*Givlosh* and *Turgos* are buried there on the battlefield, on a crossroad, between Rome (רומה) and *Elpano* (אלפנו).<sup>2</sup>

*Lokosh* returns to *Sardinia*, while *Angias* goes to *Bevinto*. The town, an important town of the *Kittim*, surrenders and they pay henceforward a yearly tax to him.

*Angias* returns to Africa, taking along *Yonnia*, *Utzu*'s daughter (סה"י).

**2312:** *Yaakov*'s children are in *Mitzrayim* since 74 years.

*Paroh* orders the construction of a new royal palace in *Mitzrayim*.

He orders the *Bnai Yisroel* should also work at the construction (סה"י).

**2314:** *Yaakov*'s children are in *Mitzrayim* since 76 years.

*Shimon* dies at the age of 120 years. According to others (סה"י), he dies in the year 2313.<sup>3</sup>

*Yehudoh* dies in the same year at the age of 119. According to others (סה"י), he

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<sup>1</sup> *Sardonia*: the island of Sardinia. Lat. *Sardinia*, Gr. *Sardó*, *Sardóne*, today Sardegna. The island received its name after its aborigines, the *Sards* (Lat. *Sardi* pl.) of unclear etnical origins, whose name can be connected to the name of an Etruscan tribe *\*sartu*, *sartuna*, *sartni*, others look for contacts with certain oriental names. Among the tribes attacking Egypt (in one of the waves of the wandering of the so-called „peoples of the sea”) led by the Lybians on the African shores, and defeated by Pharaon MERNEPTAH, one can find *Sardanas* (*šrdn*, *Sardonios* 'the inhabitants of Sardinia') also.

<sup>2</sup> *Elpano*: cf. *Elpenor*, companion of *Ulysses* (also one of the protagonists of the Trojan story) who, being drunk, fell down of the roof of *Circe*'s house.

<sup>3</sup> See 2192.

dies in the year 2324, at the age of 129.<sup>1</sup> Again others say (סה"ד), he dies in the year 2324, but at the age of 119.<sup>2</sup>

His body is embalmed (סה"י).

**2316:** *Yaakov's children are in Mitzrayim since 78 years.*

*Tzepo ben Elifaz ben Aisov* tries again to instigate *Angias* for a new war against *Yaakov's children* and *Mitzrayim*, but the king of Africa does not want a new conflict with them.

Finally, *Tzepo* leaves Africa. He goes to the land of the *Kittim* where he is named a general. From his incomes, he becomes very rich (סה"י).

At this time, the army of the king of Africa attack regularly the land of the *Kittim*. The people look for a shelter on the Mount *Kupatitziah* (קופטיציאה; סה"י).<sup>3</sup>

Looking for one of his lost steers, *Tzepo* finds a huge cave,<sup>4</sup> whose entrance is covered by a rock.

*Tzepo* with his great strength is able to roll down the rock<sup>5</sup> and, upon entering, he finds in the cave a half human half animal being,<sup>6</sup> devouring his steer.

*Tzepo* slains the monster with his sword. The people give him great ovation, celebrating that day every year, calling it *Tzepo's day*, and give him rich

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<sup>1</sup> See 2192.

<sup>2</sup> According to the apocryph „*Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*” (IV:12:12), *Yehudoh* descends to *Mitzrayim* at the age of 46, and he lives there 73 years more, what means, he dies at the age of 119. However, according to an other place of the same source (*Ibid.* 26:2), he dies at the age of 118.

<sup>3</sup> Mount *Kupatitziah*: it can be the *Capitolinus*, one of the seven hills of Rome (Lat. *caput* 'head'), together with the *Aventinus*, *Caelianus*, *Esquilinus*, *Palatinus*, *Quirinalis*, *Viminalis*.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. the story about *Avrohom's* finding the cave of *Machpeloh*, see above.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *Yaakov*, when meeting *Rochel*, „...rolled the stone from the well's mouth...” (*Beraishis* 29:10).

<sup>6</sup> Cf. the *Minotaur* of the Greek mythological tradition, a monster with a bull's head and a human body, begot by a bull sent by *Posseidon* with *Pasiphae*, wife of the Cretean king, *Minos* (son of *Zeus* and *Europe*). His real name was *Asterios*. Confined in the *labyrinth* built by *Daidalos*, he is fed by the Athenians' yearly tribute of seven youth and seven maidens until slain by *Theseus* who consequently is able to escape of the *labyrinth* with the aid of *Minos's* daughter's, *Ariadne's* thread.

presents (סה"י).<sup>1</sup>

*Yonnia*, *Angias*' wife taken from the *Kittim*'s land, becomes ill. According to the king's counsellors, the water of their country is different of that of the queen's homeland, and this must be at the origin of her illness.

*Angias* orders the construction of a stone-bridge, an aqueduct, from the *Kittim*'s land until Africa, thus providing „good” water for the queen. *Yonnia* effectively recovers of her illness (סה"י; יוסיפון).

**2317:** *Yaakov*'s children are in *Mitzrayim* since 79 years.

*Ruvain* dies at the age of 124 years. According to others (סה"י), he dies at the age of 125. Again others say, he dies in the year 2316, at the age of 128.<sup>2</sup>

In the same year, the *Africans* attack again the land of the *Kittim*.

*Tzepo* with his soldiers defeats them: the victorious general is elected king of the *Kittim*.

Led by *Tzepo*, the *Kittim* attack and conquer the land of *Tuvol*'s children<sup>3</sup> and the neighbouring islands.

*Tzepo*'s kingship is renewed: a huge palace is built for him. He rules over the land of the *Kittim* and the entire Italy for fifty years (סה"י).

He is the first king of Rome.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In the Roman mythology, *Cacus*, *Vulcanus*' son, a giant ogre belching forth flames lived in a cave of the Mount *Aventinus* – one of the seven hills of Rome -, terrorizing the surrounding region. When he steals *Herakles*' steers, the great hero kills him. The above story, thus, combines the traditions about the *Minotaur* and *Cacus*.

<sup>2</sup> See 2192. According to the apocryph „*Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*” (1:1), *Ruvain* dies at the age of 125 years, two years after *Yossef*'s death, but the latter died in the year 2309!

<sup>3</sup> Cf. the so-called *Latin war* of Rome (340-338 BCE) and the so-called *Samnite wars* (343-341, 328/326-304, 298-290 BCE) for the hegemony over Italy.

<sup>4</sup> See 2924, 3153, 3185. Being easy to recognize, in the name of *Angias*, coming from Carthago to Italy, the name of *Aineias* / *Aeneas* escaping from Troy, the story about *Tzepo ben Elifaz ben Aisov*'s becoming the king of Italy creates the historical antecedents to the identification of *Aisov-Edom* (who hates *Yaakov*, i. e. the *Bnai Yisroel*) with Rome (destroyer of the *Bais hamikdosh* in *Yerusholayim*). *Angias*' war with the *Kittim* reflects the so-called Punic wars. The story could have been influenced by the similiar sounding of the names *Tzepo* / *Scipio* (see below).



**2318:** *Yaakov's* children are in *Mitzrayim* since 80 years.

*Don* dies at the age of 124 years (ס"ה). According to others, he dies in the year 2321, at the age of 125.

*Binyomin* dies in the same year at the age of 111 years. According to others (ס"ה), he dies in the year 2325, at the age of 117. Again others say, he dies in the year 2318, but at the age of 115.<sup>1</sup>

In the same year, *Chusom*, king of *Edom*, dies.

He is followed on the throne by *Hadad ben Bedad*. He rules for 35 years (ס"ה).

**2319:** *Yaakov's* children are in *Mitzrayim* since 81 years.

*Yissochor* dies at the age of 122 years (ס"ה). According to others, he dies in the year 2318, at the age of 110.<sup>2</sup>

**2320:** *Yaakov's* children are in *Mitzrayim* since 82 years.

*Osher* dies at the age of 123 years (ס"ה).

**2321:** *Yaakov's* children are in *Mitzrayim* since 83 years.

*God* dies at the age of 125 years (ס"ה).

**2322:** *Yaakov's* children are in *Mitzrayim* since 84 years.

*Zevulun* dies at the age of 124 years. According to others (ס"ה; ר' בחיי), he dies in the year 2310, at the age of 114. Again others say (יל"ש שמות קס"ב), at the age of 110.<sup>3</sup>

In the fifth year of *Hadad ben Bedad's* reign, *Aisov's* children, the *Edomis* attack *Moav* with an army of about 400.000 soldiers.

*Moav* asks for the help of *Midyon*, but – after having been defeated in the battle

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<sup>1</sup> See 2192.

<sup>2</sup> See 2192.

<sup>3</sup> See 2192. According to the apocryph „*Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*” (VI:1:1) also, *Zevulun* died at the age of 114 years. The same text says, however, that two years (!) after *Yossef's* death. But the latter died in 2,308! According to „*Jubilees*” (28:23-24), *Yossef* and *Zevulun* were both born in 2,134. *Yossef* died in 2,242 (*Ibid.* 46:8), at the age of 110 (nevertheless, this makes only 108 !) and, if *Zevulun* died two years after him, in 2,244, the latter lived 112 years.



on *Moav's* field – they leave behind the *Midyonis* (who came to help them).

The *Midyoni* soldiers remain all dead on the battlefield.

Thereafter, *Hadad* subjugates *Moav* forcing them to pay a yearly tribute (סה"י).

**2323:** *Yaakov's* children are in *Mitzrayim* since 85 years.

War of the *Midyonis* and their allies – the *Children of the East*, descendants of *Keturoh* – against *Moav*, to take revenge of *Moav's* treason in the war against *Hadad*.

The *Moavis* ask for the help of *Hadad*, the king of *Edom*, who defeats the *Midyonis* and their allies.

From then on, there is a permanent hostility between *Moav* and *Midyon* (סה"י).<sup>1</sup>

**2327:** *Yaakov's* children are in *Mitzrayim* since 89 years.

*Naftoli* dies at the age of 132 years (סה"י). According to others (מדרש תדשא ח), at the age of 133.<sup>2</sup>

**2329:** *Yaakov's* children are in *Mitzrayim* since 91 years.

In the thirteenth year of *Tzepo's* reign, after thirteen years of peace, the *Africans* attack again the land of the *Kittim*, but *Tzepo* defeats them (סה"י).

### 6.5. The Slavery

**2332:** *Yaakov's* children are in *Mitzrayim* since 94 years (צ"ד).

*Laivi*, the last of the brothers, dies at the age of 137 years (*Shemos* 6:16).

According to others (סה"י), he dies in 2331, what means after having lived in *Mitzrayim* „only” 93 years. Again others say (פדר"א מ"ח), *Laivi* lived 92 years in

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Bolok*, 2488. The story related by the „*Sefer haYoshor*”, is the antecedent of the story of *Bilom-Bolok* (see below).

<sup>2</sup> See 2192. According to the apocryph „*Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*” (VIII:1:1), *Naftoli* dies at the age of 130.

*Mitzrayim*.<sup>1</sup>

With this, the 94 (93) years of good life for the *Bnai Yisroel* in *Mitzrayim* come to an end.<sup>2</sup>

The slavery (שעבוד) begins: the *Mitzris* take away from the *Bnai Yisroel* everything they had received from *Yossef*, their fields, their vineyards, their houses. Later, they start to afflict (עינוי) them in every possible way (סה"י).

Of the remaining 116 (117) years, thirty are the slavery and 86 (87) years of affliction.

When all the twelve brothers are already dead, the *Bnai Yisroel*, living until then only in the province of *Goshen*, get dispersed over the whole territory of *Mitzrayim*: „...and the land was filled with them” (*Shemos* 1:7).<sup>3</sup>

They start to get assimilated to the customs of the *Mitzriim*. More than that, they even start to take part in their idol-worshipping (תחומא ב' שמות ו): therefore the staying in *Mitzrayim* becomes slavery in *Mitzrayim* (ספרנו שמות א, י"ד).

*Other opinions about the factors which provoked slavery:*

► *Avrohom* was supposed not to descend to *Mitzrayim* because of the famine but to have confidence in the Eternal, He will sustain him in *Eretz Canaan* as well. This is the reason why his descendants were later forced to descend to *Mitzrayim* (רמב"ן ברא' י"ב, י);

► A punishment *mida-keneged-mida* for the brothers dealing with *Yossef*:

- they sold *Yossef* for a slave: their children are enslaved;

<sup>1</sup> According to the apocryph „*Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*” (III:12:6), *Laivi* was 118 years old when *Yossef* died what, accordingly, happened nineteen years earlier, in the year 2313. This is however four more than the traditionnally given date, see 2309. In the same text (13:8, 15:1-4), *Laivi* prophesizes the diaspora, the *golus*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. 2448.

<sup>3</sup> Modern scientific opinions seek to ideentify them with the *aperu*, *apuriu*, *habiru* mentioned in Egyptian texts who work on constructions and dig channels, or are private slaves. It is difficult to decide if the above words mean a certain ethnicity or hired guest-workers, or originally it meant a certain ethnicity and, later, *per extensionem*, every guest-worker.

- they threw *Yossef* into a pit: their children are thrown into the Nile;
- *Yossef* arrived to *Mitzrayim* because of his brothers: they have to descend there because of *Yossef*. On the other hand, *Yossef*'s children cannot avoid slavery, because *Yossef* related his dreams (אברבנל פ' לך לך);
- When he takes his followers to liberate *Lot*, *Avrohom* withholds them from Torah-learning: although this was meant for saving lives (פקוח נפש), still endures hard consequences (R. *Abahu*; נדרים ל"ב);
- When the Eternal promises him *Eretz Canaan* during the *bris ben habesorim*, *Avrohom* asks for a sign: the lack of confidence in the Eternal makes the *Shechinah* to depart from *Avrohom*, therefore the *Mitzris* will later be able to enslave his descendants (*Shmuel*; נדרים ל"ב);
- During the war of the kings, *Avrohom* renders to the king of *Sdom* the latter's liberated subjects, thus depriving these idol-worshippers of becoming the Eternal's servants: the consequence will be the slavery in *Mitzrayim* for his descendants (R. *Yochanan*; נדרים ל"ב).

The members of the tribe of *Laivi* as well as the *tzaddikim* of the other tribes do not become idol-worshippers (שמו"ר ט"ו, א).

Because of the growing assimilation, the Eternal changes the behaviour of the *Mitzriim* toward the *Bnai Yisroel*: respect and gratitude give place to hatred (שמו"ר א, ח).

After the brother's death, *Paroh* bans circumcision. Nevertheless, despite the ban, the tribe of *Laivi* observes this *mitzvoh* also (פדר"א כ"ט; שמו"ר י"ט, ו).

At the same time, during the entire periode of their staying in *Mitzrayim*, the *Bnai Yisroel* show their difference of the local population in four respects:

- They do not change their names, *i.e.* they do not give non-Jewish names to their children;

► They do not change their language. This means that:

- they conserve the holy language (*loshon hakodesh*), the Hebrew. However, living among idol-worshippers, they do not use it for the everyday communication. On the other hand, they do not speak pure, correct *Mitzri* language either, but some kind of a mixture formed for their own purposes;<sup>1</sup>

► they do not denounce each-other before the Egyptian authorities;

► they preserve their moral purity (במדב"ר כ, כ"ב; תדא"ר י"ז; כ"ג ב-ד; כ"ד, א).

Besides, they do not change their way of clothing, *i. e.* they do not wear Egyptian garments (אברבנל להגדה של פסח).<sup>2</sup>

Two places of the *TANACH* are traditionally considered as allusions to the three things, name, language and garments:

► The Torah says (*Beraishis* 33:18) that *Yaakov*, after having successfully withstood the cultural challenges at his father-in-law's, *Lovon's* house, arrives „...*intact* [שליים]<sup>3</sup> at the city of *Shchem*”. The letters of the word *shole”m* form the initials of the words מלבוש [’garment’], לשון [’language’], ש”ם [’name’].

► In the last 22 verses of *SHLOMOH hamelech's „Proverbs”* (משלי), in the section beginning with the words *Aishes Chayil* (אשת חיל), we find the word

<sup>1</sup> During the many exiles of their history, although conserving the holy tongue (*loshon hakodesh*), the Hebrew. Jews were always speaking in the local vernaculars, and this also in a somewhat altered form (cf. *Yiddish*, *Ladino*, etc.) and also writing them with Hebrew characters. And they did so despite the fact that „...the ancients were also well versed in the vernacular but intentionally corrupted the language [German into *Yiddish*] because of the decree of 18 measures...”. (*SHUT Chasam Sofer, Even hoEzer* 2:11). The „decree of 18 measures” is a series of prohibitions (*bShabbos* 13b, 14b), aimed seemingly at separating Jews from non-Jews. According to the variant given by the Talmud *Yerushalmi* (*jShabbos* 1:4), one of these „measures” is „on their languages”, which means that „A Jew should not accustom himself or his children to speak in the language of idol-worshippers” (David FRANKEL, *Qorban Eda, s.v. veal leshonom*).

<sup>2</sup> The Canon 68 of the IV<sup>th</sup> Lateran Council (1215) makes an allusion to the Jews' different way of clothing as being already present in the Mosaic Laws.

<sup>3</sup> The *Soncino TANACH* takes the word for a proper name, and hence renders it „to *Shalem* the city of *Shechem*”, cf. *Beraishis* 14:18: „...*Malchitzedek, king of Salem*...”.

של"ל ['profit, gain'; *Mishlai* 31:11]. The letters of this word form again the initials of the words ש"ם ['name'], לשון ['language'], לבוש ['garment'].

According to an other tradition (פדר"א מ"ה), the *Bnai Yisroel* merited to be taken out of *Mitzrayim* because of three things:

- ▶ they did not change their tongue,
- ▶ they did not denounce each-other,
- ▶ the whole duration of their exile there, they continuously believe in the unity of the Eternal (יחוד השם).

Although the *Bnai Yisroel* formally get involved into idol-worshipping, the purity of their souls remains inalterd, they do not become immoral.

One of the manifestations of the Eternal's inalterd love for the *Bnai Yisroel* is the fact that in *Mitzrayim* the Jewish women gave birth every time to sextuplets (שמו"ר א, ז). To this allude the six expressions in the Torah in relation with the multiplication of the *Bnai Yisroel*: „And the people of Israel... (ובני ישראל)

- ▶ were fruitful (פרו),
- ▶ and increased abundantly (וישרצו),
- ▶ and multiplied (וירבו),
- ▶ and became mighty (ויעצמו)
- ▶ exceedingly (במאד מאד),
- ▶ and the land was filled with them.” (ותמלא הארץ אתם; *Shemos* 1:7).

**2,340:** Yaakov's children are in *Mitzrayim* since 102 years.

A „New King” (מלך חדש; *Shemos* 1:8) ascends to the throne of *Mitzrayim*:<sup>1</sup> after Migron's death,<sup>2</sup> his 26 years old son, *Molol* (מלול) reigns (סה"י; according to

<sup>1</sup> It is not evident, from the different commentaries, that the new king mentioned in the Torah, is *Molol* or his son *Adikos* / *Adikom* who rules from 2444. See 2444.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. both footnotes to the year 2270.

*Rav*; (סוטה י"א) for 94 years.<sup>1</sup>

His wife's name is *Elparonis* (אלפרענית).<sup>2</sup>

Their children are: *Asoray* (עתרי), *Adikos* (אדיקס) / *Adikom* (אדיקם),<sup>3</sup> *Moryon* (מוריון); and two daughters: *Batya* and *Akuzis* (עכוזית) / *Apuzi* (עפוזי; סה"ד).<sup>4</sup>

Besides, naturally, he also had children of his concubines (סה"י).

According to an other opinion (*Shmuel*, סוטה י"א), this means that the same person is reigning, he only afflicts the *Bnai Yisroel* with new decrees. This opinion is based on the fact that, according to the Torah (*Shemos* 1:8), „...*there arose up a new king over Egypt*,...” without the usual formula: the king is dead and a new king is reigning instead.

Other opinions about the same topic:

- The new king came to the throne with force, he was not of royal lineage (אבן עזרא);
- As the Torah does not say explicitly that the king died, this is the same king but, henceforward, he behaves like an enemy who wants to overcome the *Bnai Yisroel* and the Eternal (חזקוני);
- As he does not want to provoke a further deterioration in the *Bnai Yisroel*'s situation, the aristocracy dethronizes him for three months. Thereafter, he is already willing to satisfy their demand: therefore is it written „...*there arose up a new king over Egypt*,...” (דעת זקנים);

<sup>1</sup> Reckoning 94 years from 2340, we arrive to 2434. Later, however, the „*Sefer haYoshor*” writes that *Molol*'s son and successor on the throne reigns only four years after his father's death (2444 – 2448).

It has also to be remembered that, curiously enough, PEPI Noferkaré II ruled over ninety years c. 2350-2260 BCE. But he was of the *SIXTH* Dynasty (Memphis) of the *OLD* Kingdom! Historians generally try to place *Yetzias Mitzrayim* somewhere into the periode of the New Kingdom. See below, 2448.

<sup>2</sup> *Elparonis*: presumably, the feminine form of *Paroh*'s name, possibly combined with an Arab prefix.

<sup>3</sup> *Adikos* / *Adikom*: one of the two forms can be considered being a copist's error through interchanging the letters ם and ך.

<sup>4</sup> *Akuzis* / *Apuzi*: one of the two forms can be considered being a copist's error through interchanging the letters ך and ם.

► The New *Paroh* did not know *Yossef*: he was born when *Yossef* was in jail. It is his birthday what the Torah mentions (*Beraishis* 40:20; ר' בחיי<sup>1</sup>).

Also the whole generation - who still knew *Yossef* and his brothers, who still knew of personal experience or at least of hearing, what has *Mitzrayim* to thank to *Yaakov*'s children – dies.

And the new generation - who do not know them any more, and do not know about all these things – start to afflict the *Bnai Yisroel* (סד"י).

In the same year, *Angias* – the king of *Africa* – attacks anew the land of the *Kittim*, but *Tzepo* – the king of the *Kittim* – defeats them with his army killing all the enemy soldiers.

Upon hearing about the tragic end of his army, *Angias* asks for the help of *Lokosh*, king of *Sardonia*. Thereupon, *Tzepo* asks for the help of *Hadad*, king of his relatives, *Aisov*'s children. *Hadad*, however, does not want to take part in the war because of the alliance concluded earlier with *Angias*.

Remaining alone against *Angias* and *Lokosh*, *Tzepo* accept the counsel of his noblemen, and turns for help to the Eternal, the G-d of his fathers, *Avrohom* and *Yitzchok*.

In the merit of *Avrohom* and *Yitzchok*, the Eternal helps who asks for His help: *Tzepo*, with only 3000 men, defeats the army of the two kings, altogether 800.000 soldiers, the half of the latter remain dead on the battlefield.

The two kings and *Angias*' son, *Ezdrubal* (אזדרובל)<sup>2</sup> are successful in escapeing.

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<sup>1</sup> It is very difficult to understand the point of R. BACHJA: *Yossef* reigns 80 years after having been liberated, what means, *Paroh*, son of the precedent *Paroh* is supposed to know him. If not, we have to combine this with IBN EZRA's opinion: he was not of royal lineage.

<sup>2</sup> *Ezdrubal*: cf. Hasdrubal Barca, Hannibal's brother (c. 247-207 BCE), but in the 6th-2nd centuries there were several generals in Carthago with the same name.

After their defeat, the *Africans* do not dare to attack again the *Kittim*.<sup>1</sup>

Upon hearing the defeat, *Bilom ben Beor* who, at that moment, is in *Angias*' camp, escapes to the *Kittim*. *Tzepo* receives him friendly, knowing about his great wisdom.

After his victory, *Tzepo* forgets about who helped him to defeat his enemies, he forgets about the Eternal: he continues worshipping the idols (סִדְה"י).

After his victory over *Angias*, *Tzepo* decides to attack *Mitzrayim*: he asks for the help of *Hadad ben Bedad*, king of *Aisov*'s children, and of *Yishmoel*'s children and the *Children of the East*.

The great armies come together near *Chevron*, and from there they go against *Mitzrayim*, camping in the Valley of *Patros*.<sup>2</sup>

*Mitzrayim*'s army consists of about 300.000 soldiers. To this, they join about 150 of the *Bnai Yisroel*. The latter are, however, ordered not to enter into fight only in case of extreme danger: the *Mitzriim* are afraid the Jews should not deliver them into the hands of their relatives, the children of *Aisov* and *Yishmoel*.

*Bilom* tries to unveil the end of the battle, but the Eternal confounds him.

The battle takes place in the Valley of *Patros* at *Tachpanches*: the *Mitzris* are defeated, so they call the Jews [the 150 people!] to help them.

The *Bnai Yisroel* pray to the Eternal and, with His help, they defeat the huge armies of the enemy kings, pursuing them until the border of *Kush*, killing many thousands of them.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. the Punic Wars, the three wars between Rome and Carthago - 264-241, 218-201, 149-146 BCE (about more than thousand years later) -, for the supremacy over the Western part of the Mediterranean basin. The wars end with the destruction of Carthago itself, its territory and the territories of its overseas colonies (e. g. Hispania, Sicilia, Sardinia) are organized into Roman provinces. See 2914.

<sup>2</sup> *Patros* is supposed to mean Upper-Egypt, therefore it is very interesting, how the huge armies could reach there, the only possibility being crossing the Red Sea. However, we know about a channel digged during the period of the Ramses-pharaohs. And how can our text write „in the Valley of *Patros*, at *Tachpanches*“, when earlier we had to place *Tachpanches* somewhere in the Delta !?



From among the *Bnai Yisroel*, no one falls in the battle.

The *Mitzriim* flee, leaving the Jews behind.

Therefore, the Jews, on their way back, kill many of the *Mitzriim*: they do as if taking the latters for *Edomis* or *Yishmoelis* (ס"ה).

Under the impact of the latest events, the *Mitzriim* are really afraid of the *Bnai Yisroel*: they decide to first weaken their force and consequently destroy them (*Shemos* 1:10).

*Paroh* orders, Jews and *Mitzriim* should start – as hired workers – to construct fortified border-towns. According to his plan, the *Mitzriim* will later leave the constructions and force the Jews to continue the hard work but without being payed (ס"ה).

Forced labour:<sup>1</sup> the construction of *Pisom* (פִּיתוֹם, 'Taanis'; תרגו"י)<sup>2</sup> and *Ramses* (רַמְסֵס, 'Pilusin'; תרגו"י), the two storage-towns (*Shemos* 1:11). The towns existed already, they only reconstructed and fortified them (רש"י). According to others (סוטה י"א), the two names are of the same town being only attributes of it. The tribe of *Laivi* does not work, they are uninterruptedly versed in Torah-learning.

As they are not working, they do not receive sustenance of the government: the other tribes sustain them with *maasser*.

The *Bnai Yisroel* have to work not only on the construction of the two towns, but on the fields of the *Mitzriim* as well, and also in their homes (*Shemos* 1:12; תנחומא ב' ויצא ט).

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<sup>1</sup> According to one of the modern scientific opinions „The Egyptians after having expelled the [Semitic] *Hyksos*, enslaved the Hebrews together with the other defeated peoples, forcing them to inhuman forced-labour...” (Hahn, p. 4).

<sup>2</sup> *Pisom*: Egypt. *Patum*, *Per-Atum* 'the house of the Sun-G-d *Atum*'; according to modern identification, *Tell al-Maskhuta*, situated near to the Eastern end of the *Wadi Tumilat*. However, on other places, the *Targum* renders *Tzoan* (see above) and *On* (see above) also as *Taanis*!

To stop the numerical increasing of the *Bnai Yisroel*, Jewish husbands are separated from their wives (בעה"ט א, י"א).

The *Mitzriim* force the Jewish men to do women's work (in the households, kitchens, etc.) while the women have to do men's work (hard physical labour) (תנחומא ב' ויצא ט; סוטה י"א).

The Jewish women do everything possible to maintain in their husbands the belief in redemption (סה"י).

**2345:** *Yaakov's* children are in *Mitzrayim* since 107 years.

From that moment on we are speaking about the Latin language (צ"ד).

**2348:** *Yaakov's* children are in *Mitzrayim* since 110 years.

*Kehos* dies at the age of 133 years (סה"ד בשם שה"ק). According to others, he was born in 2235 or 2236, and died in 2368, 2369 or 2370.<sup>1</sup>

**2353:** *Yaakov's* children are in *Mitzrayim* since 115 years.

*Hadad ben Bedad*, the king of *Edom* dies after 35 years of reign, in the thirteenth year of the „New” *Paroh* (סה"י). According to others (סה"ד), he dies in 2348, but the next king ascends to the throne only in 2353, after an interregnum of five years.

He is followed by *Samloh* (שמלה) of *Masrekoh* (משרקה), from the land of the *Children of the East*. He rules over the children of *Aisov* for eighteen years.

He intends to attack *Tzepo* and the land of the *Kittim*, but later he changes his mind.

Hearing about *Samloh's* plans, *Paroh* gets scared whether he wants to attack him also.

Therefore they oppress the Jews even more harshly, but the *Bnai Yisroel* are fruitful and they multiply (*Shemos* 1:12; סה"י);

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<sup>1</sup> For an analysis and critic of the different data see the „*Seder haDoros*”.

**2364:** *Yaakov's* children are in *Mitzrayim* since 126 years.

*Miryam* (מרים), 'the *Mitzris* embittered our lives', i. e. they made the forced labour even more harsh; (מג' תענית; סוטה י"א) is born. According to others (ס"ע), she was born in 2361. Again others say (תנחומא ב' בא ז על פי ס"ע), in 2362.<sup>1</sup>

She is the daughter of *Amrom* and of *Yocheved*. Having been born upon the family's arrival to *Mitzrayim* (סוטה י"ב), in 2238, the latter is at that moment 126 years old (סה"ד).

Already as a young girl, she helps her mother in the latter's work as a midwife.

*Miryam*, being overcharged with work, looks like someone very sick, and cannot get married (שמו"ר א, כ"א; ת"צ; רש"י סוטה י"א).

Later, she will be *Kolev ben Yefune's* wife (כלב בן יפונה). *Kolev*, although he is more than forty years younger than *Miryam*, considers she will have children great *tzaddikim*, similar to her brothers (שמו"ר א, כ"א; ת"צ).

She is one of *Dovid hamelech's* ancestors (סוטה י"א).

**2365:** *Yaakov's* children are in *Mitzrayim* since 127 years.

*Aharon* (אהרן) is born: he is three years elder than *Moshe rabainu* (*Shemos* 7:7).

The latter is in his eightieth year when they are standing before *Paroh* – *Aharon* is 83 at that moment (*Shemos* 7:7) - and, in the next year, the *Bnai Yisroel* leave *Mitzrayim* (סה"ד).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> According to the Talmud, *Yocheved* was born upon their arrival to *Mitzrayim*, in 2238, what means that she was 130 when *Moshe rabainu* was born, in 2368: the latter dies in 2488 at the age of 120, 2488 – 120 = 2368. According to the Torah (*Shemos* 7:7), *Aharon* is three years elder than *Moshe rabainu*, thus born in 2365. *Miryam* – the eldest of the three – was born presumably one year before *Aharon*, in 2364, when *Yocheved* is 126 (according to the Talmud, she gets married at this age), i. e. in the same year when she gets married. Accordingly, *Miryam* could not have been born in 2361/62, and *Paroh's* order concerning the killing of the new-born Jewish boys could also not have been published in 2363 (according to the same Talmud, one of the midwives mentioned by the Torah is *Miryam* as still a child)!

<sup>2</sup> The date of the „*Seder haDoros*” has to be modified with one year, as he dies in 2487 and not in 2488! According to the Torah (*Bamidbar* 33:39), he dies at the age of 123, 2,487 – 123 = 2364. This is however still in contradiction with the reckoning of the precedent footnote! The solution is seemingly the same as in the case of *Moshe rabainu* (he was in his eightieth year when he stood before *Paroh*,

His wife is *Elisheva* (אלישבע), *Aminodov's* (עמינדב) daughter, *Nachson's* (נחשון) sister, from the tribe of *Yehudoh*.

**2367:** *Yaakov's* children are in *Mitzrayim* since 129 years.

When they see that the forced labour does not break the *Bnai Yisroel*, they even become more fruitful and multiply, *Paroh* - following the counsel of *Iyov* from *Aram Naharaim*, from the land of *Utz* - gives new orders: all the new-born Jewish boys must be killed (*Shemos* 1:16). In this way, the *Mitzriim* won't have to be afraid any more of the *Bnai Yisroel* (סה"י). According to others (סה"ד), this happens in 2365, in the 127th year of their staying in *Mitzrayim*.

Despite of *Paroh's* orders, the Jewish women continue to have children.

The Eternal save the children through miracles, hiding them from the *Mitzri* soldiers sent to kill them (מהרש"א סוטה י"א).

The merit of the G-d-fearing midwives, *Shifroh* (שפרה) and *Puoh* (פועה; *Shemos* 1:15) - *Yocheved* and *Miryam* who, as a young girl, helps her mother; according to others (סוטה י"א), *Yocheved* and *Elisheva* -: despite of *Paroh's* order, they do not kill the new-borns (*Shemos* 1:17), they even risk their lives to feed them (שמור"ר א, י"ט).

*Tzepo* dies after fifty years of reign.<sup>1</sup>

He is followed by *Yanini* / *Yanush* (יאניני, יאנוש; סה"ד) / *Yoniosh* (יאניוש, סה"י).<sup>2</sup>

He also reigns for fifty years (סה"י) as king of the *Kittim*.

After *Tzepo's* death, *Bilom* goes to *Mitzrayim*, and becomes one of *Paroh's*

however he had not yet filled the eightieth): *Aharon* was in his third year in 2368, when *Moshe rabainu* was born, although not yet having filled the third.

<sup>1</sup> The data is not exact: if he was elected for a king in the year 2317, and ruled for fifty years, he is supposed to have ruled until 2366!

<sup>2</sup> *Yanini* etc.: presumably, the different Hebrew forms are variants of the same Latin name of the double-faced Roman deity, *Ianus*, due to copist's error(s).

counselors (סו"י).

*Paroh's* dream: an old man puts in one plate of a balance all the noblemen of *Mitzrayim*, and a young goat into the other. The goat overweights all the noblemen.

*Bilom's* interpretation: a child is to be born by the Jews who will destroy *Mitzrayim* and lead the *Bnai Yisroel* to freedom.

*Paroh's* three counselors propose three different solutions:

- *Yisro*: the G-d, the Eternal protects them, against Him no one can do anything, and, because of *Yossef*, the *Mitzriim* are even obliged to them. They are not allowed to harm them, only supposed to let them in peace or to send them back to *Eretz Canaan*, to the land of the ancestors.

Because of *Paroh's* anger, *Yisro*, ashamed, returns to his land, *Midyon*, taking along *Yossef's* stick.

His reward: his descendants will be among the leaders of the *Sanhedrin*.

- *Iyov* does not say a word.

His punishment: his sufferings (שמו"ר א, י"ב).

- *Bilom*: the new-born Jewish boys are to be drown in the river (סו"י).

His punishment: the *Bnai Yisroel* will later kill him (סוטה י"א). According to others (סו"ד), it is his great grandson whom they will kill.

Following *Bilom's* counsel, *Paroh* orders the new-born Jewish boys to be drown into the river.

*Paroh's* oracles give their consentment, considering the Eternal cannot punish *midoh keneged midoh*: He promised there will be no more a Flood (סוטה י"א; רש"י א, י).

*Paroh's* punishment: his army will be drown into the sea (of Reeds).

Following the publication of the new *gezeroh*, a part of the Jewish men divorces

their wives. Nevertheless, the other families remain together, and Jewish children continue to be born.

Jewish women go out to the fields, and give birth to their children there, leaving the new-borns to the mercy of the Eternal. He really takes care of the infants: placing two stones in the hands of each child, He feeds them with milk from the one and with honey from the other. Thereafter, He hides them under the ground, and they come again back to the surface when they are already grown up, ables to return home (סוטה י"א; סה"י).

**2367:** *Yaakov's* children are in *Mitzrayim* since 129 years.

Through *ruach hakodesh*, *Miryam* prophecizes that the redeemer of the *Bnai Yisroel* will be born in her family (סוטה י"א).

*Amrom* divorces his wife, *Yocheved*, who is 130 years old (more exactly she is in the hundred thirtieth) and who is in the third month of her pregnancy: the *Bnai Yisroel* follow his example (ב"ב קכ"ג; סוטה י"א). According to others (סה"י), *Amrom* divorced his wife already three years earlier.<sup>1</sup>

Under the influence of *Miryam's* arguments - *Paroh* ordered to kill the boys only, because of you no girls will be born either - *Amrom* remarries *Yocheved*: the *Bnai Yisroel* again follow his example (שמו"ר א, כ"ג; סוטה י"ב).

The oracles can foresee the birth of the *Bnai Yisroel's* redeemer. They are however uncertain if he will be of Jewish or *Mitzri* origin: *Moshe rabainu* will be brought up by *Paroh's* daughter (שמו"ר א, כ"ב).

Now *Paroh* orders the new-born *Mitzri* boys shall also be drown into the river (Shemos 1:22; שמו"ר א, כ"ג).

*Paroh's* three orders:

► the new-born Jewish boys are to be killed,

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<sup>1</sup> The variant given by the „*Sefer haYoshor*” is presumably a copist's error, three years instead of three

- ▶ the new-born Jewish boys are to be drown into the river,
- ▶ every new-born – Jewish and *Mitzri* – is to be drown into the river.

### 6.6. Moshe Rabainu

**2368:** *Yaakov*'s children are in *Mitzrayim* since 130 years.

- **Adar 7, Wednesday:** *Moshe Rabainu* (משה רבנו) is born.

He is born to seven months (סה"י).

He is the son of *Amrom ben Kehos ben Laivi* and of the 130 years old *Yocheved* (סוטה י"ב).

When he reaches the adult age, he will be ten *amos* tall (*ca.* six meters; ברכות נ"ד).

A prophet (נביא): the Eternal unveils through him the future hidden for simple people. Besides, he leads and teaches the *Bnai Yisroel* in the spirit of the Torah.

1.200.000 prophets were prophecizing for the *Bnai Yisroel*. However, tradition conserved the name and prophecies of only 48: the latters were „actual” for later generations also, while the others only for their own generation, occasionally (מגילה י"ד). In the following list, after the names, are given in brackets the names whose disciples the mentioned neviim were and during which periode were they functioning.

- 1./ *Avrohom*, 2./ *Yitzchok*, 3./ *Yaakov* (they learned Torah from *Shem ben Noach*), 4./ *Moshe Rabainu* (he received the Torah from the Eternal on Mount Sinai), 5./ *Aharon*, 6./ *Yehosuah*, 7./ *Pinchos* (*Moshe Rabainu*'s disciples), 8./ *Elkonoh* (*Shmuel hanovi*'s father), 9./ *Eli hakohen* (*Pinchos*' disciples; during

the periode of the *Judges*), 10./ *Shmuel hanovi* (*Eli hakohen*'s disciple, during *Shaul*'s reign), 11./ *God*, 12./ *Nosson*, 13./ *Dovid hamelech*, 14./ *Achiyoh hashiloni* (*Shmuel hanovi*'s disciples; the first two during *Dovid hamelech* and *Shlomoh hamelech*'s reign, *Achiyoh* during *Yorovom ben Navot*'s reign), 15./ *Shlomo hamelech* (*Nosson*'s disciple), 16./ *Ido* (*Dovid hamelech*'s disciple; during *Yorovom ben Navot*'s reign), 17./ *Eliyohu hanovi*, 18./ *Michoyoh ben Yimloh*, 19./ *Ovadyoh*, 20./ *Chanani*, 21./ *Yehu ben Chanani*, 22./ *Azaryoh ben Oded*, 23./ *Yachziel halaivi*, 24./ *Eliezer ben Dodo* (*Achiyoh*'s disciples; during the reign of *Assoh*, *Yoshofot* and *Achov*), 25./ *Elishoh* (*Eliyohu*'s disciple; during the reign of *Achazyoh*, *Yorom*, *Yehu*, *Yoochoz*, *Yoosh*), 26./ *Yonah*, 27./ *Hoshea* (*Elishoh*'s disciples; the first during *Yehu ben Nimshi*'s reign, the second during the reign of *Uziyoh*, *Yosom*, *Ochoz*, *Chizkiyoh* and *Yorovom ben Yoosh*), 28./ *Zecharyoh ben Yoyodoh* (disciple of his father who, on his turn, was *Elishoh*'s disciple, both died still in *Elishoh*'s lifetime, during *Yoosh*'s reign), 29./ *Amos* (*Hoshea*'s disciple; during the reign of *Uziyoh* and *Yorovom ben Yoosh*), 30./ *Amotz*, 31./ *Yishayoh ben Amotz* (disciples of *Amos*; during the reign of *Amatzyoh*, *Uziyoh*, *Yossom*, *Ochoz*, *Chizkiyoh*), 32./ *Michoh* (*Yishayoh*'s disciple; during the reign of *Yossom*, *Ochoz*, *Chizkiyoh*), 33./ *Yoel* (*Michoh*'s disciple; during *Menassheh*'s reign), 34./ *Nochum*, 35./ *Oriyoh ben Shmayoh* (*Yoel*'s disciples; the first during the reign of *Menassheh*, the second during *Yoyokim*), 36./ *Chavokuk* (*Nochum*'s disciple; during *Menassheh*'s reign), 37./ *Tzefanyoh* (*Chavokuk*'s disciple; during *Yoshiyoh*'s reign), 38./ *Yirmeyoh* (*Tzefanyoh*'s disciple; during the reign of *Yoyokim*, *Yoyochin* and *Tzidkiyoh*), 39./ *Yechezkel*, 40./ *Neriyoh*, 41./ *Boruch ben Neriyoh* (*Yirmeyoh*'s disciples; during the reign of *Yoyochin* and *Tzidkiyoh*), 42./ *Daniel*, 43./ *Seroyoh*, 44./ *Mechasyoh*, 45./ *Chagay*, 46./ *Zecharyoh*, 47./ *Malachi* 48./



*Mordechai* (the last seven are all *Yechezkel*'s disciples; they are actives during the Babylonian exile. According to others [רמב"ם], the last seven are all the disciples of *Ezra*, *Boruch ben Neriyo*'s disciple, they are members of *Ezra*'s *Bais Din*, they are called - together with many other *Sages*, altogether 120 men - the Men of the Great Assembly [*Anshai Knesses haGdolah*],<sup>1</sup> the last of them, *Shimon hatzadik*, was the High Priest after *Ezra*).

Seven prophetesses: *Soroh*, *Miryam*, *Deborah*, *Chanah*, *Abigail* (אביג-ל), *Chuldoh*, *Ester* (מגילה י"ד).

They were prophecizing from *Yetzias Mitzrayim* (יצאת מצרים; 'the Exode') up to the initial years of the Second Commonwealth: 2448 – 3448 = 1000 years.

*Moshe rabainu* is born circumcized (שמו"ר א, כ"ג, ע"י).

He is called by ten different names:

- his mother, *Yocheved* calls him *Yekusiel* (יקותי-ל): 'he teaches the *Bnai Yisroel* to hope and have confidence in the Eternal'; or 'I hoped to receive it back from the Eternal';
- his sister, *Miryam*, calls him *Yered* (ירד): 'he brings down the Torah on Earth'; or 'I followed him to the river';
- his grandfather, *Kehos*, calls him *Avigdor* (אביגדור): 'he puts fences (גדר) to the Torah'; or 'because of him, the Eternal did not let the Jewish new-born boys to be drowned into the river';
- his father, *Amrom*, calls him *Cheber* (חבר): 'he brings the *Bnai Yisroel* nearer to their heavenly Father'; or 'because of him I again approached my wife';
- his nurse (*Yocheved* ?), calls him *Avi Socho* (אבי סוכו): 'the greatest prophet'; or 'I could hide him for three months';

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<sup>1</sup> See 3370.

- his brother, *Aharon*, calls him *Avi Zonoach* (אבי זנוח): 'induces the *Bnai Yisroel* to abandon idol-worshipping'; or 'my father had left my mother, and he took her back'.

These six names figure in the *TANACH* (1.Divrai haYomim 4:18) as the names of *Bityah*'s children born from *Mored*: *Paroh*'s daughter, *Batyah* brings him up, what is counted for her as if she gave him life (רד"ק); and the names she gave to *Moshe Rabainu* through *ruach hakodesh* (תרגור"י).

- *Toviah* (טובי-ה): 'when he was born, his mother saw that he was good' (*Shemos* 2:2);
- *Shmayoh* (שמעי-ה): 'the Eternal listens to his prayers'; or 'it is in his time that the Eternal listens to the outcry of the *Bnai Yisroel* because of their miserable situation, and saves them';
- *Ben Nessanel* (בן נתנ-ל): 'the Eternal will give him the Torah';
- *Laivi* (לוי): 'he is from *Laivi*'s family' (ויקרא"ר א, ג; סה"י).

In *Paroh*'s house he is called *Moshe* (משה): 'I drew you out of the water' (*Shemos* 2:10). *Batya-h* calls him *Tomor* (תמר); the *Mitzriim* call him *Monius* (מוניוס) or *Mosh* (מוש, Egypt, 'water'; שמו"ר א, ל"א).<sup>1</sup>

One of the six cases of giving the name before the child is born: "My spirit shall not always strive with man, for (בשג"ם) he also is flesh; yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years." (*Beraishis* 6:3); the *gematrioh* of **בשג"ם** = the *gematrioh* of **משה**; *Moshe Rabainu* lived 120 years (פדר"א ל"ב).

- **Sivan 6:** *Yocheved* hides the new-born *Moshe* for three months (*Shemos* 2:2): the *Mitzri* soldiers are looking for the child only nine months after the second wedding (סוטה י"ב). Thereafter, she „...took for him an ark made of reeds, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child in it; and she laid it in the

<sup>1</sup> *Moshe*: according to modern opinions, Egypt. *mes*, *messu* 'child, son of someone'.

*rushes by the river's brink.*" (Shemos 2:3; שמו"ר א, כ"ט).<sup>1</sup>

The oracles immediately report to *Paroh* that the redeemer of the *Bnai Yisroel* has been thrown into the river. Thereupon, *Paroh* withdraws his order to have the new-borns drown into the river (שמו"ר א, כ"ה-כ"ט).

The Eternal sends extraordinary heat that everyone should go to the river to take a bath, among them *Batya-h* (בתי-ה, 'the Eternal's daughter', cf. 1.Divrai haYomim 4:18), *Paroh's* daughter also (Shemos 2:5; סה"י).

*Batya-h* converts herself to Judaism (פדר"א מ"ה), therefore she goes to immerse herself (רש"י סוטה י"ב). According to others (שמו"ר א, כ"ז), her intention is to cool down the boils on her body.

She takes the basket out of the water: the Eternal miraculously extends her arm to make her able to catch the basket with the baby *Moshe* (Shemos 2:5; שמו"ר א, כ"ז).

As the child is unwilling to take the milk of a *Mitzri* women (שמו"ר א, ל), *Batya-h* gives the child to *Yocheved* for nursing (Shemos 2:7-9). She nurses him for 24 months, thereafter takes him to the palace to *Batya-h* (Shemos 2:10; שמו"ר א, ל).

The infant *Moshe* is grown up in *Paroh's* house as *Batya-h's* son (Shemos 2:10).

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. the Akkadian story of SHARRUKIN, whom his mother had born in secret, thereafter put him in a basket made of reeds upon the Euphrates. Caught by a fisherman by the name of Akki, the child is grown up by the latter and becomes a gardiner. Later, however, the g-ddess *Ishtar* falls in love with him and makes him for a king: he is the first ruler of the so-called Akkadian dynasty in Agade 2334-2279 BCE. In Babylon, *Ishtar* is revered as the g-ddess of fertility, however, in Agade he is a bearded g-d of war named *Anunitum* (the same as in *Niniveh*). In the Shumerian Uruk, she is called *Innin*, and is the g-ddess of love. The Phenicians called her *Attart*, *Ashtarte*, *Ashtarot*, *Ashtoret*.

Cf. also the Greek mythological tradition about *Perseus*. Son of *Zeus* and *Danae*, he is put into an ark together with his mother and entrusted to the waters of the sea by her father, *Akrissios*, king of *Argos*, who knew it from an oracle that his grandson was to kill him. Nevertheless, they are saved by a certain *Diktys*. *Danae* is married by prince *Polydektes*, and her child brought up by him. After having brought for the latter the *Gorgo*-head, head of *Medusa*, *Perseus* saves *Andromede* - daughter of *Khepheos*, king of *Aithiopia*, son of *Belos*, brother of *Aigyptos* etc., and *Cassiopeia* - from being sacrificed to a monster. *Perseus* marries *Andromede*, one of their children will be *Perses*, ancestor of the Persian kings, who will inherit *Kepheos'* land. Later, *Perseus* effectively kills his grandfather although unintentionally.

The same *topos* reappears in the Roman mythological tradition also, in the story of *Romulus* and

**2371:** *Yaakov's* children are in *Mitzrayim* since 133 years.

At the age of three, *Moshe* takes the crown off of *Paroh's* head and puts it on his own.

*Bilom's* counsel: to get immediately rid of this child pretendent to the throne.

An Angel sent by the Eternal in the form of a minister, proposes a trial: living coal and diamonds should be put before the child. Does he choose the diamonds, the child really strives to the throne. If he chooses the living coals, he is not dangerous at all.<sup>1</sup>

As the infant *Moshe* wants to choose the flashing diamonds, the Angel *Gavriel* pushes his hand: *Moshe* seizes the living coal, takes it in his mouth thus burning his tongue and his lips also. Consequently, he will stutter (*Shemos* 4:10; שמו"ר א, כ"ו; סה"י).

*Paroh* entrusts him very early to manage the affairs of the royal household (קה"ר (פ"ט).

*Moshe rabainu* gets acquainted with the fact that the Jewish new-born boys had been drowned into the river following *Bilom* the sorcerer's counsel and that the latter wanted to have him also killed when he – as a child - took *Paroh's* crown. Consequently, he seeks to kill *Bilom*, who escapes together with his two sons, *Yanus* (ינוס) and *Yambrus* (ימברוס):<sup>2</sup> they flee to *Kikonos* (קיקנוס) / *Kokinos* (סה"י) / *Nikonos* (ניקנוס)<sup>3</sup>, king of *Kush* (סה"י).

*Moshe rabainu* obtains from *Paroh* the weekly day of rest for the *Bnai Yisroel*:

*Remus*, see 3153.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the episode in Hungarian Medieval Chronicles about the brothers Andrew I and Bela I, kings of Hungary: „if you value your life, choose the sword”.

<sup>2</sup> *Yanus*, *Yambrus*: both names sound evidently Latin. Besides, it is interesting to remember that the name *Ianus* reappears as one of the nicknames of *Yefes ben Noach* and even of *Noach* himself as well as of the follower of *Tzepo* as the king of the *Kittim* (Italy; see 1554, 1657 and 2365). In the apocryph „*Salomon's Testament*”, *Yanus* and *Yambrus* are the demons of the Sea of Reeds (see 2448). They reappear in the „*New Testament*” also, see 2*Timot.* 3:8.

<sup>3</sup> *Kikonos* / *Kokinos* / *Nikonos*: presumably variants of the same name following copist's error(s).

*Shabbos*, what they consecrate entirely to Torah-learning (שמו"ר א, ל"ב; ה, כ"ב; ) (סה"י).

In the same year, *Samlo*, the king of *Edom* dies after eighteen years of reign.

He is buried in his palace.

He is followed on the throne by a well-made, unmarried young man, *Shaul* from *Pessor* (פתור) on the river, *Bilom*'s town: he rules for forty years as the king of *Aisov*'s children.

**2384:** *Yaakov*'s children are in *Mitzrayim* since 146 years; *Moshe rabainu* is 16 years old.

Rome exists already since the time of the construction of the *Tower of Bovel* (צ"ד).<sup>1</sup>

**2386:** *Yaakov*'s children are in *Mitzrayim* since 148 years; *Moshe rabainu* is 18 years old.

*Moshe rabainu* goes to the province of *Goshen* to visit his parents. According to others, at that moment he was twenty.

One of the *Mitzri* overseers is beating a Jew before *Moshe rabainu* (*Shemos* 2:11): this was *Doson* (דטן), whose wife, *Shlomis bas Divri*, had been previously seduced by the *Mitzri* (שמו"ר א, ל"ג; ת"צ).

She was called *Shlomis* because she was greeting everyone too friendly, saying *shalom*.

She did so even to the *Mitzri* who came to take her husband to work. Encouraged by her behaviour, the *Mitzri* came later back when the husband was at work. Later, afraid of being discovered, he wants to kill the husband.

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<sup>1</sup> *Rome*: several aggadic traditions seem contradict the data given by the „*Tzemach Dovid*“. The Talmud (*bShabbos* 56b; *bSanhedrin* 21b) connects the founding of Rome to the marriage of *Shlomoh hamelech* with *Paroh Necho*'s daughter: „When *Shlomoh* married *Paroh*'s daughter, *Gabriel* descended and planted a reed in the sea, and it gathered a bank around it, on which the great city of Rome was built.“ This obviously took place several centuries later. See 2928.

At this moment did *Moshe rabainu* arrive and kill the *Mitzri* through pronouncing the Divine Name (שם המפרש; פדר"א מ"ח). Thereafter, he hides the carcass into the sand (*Shemos* 2:12).

The child born from the *Mitzri*, thus not belonging to either of the tribes, will later, in the wilderness, curse the Divine Name, and will consequently be sentenced to death and stoned (*Vayikroh* 24:10-11; ויקר"ר ל"ב, ה; ת"צ).

The next day, *Moshe rabainu* tries to intervene in the quarrel of *Doson* and *Avirom* (אבירם; *Shemos* 2:13; נדרים ט"ד): *Doson* wants to divorce his wife while *Avirom* - presumably *Doson*'s brother-in-law – tries to convince him not to do so. According to the Torah (*Devorim* 11:6), both of them are the children of *Eliov* (א-ליאב) *ben Ruvain*. According to others (פדר"א מ"ח), the Jew beaten by his fellow-Jew belonged to the family of *Kehos ben Laivi*.

Together, they denounce *Moshe rabainu* to *Paroh* (יל"ש ח"א קסו-קסז).

*Paroh* orders the execution of *Moshe rabainu* (*Shemos* 2:15).

However, the Eternal makes *Moshe rabainu*'s neck to become hard like marmor:

the sword cannot go through but finally kills the henchman (שמור"א, ל"ו; ת"צ).<sup>1</sup>

*Moshe rabainu* flees (*Shemos* 2:15): he goes to land of *Kush* where he becomes one of the counselors of king *Kikonos*.

*Kikonos*, king of *Kush*, goes to war against his revolting subjects, the *Children of the East* and *Aram*. He leaves his capital in the hands of *Bilom*, the sorcerer.

The king being absent, *Bilom*, the sorcerer occupies the throne: with his adepts, they fortify the capital surrounding it with walls and deep waterjumps, settling snakes on one side of the fortress.

*Kikonos*, on his way back from the war belaguers for nine years his own capital

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. the story of Hungarian Medieval chronicles about the execution of Ladislas Hunyadi, brother of King Mattias.

occupied and fortified by *Bilom*, the sorcerer.

*Moshe rabainu* is with *Kikonos*, in the king's camp (סה"י).

**2387:** *Yaakov's* children are in *Mitzrayim* since 149 years, *Moshe rabainu* is 19 years old.

The prophet *Achiyoh hashiloni* is born (סה"ד).

He is from the tribe of *Laivi* (ב"ב קכ"א).

He still knows *Amrom* (ב"ב קכ"א על פי ס"ע), thus he is supposed to be born before the latter died: the latest in the year 2392. According to the result of the different computations, he was born five years before *Amrom's* death – 2392 –, *i. e.* in the year 2387 (סה"ד).<sup>1</sup>

Although he is among those who come out from *Mitzrayim*, the Divine order deciding about the fate of the generation of the wilderness – those between twenty and sixty cannot enter *Eretz Canaan* - does not apply to him (*Bamidbor* 14:23). Consequently, at that moment, in 2449, he had to be at least 61 years old, *i. e.* to be born the latest in the year 2388.<sup>2</sup>

He lives more than 500 years.

**2390:** *Yaakov's* children are in *Mitzrayim* since 152 years, *Moshe rabainu* is 22 years old.

The land *Ashkenaz (Germania)* is named *Alemania* (אלמניא) after the king's name (צ"ד).

**2392:** *Yaakov's* children are in *Mitzrayim* since 154 years, *Moshe rabainu* is 24

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<sup>1</sup> This computation of the „*Seder haDoros*” is somewhat problematic. It counts 61 years backward from the *Exode* (2448 - 61 = 2387), although the abovementioned order (*Bamidbor* 14:23) had been pronounced during the summer of the year what followed the *Exode*, on the 9th of the month *Av* 2449. Accordingly, the 61 years have to be counted from this date backwards: 2449 - 61 = 2388!

<sup>2</sup> But *Achiyoh* was from the tribe of *Laivi*, and the order (being applied only to those between twenty and sixty) did not apply to the *leviim*, who entered into service at the age of thirty only. *RASHI* also says, in relation to the above Talmudic place, that the whole computation (to suppose the age of at least 61 years) is not necessary at all, as he was a *Laivi*, and consequently the order does not apply to them.

years old.

*Amrom* dies at the age of 137.

After *Amrom*'s death, *Yocheved* is married to *Eltzofon ben Parnoch* (אלצפן בן), having two children *Eldod* (אלדד) and *Maidod* (מידד;<sup>1</sup> רש"י; פדר"א; ר"ה).

According to others (תרגו"י במדבר י"א כ"ו), when *Amrom* divorces *Yocheved*, the latter is married by *Eltzofon*, and they beget *Eldod* and *Maidod*. Later *Amrom* remarries *Yocheved*,<sup>2</sup> who consequently gives birth to *Moshe rabainu*.

Again others say (תנחומא; במדב"ר ט"ו, י"ט; ר' בחיי בהעלותך; בעל הטורים; יל"ש), *Eldod* and *Maidod* were no brothers: according to this, *Eldod* is *Elidod ben Kislone* (קמור-ל; אלידד בן כסלון; *Bamidbor* 34:21), and *Maidod* is *Kemuel ben Shofton* (בן שפטון; *Bamidbor* 34:24), the *nessiim* of the tribes of *Binyomin* and *Efroim* respectively, who will be allowed to enter *Eretz Canaan*, and who will be leading the distribution of the lands.

**2395:** *Yaakov*'s children are in *Mitzrayim* since 157 years, *Moshe rabainu* is 27 years old.

In the 55th year of *Paroh*'s reign, in the ninth year of the belaguering of his own capital, *Kikonos* dies.<sup>3</sup>

His men elect for a king the faithful counselor of the late king: *Moshe rabainu* is

<sup>1</sup> ד"ה: the „*Seder haDoros*” has erroneously, through printer's error, ד"ה.

<sup>2</sup> Here, the „*Targum Yonassan*” seems to contradict the Torah, where (*Devorim* 24:4) it is forbidden to remarry one's divorced wife in case she was in the meantime someone else's wife. However, all this happened still before the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai!

<sup>3</sup> Although the story related by the „*Sefer haYoshor*” happened in the Land *Kush*, and speaks about a revolt led by *Bilom* in the absence of the ruling king, it reminds in several details the expelling of the *Hyksos* from *Mitzrayim*. It takes several years for the uprising which started in Thebes in Upper-Egypt to occupy the capital of the *Hyksos*, *Avaris*, situated in the Delta. TA-AA SEKENENREH II (1573-1558 BCE; 17th Dynasty), who ruled in Thebes as a vassal of the *Hyksos*, and who effectively started the revolt, dies (possibly he was killed), and his son, YAHMES I (Ahmes, *Amosis Nebpehtireh*; 1552-1527 BCE; 18th Dynasty) expells definitively the *Hyksos*. He is the first *Paroh* of the 18th Dynasty, and also of the New Empire. Would this connect the *Bnai Yisroel*'s stay in *Mitzrayim* to the *Hyksos*?



the new king of the Land *Kush*. He rules for forty years (י"ל"ש ח"א קס"ח).

He overcomes the revolting *Bilom*: *Moshe rabainu* orders his soldiers to catch as many young storks as they can. During three days, the storks does not receive to eat. When they are let free near the field settled and covered with snakes, the hungry young storks devoure all the snakes, thus making free the way to the fortress.

*Bilom* the sorcerer, together with his two sons and eight brothers flee back to *Paroh* to *Mitzrayim*: they are the oracles-sorcerers (חרטמים) mentioned in the Torah.

*Moshe rabainu* has to marry officially the widow of the late *Kikonos*, *Adoniyoh* (אדוני-ה), but the marriage is not consumpted (מלבי"ם).

Upon hearing the news about *Kikonos*' death, *Aram* and the *Children of the East* stand up in revolt: they try to throw down the yoke of *Kush*.

However, *Moshe rabainu*, with his *Kushi* army of about 30.000 men, defeats the revolt, and reinforces taxes (סה"י).

An earthquake takes place in *Bovel*: lots of peoples die (צ"ד).

**2406:** *Yaakov*'s children are in *Mitzrayim* since 168 years, *Moshe rabainu* is 38 years old, he rules over the land *Kush* since 11 years.

*Yehosuah* (יהושע) is born (צ"ד). According to others (ראב"ע שמות ל"ג, י"א), he was born in the year 2392. According to the latter tradition, *Yehoshua*, who lives 110 years, rules as a Judge after *Moshe rabainu*'s death for only fourteen years (seven years the *Kivush* + seven years the distribution of the lands).  $2488 + 14 = 2502$ ;  $2502 - 110 = 2392$ , what means, he was born in 2392. Again others say, he was born in 2408.

**2409:** *Yaakov*'s children are in *Mitzrayim* since 171 years, *Moshe rabainu* is 41 years old, he rules over the land *Kush* since 14 years.

*Kolev ben Yefune* (כלב בן יפונה) is born (cf. *Yehosuah* 14:7). According to others (צ"ד), he was born in 2410.<sup>1</sup>

According to the *TANACH* (*Yehoshua* 14:7), *Kolev* is forty years old when they send the Spies. According to the data given by the Talmud in relation to *Kolev*'s descendants (סנהדרין ס"ט), the *Bnai Yisroel* made the *Mishkan* in the first year of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*, *Moshe rabainu* erected it in the second year and in the same year he sent the Spies to spy *Eretz Canaan*. In reality, however, the making of the *Mishkan*, its erection and the sending of the Spies all took place in the **calendar** year, in the year 2449. Consequently, *Kolev* was born in 2409 and not in 2410. And this also means that *Betzalel* is in reality fourteen years old – or at least he is in his fourteenth -, when he directs the construction of the *Mishkan*:  $10 + 8 + 8 + 13 = 39$ ;  $10 + 8 + 8 + 14 = 40$ .

He is *Kolev ben Chetzron ben Peretz ben Yehudoh* (כלב בן חצרון; 1.*Divrai haYomim* 2:9).

He is a half-brother of the mother of *Osniel ben Kenaz*, the first *Judge*, and also the father-in-law of the latter (*Shoftim* 1:13; סוטה י"ב).

He is called *Yefune*, because he turned away (פנה) from the Spies (סוטה י"א).

When his first wife, *Azubah* (עזובה), dies, *Kolev* gets remarried. His second wife is *Efros* (אפרת; 1.*Divrai haYomim* 2:19). In reality, both names are of the same person: *Miryam* who, because of her sickness, looked like if she were dead. When getting married, she became as rejuvenated (פדר"א מ"ה; סוטה י"ב).

*Kolev* is ten years old, when his son *Chur* (חור) is born, the latter will be killed by the *erev rav* at the *Golden Calf*. On his turn, *Chur* is eight years old when his son, *Kolev*'s grandson, *Uri* (אורי) is born. Also at the age of eight, the latter

<sup>1</sup> According to my exemplar of the „*Seder haDoros*”. My exemplar of the „*Tzemach Dovid*” has 2406, but it has to be considered a copist's error.

also begets a son, *Kolev*'s great-grandson, *Betzalel* (בצל-ל), who will be the „chief-architect” of the *Mishkan* at the age of only fourteen years (1.*Divrai haYomim* 2:19-20; סנהדרין ס"ט).

According to others (תרגומ"י דה"א ד, י"ח), *Kolev* also marries *Paroh*'s daughter, *Batya-h*, who converted herself to Judaism. According to this, he is *Mored* (מרד; ‘revolted against the *Spies*’) mentioned in the *TANACH* (1.*Divrai haYomim* 4:18) as *Bitya-h*'s husband.<sup>1</sup>

**2411:** *Yaakov*'s children are in *Mitzrayim* since 173 years, *Moshe rabainu* is 43 years old, he rules over the land *Kush* since 16 years.

After forty years of reign, *Shaul*, king of *Edom* dies.

His successor, *Baal Chonon*, the son of *Achbor* (בעל חנן בן אכבור), rules over *Edom* for 38 years (סה"י).<sup>2</sup>

He is the only one among the eight kings of *Edom* mentioned in the Torah whose birthplace is not given: as he had a lot of enemies, he did not live on one place but hiding himself in one town after the other (בעל הטורים). According to others (רמב"ן), he was originally from *Shaul*'s town, that is why the Torah does not mention his birth-place. Accordingly, *Chonon* is also the name of a place: he was ruling there before being elected for the king of *Edom*.

In the same year, *Angias*, king of Africa, dies. He is buried in his palace.

He is followed on the throne by his son, *Ezdrubal* (סה"י).

**2413:** *Yaakov*'s children are in *Mitzrayim* since 175 years, *Moshe rabainu* is 45 years old, he rules over the land *Kush* since 18 years.

<sup>1</sup> According to the „*Seder haDoros*”, this can be find in chapter 45 of „*Pirkai deRabbi Eliezer*”. However, in my exemplar of the latter work, there is no mention of it.

<sup>2</sup> The data of the „*Sefer haYoshor*” is presumably a copist's error, and has to be emended to 35 (ל"ה) instead of (ל"ח):  $2411 + 38 = 2449$ , what would mean already after the *Exode*, while the events related here happened all before it. If we emend 38 to 35,  $2411 + 35 = 2446$ , thus two years before the *Exode*!

Athens is the city of wisdom (צ"ד).<sup>1</sup>

**2417:** *Yaakov's* children are in *Mitzrayim* since 179 years, *Moshe rabainu* is 49 years old, he rules over the land *Kush* since 22 years.

*Yoniosh* (יאניוס = *Yanini-Yanush*, cf. 2,365), king of the *Kittim*, dies.

He is followed by *Lationus* (לטיאנוס)<sup>2</sup> for 45 years.

He orders the construction of a huge tower for himself, with a palace inside (סה"י).

**2418:** *Yaakov's* children are in *Mitzrayim* since 180 years, *Moshe rabainu* is 50 years old, he rules over the land *Kush* since 23 years.

*Yignon* (יגנון) from the tribe of *Efroim* pretends that the Eternal appeared to him and entrusted him to lead the *Bnai Yisroel* out of *Mitzrayim* (פדר"א מ"ח).

He pretended that the 400 years of slavery promised by the Eternal to *Avrohom* are to be counted from the *Bris bain habсорim* (2,018), and not from *Yitzchok's* birth (2,048).

30.000 members of the tribe of *Efroim* flee from *Mitzrayim* (שמו"ר כ, י"א; סה"י).

According to others (תרגו"י שמות י"ג, י"ז; תרגו"י דהי"א ז, כ"א; פדר"א מח; מכילתא ) 200.000: they are the warriors of the tribe of *Efroim* mentioned in the *TANACH* (*Tehilim* 78:9; רש"י).

*Yehoshua* does not go with them: he stays with *Moshe rabainu* (רוקח).

Naturally, they do not go towards the Sea of Reeds, following the ulterior route of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*, but advance on the Mediterranean coast, towards the Land of the *Pelishtim* (תרגו"י דהי"א ז, כ"א).

<sup>1</sup> This means somewhere in the fourteenth century BCE!

<sup>2</sup> *Lationus*: presumably he is *Latinus*, king of *Laurentum*, whose daughter, *Lavinia*, will be married by *Aineias*, after the latter defeats her fiancé, *Turnus*, king of the *Rutuli*. He gave his name to the Latins and Latium. Here again, evidently, two stories are intermingled: that of *Aineias*, legendary ancestor of the Romans who flees from Troy and is on search for a new homeland, and that of the Punic wars, although the latter took place more than thousand years after *Aineias's* adventures!

They are all slain in the battle with the *Pelishtim* at *Gas*: their bones remain unburied on the battlefield (סה"י). According to others (פדר"א מ"ח), they are slain by the *Mitzris*.

They will be ressurected by the prophet *Yechezkel* (תרגו"י שמות י"ג, י"ז).

Only ten messengers are able to regain *Mitzrayim* (שמו"ר כ, י).

The Eternal does not defend them because

- 1./ they have transgressed the oath sworn to *Yossef*, to carry along his bones when leaving *Mitzrayim* (*Beraishis* 50:25);
- 2./ contrary to the words of *Yossef*, their intention was to put *themselves* an end to slavery and, finally,
- 3./ they counted the time of Redemption, relying themselves on their own calculations instead of waiting that the Eternal should take them out of *Mitzrayim* (מכילתא פתיחתא בשלח; לק"ט; רש"י תהילים ע"ח, ט; רוקח).

*Efroim* mourns for his fallen grandchildren.

Later, he begets a new son, *Berioh* (בריעה), 'a bad thing happened in my house'; 1.*Divrai haYomim* 7:22-23).

According to certain opinions (פדר"א מ"ח), slavery really begins only after the „Exode” of the *Bnai Efroim*, thus – contrary to the generally accepted tradition - , it lasts only thirty year, what means that the *Bnai Yisroel* live for 180 years in safety in *Mitzrayim*.

**2419:** *Yaakov*'s children are in *Mitzrayim* since 181 years, *Moshe rabainu* is 51 years old, he rules over the land *Kush* since 24 years.

*Kolev*'s son, *Chur* is born (סנהדרין ס"ט).

In the same year, in the third year of his reign, *Lationus*, king of the *Kittim*, attacks with a hugh fleet *Ezdrubal*, king of Africa.

He destroys the aqueduct constructed earlier by *Angias* to conduct water from the

land of the *Kittim* until Africa.

In the war which ends with the complete defeat of the Africans, *Ezdrubal* is also killed.

The latter's daughter, *Ushpizyonah* (אשפיזיונה), world-famous for her beauty, is taken by *Lationus* to the land of the *Kittim*.

After *Ezdrubal*'s death, the Africans elect his brother, *Anivel* (אניבל),<sup>1</sup> for a king.

He orders the construction of a huge fleet, sails to the land of the *Kittim*, and subjugates them.

After eighteen years, he returns home to Africa, and rules in safety (סה"י).

**2427:** *Yaakov*'s children are in *Mitzrayim* since 189 years, *Moshe rabainu* is 59 years old, he rules over the land *Kush* since 32 years.

*Uri ben Chur ben Kolev* is born (סנהדרין ט"ט).

His son, *Betzalel*, will later construct the *Mishkan*, the Tabernacle of the wilderness.

**2434:** *Yaakov*'s children are in *Mitzrayim* since 196 years, *Moshe rabainu* is 66 years old, he rules over the land *Kush* since 39 years.

For afflicting the *Bnai Yisroel*, the Eternal strikes *Paroh* with leprosy which covers his entire body.

Following his counselors, he orders to kill Jewish new-borns – 150 every morning and again 150 every evening -, to take a bath in their blood (שמו"ר א, ) (מ"א). According to others (סה"י), every day a child, altogether 375, what means

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<sup>1</sup> *Anivel*: Hannibal (ca. 247 BCE – 183 BCE), general and statesman of Carthago during the second Punic War, eldest son of Hamilcar Barcas. In 218 BCE, he crosses the Alps with his army and attacks Italy. Finally, in 202 BCE, he is defeated by Scipio at Zama in Numidy, South-West of Carthago. Afraid of being delivered to the Romans, he flees to Syria to ANTIOKHOS III, than to Bithynie to PRUSIAS, finally he commits suicide. I mentioned already that the chronological problems are due to the intermingling of the stories of *Aineias* and the Punic Wars.

that for about a year.

*Paroh* suffers from the leprosy for ten years<sup>1</sup> and, as he is unwilling to change his attitude, but afflicting every time more the *Bnai Yisroel*, the Eternal changes leprosy for boils and even adds intestinal sicknesses (ס"י).

**2435:** *Yaakov*'s children are in *Mitzrayim* since 197 years, *Moshe rabainu* is 67 years old, he rules over the land *Kush* since 40 years.

*Moshe rabainu* is deposited of the throne following the accusations of the *Kushi* queen: they did not consumpt the marriage, he does not worship the deities of the country, and the precedent king has a son (a heir to the throne of royal lineage).

Nevertheless, the *Kushis* remember what they can thank to *Moshe rabainu*.

Consequently, they send him away with great respect and rich presents (ס"י).

His follower is *Kikonos*' son, *Monachris* (מנכריס; סה"י). According to others (יל"ש ח"א קס"ח), his name is *Muncham* (מנכמ).

*Moshe rabainu* is unwilling to return to *Mitzrayim* even after forty years of exile: he is afraid of *Paroh*. He rather goes to *Midyon* (*Shemos* 2:15; סה"י).

*Yisro* (יתרו) – who escaped to *Midyon* from *Mitzrayim* just before *Moshe rabainu*'s birth and was at that moment called *Yeser* (יתר) or *Reuel* (רעו-ל) – was the high priest of *Midyon* for a long period, but as he became annoyed of idol-worshipping, he became excommunicated by the inhabitants of the country (שמו"ר א, ל"ח; ת"צ).

*Yisro* is mentioned in the *TANACH* by seven different names (מכילתא פ יתרו):

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. 2340, where it is said that the „new king” rules for 94 years.  $2340 + 94 = 2434$ . However, *Molol*'s son – according to the „*Sefer haYoshor*” – ascends the throne only after the ten years of sickness of his father, and rules for only four years! Consequently, *Molol* is supposed to have ruled not for 94, but for 104 years, as the „*Sefer haYoshor*” writes explicitly that it was he to designate his successor. As the „*Sefer haYoshor*” gives generally chronological allusions to the events related – in which year of the *Bnai Yisroel*'s staying in *Mitzrayim* did it happen – it is difficult to explain the continuous inexactitudes in relation to the subsequent Pharaohs, if not we consider inconsistencies due to the error(s) of copist(s).

- ▶ *Reuel* (*Shemos* 2:18),
- ▶ *Yeser* (*Shemos* 4:18),
- ▶ *Yisro* (*Shemos* 18:1),
- ▶ *Chovev* (חובב; *Shoftim* 4:11),
- ▶ *Chever* (חבר; *Shoftim* 5:24),
- ▶ *Kaini* (קיני; *Shoftim* 1:16),
- ▶ *Putiel* (פוטי-ל; *Shemos* 6:25).

According to certain opinions (ספרי בהעלותך י, כ"ט), *Reuel* was *Yisro's* father (cf. *Bamidbor* 10:29).

*Moshe Rabainu* defends *Yisro's* seven daughters from the other sheperds at the well, and gives to drink to their flocks (*Shemos* 2:16-17). *Eliezer* also met *Rivkoh* at the well when she brought her father's flocks to drink (*Beraishis* 24:15).

*Yisro* invites *Moshe rabainu* to his house (*Shemos* 2:20).

When *Moshe rabainu* tells that he has fled from *Mitzrayim*, *Yisro* – afraid of *Paroh* – imprisons him for ten years (יל"ש ח"א קס"ז).

During this ten years, one of *Yisro's* daughters, *Tzipporah* (צפוררה), brings secretly food for *Moshe rabainu*.

*Betzalel ben Uri ben Chur ben Kolev* is born.

He will construct the *Mishkan* at the age of thirteen (סנהדרין ט"ט).<sup>1</sup>

**2438:** *Yaakov's* children are in *Mitzrayim* since 200 years, *Moshe rabainu* is 70 years old.

*Rochov* (רחב) is born.<sup>2</sup>

From the age of ten, she is a famous harlot for forty years.

Later, she converts to Judaism and will be married to *Yehoshua*.

<sup>1</sup> In reality, in his fourteenth year, see above.

<sup>2</sup> see 2488



**2441:** *Yaakov's* children are in *Mitzrayim* since 203 years, *Moshe rabainu* is 73 years old.

When the royal messengers tell to *Paroh* that – upon hearing the news about his sickness – the *Bnai Yisroel* start to loosen discipline (*Shemos* 2:23), he decides to go, despite of his sickness, to visit the land *Goshen*.

On the way, his horses become wild and throw the king's chariot into the abyss: his dangerous injuries are his punishment inflicted upon him by the Eternal for his wickedness.

Following the counsel of his wife and the noblemen of the country, he designates his successor: instead of his mental defective first-born, he designates his handicapped (*manikin*) but very intelligent second son, *Adikos* (אדיקס) / *Adikom* (אדיקם)<sup>1</sup>.

*Adikos'* wife is the ten years old *Gedidoh bas Avilot* (גדידה בת אבילט), who gives birth to four sons.

Later, he marries three more wives who give him eight more boys and three daughters (סה"י); this means he has altogether twelve sons, cf. *Yaakov's* twelve sons.

**2444:** *Yaakov's* children are in *Mitzrayim* since 206 years, *Moshe rabainu* is 76 years old.

*Paroh* dies (*Shemos* 2:23).

Because of his sickness, his body is so extremely rotted that people are unable to embalm him, they are unable to stay near to his carcass because of the horrible smell.

He is buried into the royal grave in *Tzoan*.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> One of the two forms is presumably due to a copist's error, interchanging א and א.

<sup>2</sup> In 1939, in *Taanis*, the French Egyptologist, Pierre Montet, discovered a series of royal graves (among others that of OSORKON II, SHESHONK II, TAKELOT II). However, these graves are of a later date, from

According to his will, he is followed on the throne by the twenty years old *Adikos* (סה"י).

Henceforward, he is called – according to the customs of the country – *Paroh*, the same as his father was.

Because of his height, the people in the royal court give him a nickname in the *Mitzri* language: *Ovuz* (אבוז; סה"י).

According to others (יוחסין), his name is *Talmo* (תלמא / טלמא; צ"ד).<sup>1</sup> Again others say (שה"ק), *Kinkori* (קינקורי) or *Amosai* (אמסאי).

*Yetzias Mitzrayim*, the *Exode* of the *Bnai Yisroel* from *Mitzrayim* will take place under his reign.<sup>2</sup>

He afflicts the Jews with even more wickedness as his father did:

- he designates Jewish overseers (שוטרים) over the *Bnai Yisroel*;
- the quantity of the bricks to be made daily is established;
- in case the Jews do not make enough brick, they wall in as many Jewish newborns as many bricks they failed to make (פדר"א מ"ה; שוח"ט כ"ב, י"ח): altogether 270 Jewish children are murdered in this way. According to others (סה"י), the idea had still been conceived by the precedent *Paroh*, in the time around *Moshe rabainu*'s birth (2368), *Adikos* only renews it: he did not learn

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the so-called Late-Period, of the Lybian Pharaohs (22th and 23rd Dynasties).

<sup>1</sup> *Talmo*: cf. the names of Egypt's Hellenistic kings, the *Ptolemaides*.

<sup>2</sup> Earlier opinions (e. g. MAHLER, *Jüdische Chronologie*..., p. 120) identified the Pharaoh of the Exode with YAHMES I (Ahmose, *Amosis*, Nebpehtire; 1552-1527 BCE; 18th Theban Dynasty) who expelled the *Hyksos* and, through this, established the New Kingdom; or with AMENMESSE MENMIRE (after 1213 - before 1186 BCE; 19th Dynasty) who defeated the Lybians. DUBNOV and others, recently John BRIGHT (referring to certain archeological evidences: there have been excavated in Palestine cities destroyed by fire in the 13th century BCE) pretend the Exode took place during the reign of RAMSES II (1290-1224 BCE) who fought with the Hittites for Syria and Palestine (the battle of Qadesh, repartition of the discussed territories). According to them, the construction of *Pisom* (*Taanis*) and *Ramses* mentioned in the Torah and also the latter's name is an allusion of RAMSES' constructions at Abydos, Abu-Simbel (the sanctuaries carved into the rock) and Thebai (*Ramesseum*).

According to the rendering of the traditional Jewish chronology, *Nissan* 2448 would coincide with the year 1312 BCE, during the reign of HOREMHEB Jeserheperure (1334-1306 BCE; the last Pharaoh of the

anything of the plagues inflicted upon his father.

Here also, Divine providence can well be seen: only those children are waaled in who would later revolted against the Eternal (תנחומא תשא כ"ד; סנהדרין ק"א).

**2445:** *Yaakov's* children are in *Mitzrayim* since 207 years, *Moshe rabainu* is 77 years old.

After ten years, *Yisro (Reuel)* lets *Moshe rabainu* out of jail.

After his liberation, *Moshe rabainu* finds in *Yisro's* garden and pulls out of the ground the saphir staff what has been given to *Odom horishon* by the Eternal still in the *Gan of Eden*. The staff later came to *Shes*, than to *Avrohom* and, finally, to *Yossef* in *Mitzrayim*. After the latter's death, *Yisro* took it with himself, as he knew it from the stars that it was intended for the redeemer of the *Bnai Yisroel*, only he will be able to pull it out of the ground (פדר"א מ; יל"ש ח"א) (קס"ז).<sup>1</sup>

Later, the staff will arrive to *Dovid hamelech* and, consequently, to the following kings of *Yehudoh*.

The staff weights forty *sooh*, the initials of the ten plagues (דצ"ך עד"ש) (באח"ב) and the Eternal's name are carved on it (יל"ש ח"א קפ"א).

At the age of 77, *Moshe rabainu* gets married in *Midyon*: his wife is *Tzipporah*, *Yisro's* daughter (*Shemos* 2:21).

Until then, *Yisro* had refused all of his daughter's suitors: he only wanted to give her hand to the one who is able to pull out the staff (פדר"א מ; סה"י).

*Tzipporah* gives birth to two sons: *Gershom* (גרשם, 'I am a stranger in a foreign land': although everyone is worshipping idols, I serve the Eternal; מכילתא יתרו) and *Eliezer* (אליעזר, 'the Eternal helped me'; *Shemos* 2:22).

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18th Dynasty who came to the power as a general of the army).

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the *Excalibur*, king Arthur's legendary sword, and also Attila's sword in the Hungarian chronicler's tradition.

Following *Yisro*'s request, one of the two boys is not circumcised: the opinions differ about whether the elder (תרגו"י שמות ד, כ"ד; סה"י) or the younger son remains uncircumcised (רש"י שמות ד, כ"ד על פי מדא"ג י"ח, א).

**2446:** *Yaakov*'s children are in *Mitzrayim* since 208 years, *Moshe Rabainu* is 78 years old.

*Baal Chonon ben Achbor*, the king of *Edom* dies.<sup>1</sup>

He is followed by *Hadar* (הדר) from *Pou*, from the land *Aram*: he rules for 48 years over *Edom* (סה"י).<sup>2</sup>

**2447:** *Yaakov*'s children are in *Mitzrayim* since 209 years, *Moshe rabainu* is 79 years old.

● **Nissan 15, Pessach** (ר' בחיי; ש"ע; ש"ק): *Moshe rabainu* is grazing the flocks of his father-in-law and, in search for convenient grazing lands, after forty days of wandering, he finds himself at the foot of Mount *Sinai* (סני; *Shemos* 3:1): the mountain comes across him (מדה"ג ג, א; זוהר ח"ב כ"א). According to others (סה"י), he finds himself at the foot of the Eternal's mountain the Mount *Choreb* (חורב) when running after a stray kid of a goat.

From the burning bush (סנה; *Shemos* 3:2-5) the Eternal calls him with *Amrom*'s voice: *Moshe rabainu* understands, his father has to be dead, as the Eternal does not associate His name with the names of livings (שמו"ר ג, א; ת"צ).

The Eternal sends *Moshe rabainu* back to *Mitzrayim*, to lead the *Bnai Yisroel* out (*Shemos* 3:10).

As *Moshe rabainu* is unwilling to accept the commission (*Shemos* 3:11, 4:13), The Eternal tries to convince him during seven days (the seven days of *Pessach*; ס"ע). Finally, as a punishment (*Shemos* 4:14), He takes away the priesthood

<sup>1</sup> See 2411.

<sup>2</sup> My exemplar of the „*Sefer haYoshor*” has here *Hadad* – presumably a copist's error through interchanging the letters ח and ד – who was an earlier king of *Edom*.

(זבחים ק"כ) of *Moshe rabainu* and gives it to *Aharon* (כהונה).

The Eternal designates *Aharon* as an „interpreter” for *Moshe rabainu* because of the latter’s defective speech (*Shemos* 4:14-16; מדה"ג ד, י"ג).

*Moshe rabainu* returns to *Midyon* (*Shemos* 4:18).

The Eternal appears to *Moshe rabainu* in *Midyon*, and orders him to return to *Mitzrayim* (*Shemos* 4:19).

*Moshe rabainu*, together with his wife and children (*Shemos* 4:20), departs at the end of the month *Nissan*.

On the way, an Angel tries to kill *Moshe rabainu* (*Shemos* 4:24). Therefore, *Tzipporah* circumcizes her uncircumcized son (*Shemos* 4:25) with a knife or – according to others (סה"י) – with a sharp stone.

*Aharon* goes across his brother until the Mount *Sinai* (*Shemos* 4:27): they return together to *Mitzrayim*.

*Aharon* relates to the *Bnai Yisroel* all what the Eternal had said to *Moshe rabainu* at Mount *Sinai*.

*Moshe rabainu* on his turn presents to them all the signs what the Eternal had given to him (*Shemos* 4:30). However, they believe in the truth of his mission even without the signs: he is justified by the use of the words *pokod pokadti* (פקד פקדתי) (*Shemos* 3:16; *Shemos* 4:31; שמור ה, ט"ז; ת"צ).

*Moshe rabainu*, *Aharon* and the *Elders* (זקנים) go together to *Paroh*’s palace (*Shemos* 5:1).

„And *Moshe* was eighty years old, and *Aharon* eighty three years old, when they spoke to *Paroh*” (*Shemos* 7:7): if he dies at the age of 120, and spends 40 years in the wilderness after *Yetzias Mitzrayim*, he has to be 80 years old at the moment of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*. However, *Moshe rabainu* was born on the 7th of the month *Adar*, thus he was 79 on the 7th of *Adar* of the year 2447.

Consequently, when he goes for the first time to *Paroh* at the end of *Nissan*,<sup>1</sup> he is already in the eightieth year of his life.

When they remark the Jews tortured and killed, the *Elders* turn back.

Their punishment: during the Giving of the Torah (*Matan Torah*) only *Moshe rabainu* can ascend the Mount *Sinai*, the *Elders* has to stand downstairs (שמו"ר (ה), י"ז).

*Paroh's* palace has 400 gates. All the gates are guarded by wild beasts which however become friendly upon seeing *Moshe rabainu's* staff (יל"ש ח"א קע"ו), and they even accompany him to *Paroh's* throne (סה"י).

*Moshe rabainu* fled from *Mitzrayim* 61 years earlier, in 2386. Therefore, *Paroh* does not recognize him and he does not unveil who he really is,<sup>1</sup> he only tells that he is the Eternal's messenger (*Shemos* 5:1, 5:3).

*Paroh* orders them to come back the next day. He also calls to the palace *Bilom* the sorcerer with his two sons and all the sorcerers and star-gazers of *Mitzrayim*.

The next day, *Moshe rabainu* and *Aharon* return to the palace, and transmit to *Paroh* the Eternal's message: „Let my son go, that he may serve me” (*Shemos* 4:23; סה"י).

With *Aharon's* staff, they perform the signs: the staff thrown down to the ground becomes a serpent and swallows all the staffs of the magicians which also became staffs, than it returns to a staff and swallows all the staffs of the sorcerers without changing the size (*Shemos* 7:10-12; שמו"ר ט, ג-ד).

*Paroh* pretends that the Eternal does not figure in his books containing all the deities of all the nations, consequently he is not supposed to listen to Him (*Shemos* 5:2; שמו"ר ה, א; מדה"ג ה, א).

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<sup>1</sup> See below.

*Moshe rabainu* insists *Paroh* should let the *Bnai Yisroel* leave for three days to bring sacrifices to their G-d, the Eternal (*Shemos* 5:3): since they are in *Mitzrayim*, they were unable to do so because of the idol-worshipping surrounding (ס"ה").

*Paroh* – who arrogantly pretends that he as a g-d created himself and also the river Nile – does not let the *Bnai Yisroel* go (ס"ה").

*Paroh* makes the situation of the *Bnai Yisroel* even more difficult:

- ▶ as *Moshe rabainu* and *Aharon* belong to the tribe of *Laivi*, he orders this tribe should also work;
- ▶ he orders the *Mitzri* overseers should not give straw to make the bricks. Instead, everyone should collect the straw necessary for the bricks (*Semos* 5:7), without diminishing the quantity of bricks to be made daily (*Shemos* 5:8);
- ▶ contrary to what he himself authorized previously, now he orders the *Bnai Yisroel* should work on the weekly day of rest (*Shabbos*) also (שמו"ר ה, כ"ב).

*Moshe rabainu* returns his wife and children to his father-in-law, and stays together with them in *Midyon* for the following three months (ר' בחיי). According to others (שמו"ר ה, כ"ב-כ"ג; ת"צ), for six months. Again others say (ס"ה"), when they had met at the Mount *Sinai*, *Aharon* expressed his discontent about *Moshe rabainu's* *Midyoni* wife, and this was the reason why he sent her back to *Midyon*.

With making their work even more hard and with *Moshe rabainu's* absence, the Eternal wants to test the *Bnai Yisroel*: He wants to test the strength of their confidence in Him (שמו"ר ה, כ"ב-כ"ג; ת"צ).

After three months, *Moshe rabainu* returns to *Mitzrayim* (ר' בחיי). According to others (שמו"ר ה, כ"ד), after six months.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Yossef* and his brothers.

*Aharon* again goes across him.

When gets informed – from the complaints of *Dosson* and *Avirom* (*Shemos* 5:20) and from the complaints of the *Bnai Yisroel* – about the always harshening situation of his brethren, *Moshe rabainu* complains to the Eternal (*Shemos* 5:22-23).

His punishment: it will be *Yehoshua* and not he who will lead the *Bnai Yisroel* to occupy *Eretz Canaan* (שמו"ר ו, כ"ז, ע"י).

*Moshe rabainu* is permitted to liberate a Jewish child sentenced to be walled in: this is *Micho* who will participate in the making of the *Golden Calf* and who will, in the time of the *Judges*, erect an idol in *Eretz Yisroel* (*Shoftim* 17; תנחומא). According to others, he saves two children: *Dosson* and *Avirom* who will stand at head of every revolt against the Eternal and against *Moshe rabainu*.

*Moshe rabainu* transmits the Eternal's message to the *Bnai Yisroel*: fourfold redemption for *Paroh's* four decrees:

- ▶ „and I will bring you out (והוצאתי) from under the burdens of the Egyptians”: because they were forced to work hard for the *Mitzriim*;
- ▶ „and I will rid you (והיצלתי) from their slavery”: because their new-borns were drawn into the river;
- ▶ „and I will redeem you (וגאלתי) with an outstretched arm, and with great judgments” (*Shemos* 6:6): because the children of the *Bnai Yisroel* were slain that *Paroh* should take his bath in their blood;
- ▶ „And I will take you (ולקחתי) to me for a people” (*Shemos* 6:7): because they stopped giving them straw for making the bricks.

*Pessach* by night, during the *Seder*, we thank the Eternal for the fourfold redemption with drinking four cups of wine (שמו"ר ו, ה; מדה"ג ו, ו).



► „And I will bring you (וְהֵבֵאתִי) in to the land, concerning which I swore to give it to Avrohom, to Yitzchok and to Yaakov” (*Shemos* 6:8): the fifth cup of wine prepared in honour of *Eliyohu hanovi*, messenger of the final redemption. *Moshe rabainu* urges the *Bnai Yisroel* they should stop worshipping the *Mitzri* idols, however they do not follow him (*Shemos* 6:9; ט, מדה"ג ו, ט).

### 6.7. The Ten Plagues

**2447 – 2448:** the Ten Plagues.

The Eternal strikes the *Mitzriim* with ten plagues because *Paroh* negates the existence of the Eternal who created the world with ten utterances ( צרור המור ) (בא), and also because *Avrohom* – ancestor of the *Bnai Yisroel* – went through all of his ten tests (י"ל"ש ה"א קפ"ב).

The plagues strike only the *Mitzriim* not the *Bnai Yisroel*: these are ten miracles for the *Bnai Yisroel* in *Mitzrayim* (אבות ה, ד).

*Mitzrayim*'s sentence is twelve months: the ten plagues take place during the twelve months preceding *Yetzias Mitzrayim*. According to the Torah (*Shemos* 5:7), the *Bnai Yisroel* do not receive any more straw for the making of the bricks, they have to go themselves to glean. As straw can be found in the month *Iyyar* and they go out in *Nissan*; from *Iyyar* to *Nissan* there are twelve months (תוי"ט עדיות ב, י).

*Moshe rabainu* goes to *Mitzrayim* to speak to *Paroh* at the end of the month *Nissan*, thereafter he returns to *Midyon* for three months: consequently the first plague (*Blood*) starts on the first day of the month *Av*; in *Elul* the *Frogs*, in *Tishrai* the *Lice* (starting on the 1st of *Tishrai* 2448, on *Rosh hashonoh*, at the same moment, forced labour ends for the *Bnai Yisroel*; ר"ה י, in *Cheshvan* the *Wild Beasts*, in *Kislaiv* the *Pestilence*, in *Taives* the *Boils*, in *Shvat* the *Hail*, in

*Adar* the *Locusts* (but it is also possible that these came in the month *Nissan*, as the trees are buding at this time of the year<sup>1</sup>), in *Nissan* the *Darkness* for six days, then a break for a week, consequently, during the night of the 14th to the 15th, the *Slaying of the Firstborn* (ר' בהיי). According to others (רמב"ן), the first plague (*Blood*) takes place already in *Nissan* (it was a Thursday; פדר"א ט); thereafter *Moshe rabainu* returns to *Midyon* for three months; on the 1st of *Av* come the *Frogs*, in *Elul* the *Lice*, in *Tihسرائ* the *Wild Beasts*, in *Cheshvan* the *Pestilence*, in *Kislaiv* the *Boils*, in *Taives* the *Hail*, in *Shvat* the *Locusts*, in *Adar* the *Darkness*, and on the night of the 14th to the 15th of *Nissan* the *Slaying of the Firstborn*. Again others say (ס"ע), the plagues started in the month *Iyyar*, as straw can be found in this month, see above. Again others say (שמו"ר ה, כ"ב-כ"ג; ), the plagues could not start before *Tishrai*, as *Moshe rabainu* returned to *Midyon* for six months.

Every plague is preceded by a waiting period of three weeks, the plagues themselves (with the exception of the last one) endure for a week (*Shemos* 7:25). According to others (שמו"ר ט, י"ב), things happened just in the opposite way: after a waiting period of one week, the plague endures three weeks. Again others say, the waiting period between two plagues lasted more than thirty days. Again others say (ר' בהיי), two plagues are preceded by a warning while the third one not, thereafter again two plagues are preceded by a warning and the third one not, and so on.

Every plague is accompanied (as by a „side-plague”) by an epidemic what kills many *Mitzriim* (שמו"ר י, ו).

Every plague consists in reality of four parts, striking the *Mitzriim* in four different ways, what means that in reality we can speak about  $4 \times 10 = 40$

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<sup>1</sup> On the one hand, here *Rabainu* Bachya contradicts himself and, on the other, this would mean three

plagues (ר' אליעזר בהגדה של פסח). According to others (ר' עקיבא שם), the plagues consisted of five parts consequently we can speak about  $5 \times 10 = 50$  plagues.

The first three plagues take place with the collaboration of *Aharon*, while the others with that of *Moshe Rabainu*: the water had saved the infant *Moshe Rabainu*, he could hide the *Mitzri* overseer into the sand on the bank of the river consequently it would be ungrateful to strike with his staff the water (שמו"ר כ, א; ) and the sand (שמו"ר ו, ז) (ת"צ).

► 1./ *Blood* (דם):

This plague takes place on a Thursday, the day of the Creation of the animals of the waters (פדר"א ט).

*Paroh* – who ordered the people to worship him as a g-d – goes every morning at dawn secretly to the Nile to do his needs (שמו"ר ט, ז), therefore *Moshe Rabainu* – upon the Eternal's command – warns him at daybreak on the Nile-bank that, in case he is unwilling to let the *Bnai Yisroel* leave, the Eternal will punish him and his whole country (*Shemos* 7:15-18).

*Aharon* strikes the Nile with his staff, and all the waters of *Mitzrayim* become blood (*Shemos* 7:20).<sup>1</sup>

This a punishment because:

- the Nile was worshipped (שמו"ר ט, ה);
- *Paroh* said: „*My river is my own, and I have made it for myself.*” (*Yechezkel* 29:3), meaning 'I do not need the rain given by the Eternal, as the river is giving life to the country';
- they shed innocent Jewish blood when throwing the Jewish children into the Nile (לק"ט);

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plagues for the month *Nissan*, and the first seven during the preceding eleven months.

<sup>1</sup> For the Mesopotamian occurrence of this *topos*, see KOMORÓCZY, *Kistiükör*, pp. 213-14, vv. 35 and 75-81 (*Innin and Shukallatuda*), and the relative note on p. 440.

— they did not let the Jewish women to make their ritual immersion in the Nile (שמו"ר ט, ט).

In the province of *Goshen*, where the Jews live, the waters of the wells remain clear: the *Mitzriim* has to come and buy water from the Jews for money (שמו"ר ט, ט).

As *Paroh*'s sorcerers are also able to turn water into blood, *Paroh* does not let the *Bnai Yisroel* go (*Shemos* 7:22).

As the seven days of the plague are over, the Eternal sends *Moshe rabainu* to warn *Paroh* concerning the next plague (*Shemos* 7:25-29).

## ► 2./ *Frogs* (צפרדע):

At first a huge frog comes up from the Nile (*Shemos* 8:2; שמו"ר י, ה), spitting forth from its mouth masses of smaller frogs (מדה"ג ה); thereafter always new and new legions of frogs break forth from the river (שמו"ר י, ה).

At first, they break in to *Paroh*'s palace spared by the first plague, thereafter they overrun the whole country (כ"ו-כ"ז), the houses, biting the people, entering the people's mouth, the ovens etc.

If someone kills a frog, six others come out of it (זוהר וארא ל).

The appearance of the frogs decides, as a „side-effect”, the border-dispute between *Mitzrayim* and *Kush*: they only invade the territory of *Mitzrayim* (שמו"ר י, ב).

*A punishment:*

— because the *Mitzriim* tortured the *Bnai Yisroel* also through forcing them to collect all kinds of reptiles;

— and because *Paroh* said „*I know not the Lord*” (*Shemos* 5:2), the frogs came and even sacrificed themselves for the Eternal: they even jumped into the ovens (כלי יקר).

Although the sorcerers are also able to bring forth frogs (*Shemos* 8:3), *Paroh* sees himself obliged to call *Moshe rabainu* and *Aharon*: „Entreat the Lord, that he may take away the frogs from me, and from my people; and I will let the people go...” (*Shemos* 8:4).

Upon *Moshe rabainu*'s prayer (*Shemos* 8:8), the following morning the frogs disappear (*Shemos* 8:9-10) with the exception of those which jumped into the ovens: these can return to the river as they were ready to sacrifice themselves for the Eternal (*Shemos* 8:5, 8:7).

However, at the end, *Paroh* does not let the *Bnai Yisroel* go (*Shemos* 8:11): although he got frightened, he still did not make *tehsuvah*.

**2448:** the *Bnai Yisroel* are in *Mitzrayim* since 210 years.

●**the First of Tishrai, Rosh hashonoh** (ר"ה י):

► **3./ Lice** (כִּינִים).

*Aharon* strikes the sand on the Nile-bank, and it turns into lice (*Shemos* 8:13).

They cover and bite humans and animals (*Shemos* 8:13), they cover even the produce.

This plague is not preceeded by a warning, as *Paroh* did not take into consideration the warning preceeding the first two plagues.

*A punishment:* because the *Mitzriim* made the *Bnai Yisroel* to clean the dust of the streets and squares.

From the beginning of this plague, the *Bnai Yisroel*'s forced labour comes to an end, as there is no more clean clay to be found for the constructions (משנת ר"א (פ"ט).

The sorcerers of *Mitzrayim* are unable to repeat the miraculous happening (*Shemos* 8:14): they are forced to recognize about this plague and also – with a retroactive effect – about the precedent two that these were the Eternal's work

(*Shemos* 8:15; שְׁמוֹר י, ז).

Nevertheless, *Paroh* hardenes his heart: he does not let the *Bnai Yisroel* go (*Shemos* 8:15).

► **4./ Wild Beasts (עֲרֹב):**

This plague again takes place after three weeks of continuous warnings.

Lions, bears, snakes, scorpions *etc.* break in to the houses of the *Mitzriim* (*Shemos* 8:20), while the domestic animals become wild biting the peasants mortally (סֶה").

The wild beasts devour the animals left outside on the fields.

A *punishment*: because the *Mitzriim*, upon remarking that the *Bnai Yisroel* do not work any more on the constructions, they sent them to catch wild beasts hoping that these will devour them.

Therefore, the Eternal sends *Moshe rabainu* to bring together wild beasts and they should invade *Mitzrayim* (מִדְיָן; שְׁמוֹר י"א, ד).

*Paroh* calls *Moshe rabainu* and *Aharon*: you should sacrifice to your G-d, but here in *Mitzrayim*, you are not allowed to leave the country (*Shemos* 8:21).

*Moshe rabainu's* answer: as we want to sacrifice lambs which are idols for the *Mitzriim*, we cannot do this here, we have to leave for at least three days (*Shemos* 8:22-23).

*Paroh* seems to agree: you may go, just take off this plague of me (*Shemos* 8:24).

After *Moshe rabainu's* prayer (*Shemos* 8:26), the Eternal makes the wild beasts to disappear from the entire territory of *Mitzrayim* (*Shemos* 8:27). Nevertheless, *Paroh* does not let the *Bnai Yisroel* go (*Shemos* 8:28).

► **5./ Pestilence (דָּבָר):**

The Eternal warns *Paroh* through *Moshe rabainu* (*Shemos* 9:1) that, already the following morning (*Shemos* 9:5), He will strike *Mitzrayim* with pestilence

(*Shemos* 9:2-4): in this way, they cannot say that it is a natural epidemic, however, *Paroh* has time to repent, to make *teshuvah* (ה, מדה"ג ט, ט).

The pestilence kills the animals in the stables, and the sheperds, the horsmen *etc.* also die (ה, מדה"ג ט, א).

*A punishment:*

- because the *Mitzriim*, in order to stop the multiplication of the *Bnai Yisroel*, forced the latters to go out with herds to farewell mountains and also to go to distant places as donkey-drovers. Now their animals are striked (ה, שמו"ר י"א, א);
- and also beacuse the *Bnai Yisroel*, originally being herdsmen, lost their herds when they started to work on the constructions, therefore the herds of the *Mitzriim* are destroyed (כלי יקר).

Nevertheless, *Paroh* hardens his heart: he does not let the *Bnai Yisroel* go (*Shemos* 9:7).

After the fifth plague, it is the Eternal to harden *Paroh's* heart (*Shemos* 9:12): until now he had the possibility to do *teshuvah*, the Eternal was even waiting for his repentance. Now, He takes away of him the possibility to make *teshuvah* (שמו"ר י"ג, ד; לק"ט). However, in case he would make a sincere effort to make *teshuvah*, it would still be accepted (ה, שמו"ר י"א, ז; ת"צ).

The first three plagues (*Blood, Frogs, Lice*), operating from below upwards, take place with *Aharon's* collaboration; three (*Hail, Locusts, Darkness*), operating from above downwards, starting from heaven, happens with *Moshe rabainu's* collaboration; three plagues (*Wild beasts, Pestilence, Slaying of the Firstborn*) are brought upon the *Mitzriim* by the Eternal Himself; finally, one (*Boils*) is the result of the cooperation of all three (ה, שמו"ר י"ב, ז; ת"צ).

#### ► 6./ *Boils* (שחין):

*Moshe rabainu* and *Aharon* take two and two handfuls of ashes from a furnace,

and *Moshe rabainu* sprinkles it toward the heaven (*Shemos* 9:8).

The ashes fly to heaven to the Eternal's throne.

Among normmal circumstances, this amount of ashes would cover only a territory of four *amos*, however, through a miracle, the ashes get dispersed over the entire territory of *Mitzrayim* (שמו"ר י"א, ו; ת"צ), provoking „...boils ... with sores upon man and beast...” (*Shemos* 9:10).

This plague strikes already the *Mitzriim* also not only their properties (שמו"ר י"א, ו; ת"צ).

Consisting of the combination of 24 kinds of leprosy, the sickness cannot be healed (ב"ק פ).

*Paroh's* sorcerers and counselors will suffer from this sickness until the end of their lives (יל"ש ח"א קס"ד), as it was their counsel to drown the Jewish new-borns into the river, and to sentence to death *Moshe rabainu* when the latter, as a child, put *Paroh's* crown upon his own head (שמו"ר י"א, ו; ע"י).

*A punishment:*

- the *Bnai Yisroel* had to prepare the bath for the *Mitzriim*, while for them they did not even let time enough to scratch their itching bodies. Now the *Mitzriim* experience the itch and, more than that, their bodies do not support even the contact with water (שמו"ר י"א, ו);
- and also because the *Mitzriim* separated Jewish women from their husbands, therefore the Eternal punishes them with boils what makes them difficult marital relations (כלי יקר).

► **7./ Hail** (ברד):

At first, simple rain starts falling: the Eternal still hopes the *Mitzriim* make *teshuvah* (תנחומא וארא כ"א).

Thereafter, lightning, thunder, earthquake come and hugh pieces of hails,



composed of fire and ice, start to fall (*Shemos* 9:23-24; כ"ג, ט, מדה"ג): the suspension of the laws of nature shows for the world with evidence the Eternal's power (מדה"ג ט, י"ד).

The fire symbolizes the punishment of the wicked in *Gehinnom*.

The ice congeals while the fire burns the produce on the fields (*Shemos* 9:25), with the exception of what the Eternal reserves for the locusts (לק"ט).

A *punishment*: because *Paroh* was unwilling to listen to the Eternal's voice („Who is the Lord that I should listen to his voice...”; *Shemos* 5:2; כלי יקר).

Upon *Paroh*'s request – „I have sinned this time; the Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked. Entreat the Lord, for it is enough, that there be no more mighty thunderings and hail; and I will let you go...” (*Shemos* 9:27-28) - *Moshe rabainu* extends his hands to the Eternal: the hail stops (*Shemos* 9:33).

The Eternal stops the hail even before *Moshe rabainu* should start to pray: He does not want the wicked should praise Him (מדה"ג ט"ז, ל"ג).

The pieces of hail remain as if suspended in the air. A part of them will fall after 41 years, in the times of *Yehoshua* (see 2,489, *Yehoshua* 10:11); the other part remains suspended until the times of *Gog* and *Magog* (תנחומא ט"ז; שמ"ר י"ב, ה). On the other hand, the thunder will be ended in the times of *Yorom*, king of *Israel* (2.*Melochim* 7:6).

However, when thunder and hail are stopped, *Paroh* does not let the *Bnai Yisroel* go (*Shemos* 9:34-35).

#### ► 8./ *Locusts* (ארבה):

Upon the Eternal's command, *Moshe rabainu* warns *Paroh* concerning the next plague (*Shemos* 10:3-6).

*Paroh*'s counselors are already willing to believe to *Moshe rabainu*, and they suggest *Paroh* should let the *Bnai Yisroel* go (*Shemos* 10:7).

*Paroh* would let the men go (*Shemos* 10:11), *Moshe rabainu* however insists, he should let all of them free (*Shemos* 10:9): as the entire people was serving *Paroh*, now the entire people will serve the Eternal (לק"ט).

*Paroh*, a great astrologer, sees in the stars, that the constellation *Raa*, the symbol of blood, shines above the *Bnai Yisroel* in the wilderness: according to his conclusion, they will perish there.

However, the Eternal changes the blood of death into the blood of circumcision (שמו"ר י"ג, ה; יל"ש שצ"ב): He takes the fate of the *Bnai Yisroel* out of the influence of the stars and, henceforward, He directs their fate through His direct and permanent intervention, through continuous miracles (מהר"ל).

A strong Eastern wind is blowing the whole day and the whole night (*Shemos* 10:13): the Eternal is still waiting for the *teshuvah* of the *Mitzriim* (שמו"ר י"ג, י).

At dawn, herds of locusts appear in heaven (*Shemos* 10:14).

They destroy the produce on the fields spared by the hail and also the produce in the granaries, later they devour everything what they find in the houses (*Shemos* 10:15), they even kill the men (מדה"ג י, י"ז).

*A punishment:*

- because the *Mitzriim* forced the *Bnai Yisroel* to work on their fields;
- and also because they tried to impede the fulfillment of the Eternal's promise made earlier to *Avrohom* – „and in multiplying I will multiply your seed” (והרבה ארב"ה את זרעך, *Beraishis* 22:17): ארב"ה 'locust', but it means also 'I will multiply' (כלי יקר).

Upon *Paroh's* request - „...entreat the Lord your G-d, that he may take away from me this death only...” (*Shemos* 10:17) - *Moshe rabainu* prays to the Eternal (*Shemos* 10:18): a strong west wind blows away all the locusts to the Sea of Reeds (מדה"ג י, י"ט; שמו"ר י"ג, ו; *Shemos* 10:19).

However, *Paroh* does not let the *Bnai Yisroel* go (*Shemos* 10:20).

► **9./ Darkness (חושך):**<sup>1</sup>

This plague endures only for six days: the seventh day of *Darkness* will befall the *Mitzriim* when they pursue the *Bnai Yisroel* at the Sea of Reeds (שמו"ר י"ד, ג).

During the first three days of *Darkness*, the *Mitzriim* can freely move they just do not see anything even when they light candles (*Shemos* 10:22).

During these three days, those among the *Bnai Yisroel* who do not believe in the mission of *Moshe rabainu*, do not believe in redemption, do not want to go out of *Mitzrayim* (because they became rich and/or they have reached high ranks in the administration), four fifth of the *Bnai Yisroel*, die: „...and the people of Israel went up armed...” („וחמשים עלו בני ישראל,“; *Shemos* 14:18); „*chamushim*” means 'armed', but also means 'five' (מכילתא בא פסחא פי"ב; תנחומא) (במדבר).

They are burried during the night that the *Mitzriim* should not know about their death (שמו"ר י"ד, ג; ת"צ).

On the fourth day, *Darkness* becomes so thick that it forces the *Mitzriim* to stay without moving for the coming three days (*Shemos* 10:23).

During these three days, the *Bnai Yisroel* go and look around in the *Mitzriim*'s houses to see the valuables the latters dispose, without touching anything: they will ask for these thing when going out of *Mitzrayim* (שמו"ר י"ד, ג).

*A punishment:*

— because the *Bnai Yisroel* were forced to serve as living candelabres lighting

<sup>1</sup> According to modern scientific interpretation, the eruption of the Santorin volcano on the Thera island (today Thira, a Southern member of the Cyclades) c. 1500-1450 covers Egypt with dense black volcanic ash; the volcanic ash can be seen in archeological excavations. Cf. the sixth plague (*Boils*) starts when *Moshe rabainu* sprinkles two handfuls of ashes towards heaven, and through a miracle they cover the entire territory of *Mitzrayim*.

with burning candles upon their heads in the house of the *Mitzriim*, now the Eternal punishes the latter with *Darkness*; and they must even see – despite of the darkness, as if in a „cinema” – that, in the land *Goshen*, the *Bnai Yisroel* are awaiting with joy to can leave (מדה"ג י, כ"א-כ"ג);

— and also because the *Bnai Yisroel* had to hide their new-borns, and the Eternal had hidden them even under the ground (כלי יקר).

Now *Paroh* is willing to let the *Bnai Yisroel* (the men and even the children) go, but without their animals (*Shemos* 10:24): a guarantee for their returning (רוקח).

Naturally, *Moshe rabainu* does not agree, he even asks *Paroh* to give them more animals: we do not know in advance, how many animals we will have to sacrifice (*Shemos* 10:25-26).

From *Moshe rabainu*'s answer *Paroh* understands that he is only willing to listen to the Eternal and not to him (although he pretends being the master of the universe): he urges *Moshe rabainu* out of the royal palace, and even bans him under death penalty to return any more there (*Shemos* 10:28).

*Moshe rabainu* effectively promises not to return to the palace (*Shemos* 10:29): it will be *Paroh* who will come to see him (שמור י"ד, ד ע").

In order *Moshe rabainu* could keep his word, this single time the Eternal speaks to him still in the royal palace (despite of the presence of all the idols there; שמור י"ה, א; ת"צ) calling him to warn *Paroh* of the coming tenth plague, the *Slaying of the Firstborn* (*Shemos* 11:4-8).

*Paroh* does not take the warning seriously (*Shemos* 11:10) considering only a few children will be touched: however, because of the *Mitzriim*'s general state of immorality, a woman can have more than one firstborn of different men, and *vice versa* (מדה"ג י"א, ה).

● the 1st of Nissan, Thursday:

The Eternal orders the months should be counted beginning from *Nissan* („החודש הזה”; *Shemos* 12:2): although the „birthday of the world” is the first day of *Tishrai*, *Yetzias Mitzrayim* marks a new chapter in (Jewish) history.

The command to sanctify the new moon (מצות קידוש החודש): until then it was the Eternal to establish the begin of every new (lunar) month; now – as the *Bnai Yisroel* become a people – he charges them with this task.

The Eternal shows to *Moshe rabainu* and to *Aharon* how the new moon is supposed to look like that the *Bais Din* could sanctify and declare the begin of the new month.

He also explains them how the *Bais Din* has to interrogate the witnesses who come to relate the appearance of the new moon (מכילתא).

For a long time, they accepted the witness of every Jew. Later, however, when the followers of *Tzaddok* and *Beysus*, the *tzaddokim* (צדוקים, 'sadduceans') try to mislead the *Bais Din*, only the witnesses of Jews who follow the teachings of the *Sages* will be accepted (ר"ה כ"א-כ"ג).

The Eternal also commands the *Pessach*-sacrifice (קרבן פסח) and, as a condition of it, circumcision (*Shemos* 12:42, 12:48): in *Mitzrayim* they were not circumcized.

Besides, the Eternal orders that every year, the 15th of *Nissan* should be a Festive day (יום טוב; *Shemos* 12:14). On the 14th of *Nissan*, everything leavened (חמץ) has to be put away from the Jewish houses, which have to be kept leavened-free during seven days (*Shemos* 12:15, 12:19). Every year, on the night of the 14th to the 15th of *Nissan*, the *korban pessach* has to be eaten roasted with fire (צלי אש; it should be recognizable) together with unleavened bread (מצה) and bitter herbs (מרר; *Shemos* 12:8) to remember the liberation of the Egyptian slavery. The remnants of the meat has to be burnt the nex morning

(the 16th Nissan; *Shemos* 12:10).

The Eternal also orders that „*Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man borrow from his neighbour, and every woman from her neighbour, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold.*” (*Shemos* 11:2): through this, the Eternal will fulfil His promise made to *Avrohom* according to what „...and afterward shall they come out with great wealth.” (*Beraishis* 15:14; ברכות ט).

The Eternal uses the word *please* (נא) that, due to the excitement of being liberated, they should not forget about this, and His promise should not remain unfulfilled.

● **the 10th of Nissan, Shabbos** (שבת הגדול; שבת פ"ז על פי בא; תוספות שבת פ"ז על פי בא; שבת הגדול)<sup>1</sup>

The *Bnai Yisroel* prepare the *Pessach*-sacrifice (*Shemos* 12:3): a lamb without blemish, a male of the first year (*Shemos* 12:5), revered by the *Mitzriim* as an idol. It has to be kept for four days at home (*Shemos* 12:6) tied to the bed that the *Mitzri* neighbours should see the Jews will sacrifice their idols and they cannot do anything (שמור"ר ט"ז, ג).

At the same time, the sacrificing of the *Mitzri* idols to the Eternal is an expiation for the *Bnai Yisroel*'s participating in idol-worshipping in *Mitzrayim*, and it will also fortify their belief in the Eternal (שמור"ר ט"ז, ג; ת"צ).

● **the 14th of Nissan, Wednesday afternoon:**

*Moshe rabainu* and *Yehoshua* circumcise the entire people (ריקח).

To can partake in the *pessach*-sacrifice and also in the glory of the *Bnai Yisroel* who prepare themselves to the liberation, also a lot of the *Mitzriim* let themselves be circumcised, and convert fictitiously to Judaism: they are the *erev rav* (ערב רב). Cf. *Purim*: the *misyahadim* (מתייהדים; *Ester* 8:17; שמור"ר י"ח, ה).

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. 2487, *Miryam*'s death.

Effectuating the two *mitzvos* connected with blood – the *pessach*-sacrifice and *bris miloh* – they merit to be redeemed: in this way, they do not receive their freedom simply as a present (מתנת חנם) from the Eternal.

They bring the *Pessach*-sacrifice: the Eternal carries them on clouds to *Yerusholayim* (as if on „eagles’ wings”, *Shemos* 19:4), they should bring the *Pessach*-sacrifice there, on the ulterior site of the *Bais hamikdosh*. Thereafter, He carries them back to *Mitzrayim* (תרגו"י שמות י"ט, ד).

With a bunch of hyssop, they have to spread the lamb’s blood on the lintel and the two side posts of their houses (*Shemos* 12:7, 12:22): the Eternal so to say will „jump through” (פסח) the *Bnai Yisroel*’s houses marked with the blood of the *korban Pessach* (*Shemos* 12:13, 12:23) because

- the hyssop is the poorest plant: even if the *Bnai Yisroel* were held in *Mitzrayim* in low esteem, they are precious for the Eternal (שמו"ר י"ז, ג);
- the lintel symbolizes *Avrohom*, the two side posts symbolize *Yitzchok* and *Yaakov*: as the side post cannot be separated of the door, so were the patriarchs attached to the Eternal; therefore it is only in their merit that the *Bnai Yisroel* are saved from the *Slaying of the Firstborn*, their own merits being insufficients (שמו"ר י"ז, ג; ת"צ);
- in reality, it is not the Eternal, who needs the blood to can recognize the *Bnai Yisroel*’s houses: the exteriorization of being Jewish means the refusal of idol-worshipping, thus proves they merit to being redeemed (שמו"ר ט"ו, י"ב; ע"י).

● the night of the 14th to the 15th of Nissan:

► 10./ *The Slaying of the Firstborn* (מכת בכורות).

The *Mitzri* firstborn ask their parents they should let the *Bnai Yisroel* go, but the latters refuse this.

Thereupon, they turn to *Paroh* (himself a firstborn), but he also refuses their

request (י"ל"ש ט"ז).

Near to midnight, the *Mitzri* firstborn take their swords and slay their parents and also everyone who comes into their way (שמו"ר בא; זוהר ח"ב מ"ה).

At midnight, the Eternal, accompanied by destroying Angels, descend upon *Mitzrayim*: He himself kills the firstborns (*Shemos* 12:12, 12:29), while the destroying Angels kill those not yet born, who are still in their mothers' womb (שמו"ר י"ז, ח; ת"צ).

Many seek refuge in the sanctuaries of the idols: these will perish together with the idols (*Shemos* 12:12).

The Eternal only spares the idol named *Baal Tzefon* (בעל צפון) in order the *Mitzrim* should have the possibility to choose whether they will recognize the Eternal's power or to continue with their idol-worshipping (שמו"ר ט"ו, ט"ז).

The sanctuary of the idol *Baal Tzefon* stood near the Sea of Reeds: cf. „...when Pharaoh had let the people go, ...G-d led them not through the way of the land of the Pelishtim, although that was near....But G-d led the people around, through the way of the wilderness of the Sea of Reeds...” (*Shemos* 13:17-18). And they encamped „...before Pi haChiros, between Migdol and the sea, opposite Baal-Tzephon...” (*Shemos* 14:2).<sup>1</sup>

In the families where there is no firstborn, the eldest son is slain (מדה"ג י"ב, ל; שוח"ט).

The carcasses of the already dead and buried firstborns are dug out by dogs

<sup>1</sup> *Baal Tzefon*: according to O. EISFELDT (*Baal-Zephon*. Halle, 1932), the *Baal*-sanctuary of the Phœnician colonists stood on the Mediterranean coast of the Sinai Peninsula, at the *Sirbonnis* Bay, named after the Mount *Tzefon* near *Ugarit* being the dwelling place of the g-ds there, like the Mount *Olympos* in Greece. From this, certain modern opinions would say that the Sea of Reeds mentioned in the Torah actually was the *Sirbonnis* Bay and not the Northern edge of the Red Sea. This however contradicts the quoted words of the Torah. Without querying Eisfeldt's opinion, it seems difficult to suppose that here it should be question of the same place. Nevertheless, it can also be that there were more than one „*Baal Tzefon*” in *Mitzrayim*. According to EBERS (*Durch Gosen zum Sinai*. p. 524.), this can be the 'Mount Ataka in Egypt, near the Red Sea'.



which devoure them (מדה"ג י"ב, ל; שוח"ט).

*Paroh*'s firstborns also die. Thereupon, he slays his counselors with his sword: it was following their counsel that he disobeyed *Moshe rabainu* and, through him, the Eternal.

Three slayings during one night:

- the firstborns slay their parents,
- the Eternal slays the firstborns,
- *Paroh* slays his counselors (יל"ש ט"ז; זוהר ח"ב מ"ה).

A *punishment*: because they wanted to destroy the Eternal's firstborn, the *Bnai Yisroel* (*Shemos* 4:22; כלי יקר). However, He does not bring upon them the water of the sea. Instead, in their wickedness, they themselves will enter it (כלי יקר). And this happens during the night, because the *Mitzriim* overthrow the natural order of the world, forcing the *Bnai Yisroel* to do night-work during the day and day-work during the night, and also when they forced the women to do men's work and the men to do women's work (שמו"ר י"ח, ז).

*Paroh* – himself a firstborn – stays alive, to declare publicly the Eternal's miracles (ריוקה).

Upon *Moshe rabainu*'s prayer, the Eternal spares *Batya-h*'s life also: although a firstborn to her mother (סה"י), she saved *Moshe rabainu* and brought him up as her own child (מדה"ג י"ב, ל).

While the tenth plague takes place, the *Bnai Yisroel* are eating their *Pessach*-sacrifice roasted with fire, together with *matzos* and *maror*: *Seder* (סדר):

- roasted with fire, because *Avrohom* had been saved from the burning furnace;
- with *matzos*, because *Soroh* had baked *matzos* for the three Angels, and also because they were eating such a poorish bread as slaves;
- with *maror*, because *Yaakov*'s life, being pursued by *Aisov*, was full of

bitterness (שמו"ר ט"ו, י"ב); and also because the *Mitzriim* embittered the *Bnai Yisroel*'s life (*Shemos* 1:14).

*Paroh* himself goes to *Moshe rabainu* to the province of *Goshen*, ordering him they should leave immediately the country (*Shemos* 12:31-32).

To stop the plague, *Paroh* declares publicly the liberation of the *Bnai Yisroel*: until then they were *Paroh*'s slaves, henceforward they only will serve the Eternal (ירושלמי פסחים פ"ה).

*Moshe rabainu*'s answer: the Eternal prohibited us to leave our houses until dawn; we shall only go tomorrow morning at the sight of everyone, as free people, and not during the night as robbers (פדר"א מ"ח; סה"י).

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