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This is a condensed version of the original narrative that was written by Westerly Tressler and restructured for reading to children. See chapter 11 in *Forty-Two Months and Ten Toes, The Perfect Jewish Calendar*, Trafford Publications, ©2013 by Westerly Tressler, for additional details and documentation. Also visit:

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*Mary Kindled the Hanukkah Candles*, tells the story of the angel Gabriel's visit to Mary the mother of *Yeshua*/Jesus that took place on, Kislev 25 & December 15, in 7BCE, i.e. BC.; the *Hanukkah*/Christmas Season.

*The Three Stars of Bethlehem* is the continuation of this story; from when Mary and Joseph left Bethlehem, until after the Nativity and Circumcision of *Yeshua*/Jesus took place.

# **Mary Kindled the *Hanukkah* Candles**

Long before Christian children began receiving gifts on Christmas Day, Jewish children were observing the Festival of *Hanukkah*. During the eight days of this Festival, Jewish children today play games and also say prayers, while the candles are lit on a menorah. A menorah has eight candleholders, plus a ninth elevated candleholder in the center.

The parents of Mary the mother of Jesus were Observant Jews, so while Mary was growing up she celebrated *Hanukkah* with them every year around December. But when Mary became a young lady and was waiting to be married to her future husband, the LORD gave her a prominent role in the *Hanukkah*-Christmas drama.

## **Mary Prepares for the *Hanukkah* Celebration**

Mary awoke and bounded out of bed! She hastily dressed and hurried to her mother's side. Mother had started a fire to warm the house, and was already baking items for the family to take to a *Hanukkah* celebration.

“Mother,” Mary said, “I wish you and I could go to the *Hanukkah* festivity too.”

Mother replied, “It's your turn to stay home and care for our animals, Mary.”

“I know,” Mary sighed. “I'm thankful you always stay home with me or my sisters

whenever it's our turn to stay home.”

Mother said, “It's not safe for a beautiful sixteen year old girl to be home by herself.”

Soon, it was time for the family to leave. After they had left, Mary asked, “May I decorate the table for our own *Hanukkah* celebration?”

“Yes,” Mother replied, “I'll simply do some sewing while you decorate and set the table.”

“After I finish,” Mary promised, “I'll take care of the animals.”

Mary baked some bread and cut up some fruit and vegetables. When Mary was done, she asked, “Mother, may I set the table for three people in case a special guest shows up? Even though Joseph lives in Bethlehem, I was hoping he might visit us here in Nazareth tonight.”

Mother answered, “That's a good idea, Mary.”

Then Mary asked, “And may I also light the first candle on the menorah?”

Mother replied, “You may perform the entire *Hanukkah* ceremony tonight, Mary, because next year you may be doing this for yourself and Joseph.”

Speaking softly to herself, Mary said, “A white tablecloth and Mother's special plates are needed. The Sabbath also begins tonight at sunset, so two Sabbath candles must be placed at the head of the table....and the menorah will need nine new candles.”

Mary spread the *Hanukkah* cloth on the table. On it she placed three dinner settings. She put one plate at the head of the table and placed the

two Sabbath candles directly in front of it. Then Mary took the menorah from a window ledge and placed it in the middle of the table. The other two dinner settings were placed on each side of the menorah. Next she put four candles into the candleholders on the right side of the menorah beginning with the holder on her right. Then she skipped over the elevated center holder and put four candles into the holders on the left side of the menorah, ending with the one on her left. After she had placed the *Shamash* (a service candle) into the center holder, she said, "Mother, I know it's early, but I want to have the animals fed and watered before it's time for the Sabbath candles to be kindled." Then whispering softly to herself, she wishfully said, "Joseph, you may sit across from me. I'll be back as soon as I finish feeding the animals."

Mother called out, "Do you want some help, Mary?"

"No!" Mary called back. Then she quietly added, "I'll merely imagine I'm doing this for Joseph and me."

As Mary stepped outside, the sun broke through the clouds in the western sky. Inspired by the clearing sky, she sweetly chanted some psalms of praise to the LORD, while she fed and watered the animals. Then as the sun neared the horizon, she returned into the house.

"Mother," she asked, "Is it time for you to light the Sabbath candles?"

Her mother answered, "This is a special night,

Mary. It will not only be the first night of *Hanukkah*, but it's also going to be the beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup>Day Sabbath.”

“I know,” Mary responded. “The Sabbath candles must always be kindled before any other lights are lit, except when the first night of *Hanukkah* falls on a 7<sup>th</sup>Day Sabbath. So tonight we'll use the *Shamash* to light the first candle of *Hanukkah*, and then we may light the two Sabbath candles.”

### **Mary Kindles the First *Hanukkah* Candle**

Mary bent over and lifted the center candle from the menorah, saying, “Mother, you may sit on your cushion while I light the first *Hanukkah* candle.”

Mary walked over to the fireplace and held the *Shamash* near the fire. She flinched when the flame leaped up on the other end. After watching the flame for a few moments, she walked back to the table and knelt on her cushion facing the menorah. Then while holding the flaming candle in front of her, she bowed her head and recited the *Hanukkah* blessing:

“Blessed are You Lord God, who is King of the universe and is He who has set us aside with His Ten Commandments and ordered us to kindle the *Hanukkah* candles. You performed miracles for our forefathers during this time, and You have also sustained our lives and allowed us to celebrate this Festival.” Then she added, “And please perform another miracle by sending our Messiah to us very soon!”

Mother noticed the added prayer but did not say anything. Mary leaned forward and touched the flame of the candle she was holding, to the wick of the candle on the right side of the menorah. It burst into flame as though it could not wait for the *Shamash* to touch it. Both Mary and her mother gasped in surprise. After watching the candle burn for a few moments, Mary held the *Shamash* toward her mother, so she could use it to light the two Sabbath candles. But her mother said, "You may light the Sabbath candles in my place, Mary."

Mary withdrew the candle and moved to the head of the table; and knelt on her mother's cushion. Now she was facing the two Sabbath candles as she held the *Shamash* and touched its flame to the wicks of each candle. They burst into flame in the same way the first candle of *Hanukkah* did. Even though she and her mother were both surprised, they did not say anything. Instead, Mary recited the Sabbath blessing.

"Blessed are You Lord God, who is King of the universe and is He who has set us aside with His Ten Commandments and ordered us to kindle the Sabbath candles."

Then she exclaimed, "Look how brightly all the candles are burning, Mother!"

Mother replied, "Father must have added something to the tallow to cause them to burn so brightly!"

Mary suggested, "Maybe the LORD is looking with favor on our nation tonight? Father believes the coming together of those two Wandering

Stars (i.e. Jupiter and Saturn) during *Shavuot* (i.e. Pentecost) last spring, and again during *Sukkoth* (i.e. Tabernacles) this past fall, were signs for the Messiah's arrival."

Mother added, "It may be that our prayers for the LORD to send the Messiah to Israel will be answered soon. He may also be looking with favor on our household tonight."

Mary did not say anything as she returned the *Shamash* to its elevated spot in the center of the menorah. Then she turned to her mother, and said, "As usual, the winter weather has been rainy and dreary so we haven't seen the sun and stars for many days. However, the sun is shining this evening, so I'd like to enjoy the sunset and look for the first stars as they appear in the sky."

Mother responded, "I'll come with you."

### **Mary is Visited by an Angel**

When they stepped outside, Mary exclaimed, "Look how serene the evening sky is! I have such a strange and wonderful feeling in my heart. It's as though I could reach out and touch the Glory of our LORD."

As they gazed into the eastern sky one little sparkle of light peeked through the pale blue canopy of space. Soon another one nudged its way through the blue. They continued watching while several more stars made their dainty entries into the heavens. Then Mary pointed toward the eastern sky, and exclaimed, "Look! Those first two stars are the same two Wandering Stars that came together during

*Shavuot* and again during *Sukkoth!*”

Suddenly someone ran up to Mary’s mother, and exclaimed, “My daughter is ready to give birth to a baby! I need your help!”

Mary’s mother agreed to go with her friend. Mary stayed outside to observe Jupiter and Saturn repeating their conjunction for the third time in seven months (planets were called Wandering Stars at this time in history). Soon the blue background of the starlit sky darkened, and a visible beam of light from the two planets seemed to be reaching down to where she was standing. She felt afraid with her mother gone so she went into the house. The house was silent and lonely. To overcome her loneliness she placed all the food on the table. Then she said, “Everything is ready so when Mother returns we can finish our *Hanukkah* celebration.”

Mary sat down on her cushion with her legs crossed in front. The first candle of *Hanukkah* was still burning brightly. But the light from the *Shamash* in the center of the menorah held her attention; and it began growing brighter and brighter. Its brilliance fascinated her, so she continued gazing into the shimmering flame. Soon she imagined Joseph was sitting across the table from her, so she began talking to him. “Joseph,” she asked, “why do we use an eight-candle menorah to celebrate *Hanukkah*?”

In her mind she knew how Joseph would answer. “About 160 years ago the Altar in front of our Temple was desecrated by the king. A new

Altar was built so we could rededicate the Temple, which had also been defiled. The large seven-branch Menorah in the Holy Place also needed to be lit for the eight-day rededication ceremonies. But the priests could only find one vial of Holy Oil. That would keep the seven lamps of the Menorah burning for only one night. However, that one vial of oil kept all seven lamps burning for all eight nights. That was the miracle of *Hanukkah*. So we light an eight-branch menorah to celebrate the eight nights that the seven lamps burned.”

Mary’s fantasy faded as she remembered Daniel had said the Messiah would soon be born. She began praying to the LORD for his quick arrival, saying, “There are many young girls from the House of David that would gladly be the mother of our Messiah. Please honor one of them very soon for this purpose....and in spite of my stubborn ways, please allow me the privilege of seeing and holding him.”

Suddenly, the flame of the *Shamash* changed into a glorious glow and she heard a soft, brushing sound. “Joseph? Is that you?” she asked, trying to see through the shimmering light. But she was unable to see anything after staring at the flame for such a long period of time.

“*Shalom!*” greeted a voice. “You who are highly favored....the LORD is with you!”

Mary was startled. “Who....who are you? And....and what do you want?” she stammered.

“I am Gabriel!” he announced. “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with the LORD. You will be with child and give birth to a son. You will give to him the name, *YESHUA* (i.e. Jesus). He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The LORD will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever. His kingdom will never end.”

Mary anxiously asked, “When is this thing supposed to take place?”

The angel answered, “The Spirit of the LORD will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you through the 8<sup>th</sup>Day of *Hanukkah*. The Holy One to be born will be called, the Son of God.”

Mary questioned, “How is this possible since I’m not yet married to Joseph, my betrothed husband?”

“Nothing is impossible with the LORD,” answered the angel. “Even Elizabeth your close relative is going to have a child in her old age, just as I informed Zacharias in the Temple Sanctuary. She who was said to be barren is now in her 6<sup>th</sup>Month.”

Mary was frightened by this encounter with the angel, but she responded, “I am the servant of the LORD. May it be to me as you have ordered?”

The angel departed, and Mary sat pondering about what the angel had said. Then she softly asked herself, “Can this really be happening to me? My mother is a descendent of King David,

but my father is a priest from the House of Aaron. How is it possible that the LORD could choose me to give birth to His Anointed One?”

### **Mother Returns and Questions Mary**

Mary was still sitting cross-legged on her cushion, when her mother returned from helping their neighbor deliver a baby. Mary attempted to hide her tearstained face, but with a look of concern, Mother asked, “What happened while I was gone, Mary?”

Mary replied, “I was staring at the *Shamash*, and I must have started dreaming.”

“Did you have a visitor?” Mother demanded.

Mary hesitated, and then admitted, “At first I was making believe I was talking to Joseph. But he wasn’t Joseph. I think an angel talked to me and I talked to him. I saw him sitting across the table from me. Yet thinking back, everything seemed so....so make-believe!”

Mother looked into Mary’s eyes, and asked, “Is this simply another of your fairytale dreams? Did he tell you his name?”

“Oh Mother!” Mary whispered. “He said his name was, Gabriel!”

Her mother’s words changed from words of doubt, into a serious question. “What else did he say to you, Mary?”

Mary replied, “He told me I had found favor with the LORD, and I will give birth to a child. I’m supposed to name him *YESHUA* (Jesus), because he’ll be great and will be called the Son of the Most High.”

Mother asked, “Did he say when this might happen? And did you inform him you won’t be married to Joseph until next spring?”

Mary answered, “It’s supposed to be completed on the 8<sup>th</sup>Day of *Hanukkah*. He told me the Spirit of the LORD will come upon me, and the power of the Most High will overshadow me.”

After a few minutes of silence, Mother said, “Whenever the LORD reveals something to His servant; He always gives them a sign. Did the angel promise you a sign, Mary?”

Mary responded, “I don’t think he gave me a sign. I’m sorry Mother. I must have been dreaming. But it seemed so real at the time. He even mentioned Father’s older sister, Elizabeth.”

Mother asked, “What about Elizabeth?”

Mary replied, “That’s why I think I must have been dreaming. He said she’s going to have a child in her old age, and she’s in her 6<sup>th</sup>Month.”

Mother thought about that, and then said; “I didn’t hear anything about Elizabeth when we attended the Feast of Tabernacles in October. If anyone as old as she had been with child at that time, I’m sure we would have heard the news.”

### **Mary Receives Her Sign**

Mary and her mother continued to sit and talk, while they ate their *Hanukkah* meal in front of the burning candles. Later, they watched as the flickering flame of the first candle of *Hanukkah*, struggled to prevent itself from drowning in its little puddle of wax. Only the *Shamash* and the two Sabbath candles continued radiating their

brilliant light. Mary started to comment that the *Shamash* looked as though none of its wax had melted, and it was just as tall as it was when she kindled it in the fireplace. But a commotion outside the house interrupted her thought. Mother stood and walked over to the door and removed the bolt.

Father spoke first, saying, “There’s something special going on in the sky tonight. Do you remember how the two brightest Wandering Stars came together during *Shavuot*, and then again during *Sukkoth*? Well, the clouds went away just before sundown, and guess what? The same two stars have begun touching each other again. It’s the third time in just seven months. It’s as though the LORD is giving us a sign that the Messiah is about to come to his people!”

Mary’s mother responded, “I hope that’s what the sign means!”

Father continued his thought. “As you’ll recall, when the two stars appeared during *Shavuot*, an angel appeared to Zacharias in the Temple Sanctuary. He told Zacharias he would have a son who would prepare the way for the Messiah. Speaking of Zacharias, I have some news you’ll find difficult to believe. It was announced at the *Hanukkah* celebration that my oldest sister Elizabeth is with child! Right now she’s in her 6<sup>th</sup> month! Zacharias and Elizabeth kept it a secret for the first five months, because they didn’t want to publicize it until they were sure it might really happen. Not only that, but

Zacharias sent word he wants Mary to visit them before the Passover, so Mary can be there when Elizabeth's baby is born!”

Mary buried her face in her hands, and began weeping uncontrollably. Mother walked over and held Mary closely. “An angel always gives a sign,” she said, “and he gave you your sign.”

Father asked, “What are you talking about? And why did you replace the *Shamash* and Sabbath candles with new ones? Wouldn't it have been better to have ignited a lamp?”

Mother replied, “Those are the same candles Mary kindled before sundown. As soon as the children are in bed, Mary and I have a lot to tell you, Father.”

### **Seven more Nights of *Hanukkah***

The next afternoon the family attended the combined *Hanukkah* and Sabbath services in the local Synagogue. At sundown all the people returned to their homes instead of gathering in the town square to meet and chat with friends, as was the custom after the end of a Sabbath. The second night of *Hanukkah* was about to begin, and the first and second candles on the menorah must be kindled as soon after nightfall as possible.

When Mary's family arrived home, Father said to Mary, “Your mother and I think you should light the *Hanukkah* candles for the remainder of this Festival.”

Mary lifted the *Shamash* and held it next to the smoldering embers in the fireplace. The candle

again burst into flame. Then she walked back to the table and faced the menorah. Kneeling on her cushion, she prayed,

“Blessed are You Lord God, King of the Universe, who will sanctify the conception of the Messiah in the second month.”

Mary was surprised that neither her father nor her mother questioned why she had changed the *Hanukkah* blessing. Her siblings however, ignored her changes. They assumed she had said it according to tradition. She held out the *Shamash* and touched the wick of the second *Hanukkah* candle, which instantly burned very brightly. Then she kindled the first candle. This time the light of the first candle was normal.

On the third night of *Hanukkah*, she said the same blessing, but ended it with, “in the third month.” Then she kindled the candles, beginning with the third candle. The third candle burned brightly, but the second and first candles simply burned normally. This sequence of prayers and lighting of the candles was repeated on the next four nights.

### **Mary Anticipates the Reproach She will Bear**

On the eve of the Sabbath that commenced the eighth night and final day of *Hanukkah*, Mary asked, “Are you planning to use the *Shamash* to kindle the Sabbath candles, Mother?”

“Please light them for me,” Mother replied.

As on the other nights, Mary kindled the *Shamash* in the fireplace. Then while kneeling in front of the menorah, she repeated her new

version of the *Hanukkah* blessing.

“Blessed are You Lord God, who has commanded us to kindle the *Hanukkah* candles, and who will sanctify the conception of the Messiah in the eighth month.”

Father and Mother watched in awe while Mary touched the flame of the *Shamash* to the wicks of the eight candles. Her brothers and sisters merely remarked about how the eighth candle was burning brighter than the others. They were unaware of Mary’s encounter with the angel on the first night of *Hanukkah*. They had not even noticed how she had revised the *Hanukkah* blessings. Mary remained kneeling quite some time, holding the *Shamash*, while the eight candles of *Hanukkah* burned on the menorah. Then Mary moved to the head of the table and knelt down. With the *Shamash* still in her hand, she ignited the two Sabbath candles. Again, all the family was surprised by the brightness of the two candles. Mary closed her eyes and recited the Sabbath blessing.

“Blessed are You Lord God, King of the universe, who has set us aside with His Ten Commandments and ordered us to kindle the Sabbath candles.”

Mary’s brothers and sisters had now tuned out the rituals, and were sneakily making gestures and faces at each other. With their attention diverted, Mary leaned back and held the *Shamash* in front of the two Sabbath candles so they formed a triangle. In the quietness she stared at the three candles burning brightly in

front of her. Several large tears made their way down her cheeks. She fought an urge to burst into uncontrollable sobbing. When she regained her composure, she whispered,

“Bless your handmaiden when the promised miracle is completed on this day, and provide me with the resolve to endure the appalling reproach this honor will heap upon me.”

Mary arose, and with tears now streaming down her cheeks, she returned the ninth candle into the center holder of the menorah. Then she again knelt on her cushion. For several quiet moments, she gazed at the nine burning candles through her tear filled eyes. Finally, she closed her eyes and prayed:

“Blessed are You Lord God, King of the universe, who will keep the Messiah through the ninth month and enable both of us to reach that season.”

### **An Angel Visits Joseph**

In the spring, the family joined an early caravan to make the trip to Jerusalem for the Passover. As the caravan neared Jerusalem, Heli and his family left the caravan and traveled to Zacharias' home. When Mary greeted Elizabeth, Elizabeth was filled with the Spirit of the LORD and Elizabeth's baby leaped inside of her. She was happy Mary had come and that she would stay until after little John was born.

About two weeks later, following the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Mary's family stopped by Zacharias' home to see baby John, and to be sure Mary wanted to remain there until after

*Shavuot* (the Day of Pentecost). Mary told her father, "I want to remain with Elizabeth until after *Shavuot*. But I also want to know if you told Joseph about what has happened to me?"

Heli replied, "Joseph asked about you, but I never mentioned your encounter with the angel."

Mary's family left and returned to Nazareth, and Mary stayed with Elizabeth. About two months later, Mary's father returned to Jerusalem to observe the Festival of *Shavuot*. Heil met Joseph on the first day of the Festival, and told Joseph Mary was with child and in her 6<sup>th</sup> Month. Mary's father never mentioned her encounter with the angel. Instead, he simply asked Joseph to seek guidance from the LORD.

When the Festival had ended, Joseph advised Mary's father of his decision, saying, "At first I wanted to punish Mary for being unfaithful to me. I became very angry and thought about bringing her before the religious leaders in order to expose her. I felt she deserved to be stoned according to the Law of Moses. But because you advised me to seek guidance from the LORD, I struggled and prayed most of the night. When I awoke I remembered her beautiful attitude and the love in her eyes for me. So I decided to travel with you to Nazareth and divorce her privately, because I didn't want to publicly put her to shame."

Mary's father asked, "Is that your decision?"

"No," Joseph replied. "Last night something else happened that changed my attitude and

directed my decision.”

“What was that?” asked Mary’s father.

Joseph answered, “You’ll probably think of me as a foolish young man who’s making something up, because I don’t want to lose Mary as my bride. Anyway, I had a dream. An angel appeared in my dream and told me not to be afraid to take Mary as my bride. He said her child was from the LORD. I asked him what sign he would give me to confirm this, but he simply left and I awoke.”

Then Mary’s father told Joseph about the angel’s visit to Mary. He concluded with, “The angel told her what to name the Child.”

Joseph asked, “What name did he tell her to give him?”

Mary’s father replied, “I’ll let her tell you.”

Joseph responded, “The angel also told me what to name the Child, so if the names are the same, that would be my sign from the angel!” Heli and Joseph travelled to Zacharias’ home to take Mary back to Nazareth.

Mary was alone with baby John in Zacharias’ house when Elizabeth walked in, and said, “Heli and Joseph will be here soon. You must get ready to meet them before they arrive.”

Mary answered, “I’ve been longing to see Joseph again, even though he may insist I appear before the local Sanhedrin in Nazareth. My love for him is almost as great as my love for the little Baby I’m carrying for *Adonai*.”

Mary quickly dressed and went out to meet

them. She was cautiously ecstatic in her anticipation of seeing Joseph. But she still feared that for spite, he might demand she be banished or stoned. However, she was also hopeful Joseph's love for her would allow him to accept her as his bride, even though she was with Child. When she met them she bowed, and said, "I'm your humble servant, Joseph. I'm with Child and in my 6<sup>th</sup> month, but I pray you'll look on me with favor."

Joseph took her by the hand and drew her up, saying, "Your father told me about your encounter with an angel. You believed what the angel told you on that 1<sup>st</sup> day of *Hanukkah*, and you've agreed to accept the reproach it has brought upon you. I have also agreed to bear any disrepute it may bring."

Mary wanted to know if Joseph had received a sign from the LORD that her baby is indeed the Messiah, so she asked, "How can you be sure my father told you the truth?"

Joseph replied, "I observed you when we attended the various Festivals. You've always conducted yourself in a manner becoming a truly virtuous young girl. Heli told me everything concerning your experience with the angel that took place on the 1<sup>st</sup> night of *Hanukkah*. I'm certain you would never lie about such an experience. The only thing we didn't discuss is what name will be given to the Baby?"

Unable to squelch her impulsive ways, Mary resolutely responded, "His name will be,

*Yeshua!*”

Joseph exclaimed, “Then an angel really did appear to me in my dream! That’s the name the angel gave to me! You’ve just confirmed his NAME was the sign given to me by the angel! My desire to take you as my wife was so intense, I was afraid my dream might have been only a figment of my imagination. Now I know it wasn’t just a dream. It was a vision from *Adonai!*”

“You were visited by an angel in a dream?” asked Mary.

“Yes,” he replied. “When I told your father about my experience with an angel, I advised him the angel told me what to name the Child. He said you were also told what to name the Child. Now you have confirmed his NAME, so I know this was the sign to me that you are carrying the Messiah!”

Joseph leaned over and gently kissed his betrothed bride. Then Mary said, “You’re truly a servant of *El Shaddai*, Joseph, because you also believe what the angel told you.”

Joseph agreed to take Mary as his wife, but she would remain in her father’s home until after the Baby was born.

~ That was the end of the beginning ~

For more details and documentation, see chapter 11 in *Forty-Two Months and Ten Toes, The Perfect Jewish Calendar*, Trafford Publications, ©2013 by Westerly Tressler.

## **The Four Stars of the Nativity are Recorded in the Annals of Astral History.**

In 7-6BCE(BC) GOD judiciously placed a pattern of five(5) Festivals (Feasts of the LORD) on the Jewish Lunar Calendar. The alignment of their Lunar High Sabbaths with 7<sup>th</sup>Day Solar Sabbaths, unlocked the destiny of the *Seed of Eve* referred to in Genesis 3:15. The date of each event of the Nativity of *Yeshua/Jesus* took place as predestined by these Sabbaths.

Festival #1: In 7BCE, the Lunar High Sabbath of Passover Nisan 15 aligned with the 7<sup>th</sup>Day Solar Sabbath on April 15. So, the 49-day count to *Shavuot* (Pentecost) began on Nisan 16.

Festival #2; and the 1<sup>st</sup>Star of the Nativity: In 7BCE a once every 900-year triple conjunction of Jupiter & Saturn greeted the visit of the angel Gabriel to Zacharias during *Shavuot* (the Day of Pentecost) on Sunday, Sivan 6 & June 4.

Festival #3; and the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>Stars of the Nativity: A second merger of Jupiter & Saturn during *Sukkoth* (the Feast of Tabernacles) in October of 7BCE was the second sign of the coming of the Messiah. About 70 days later, Jupiter & Saturn were again in conjunction when the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary on the 1<sup>st</sup>Day of *Hanukkah*, Kislev 25 & December 15.

Festival #4; Yeshua/Jesus was born: His birth occurred on Friday night, Tishri 15 & September 28, in 6BCE. It was 280 days (40 weeks) after the 8<sup>th</sup>Day of *Hanukkah*. It was the 1<sup>st</sup>Day of *Sukkoth* (Tabernacles, a.k.a., the Festival of Lights).

Festival #5; the 4<sup>th</sup>Star of the Nativity: This was the Star of Bethlehem: 7-Days after the birth of *Yeshua/Jesus*, a single once every 805-year 3-star conjunction of Jupiter, Saturn & Mars, led the Wise Men to the Babe in the feeding trough next to the *sukkah*. They arrived during the night of *Shemini Atzeret* (The-Eighth-Day), on Tishri 22 & October 5, in 6BCE. During the following morning (still Tishri 22 but now October 6) *Yeshua/Jesus* was circumcised and named; and the Wise Men presented their gifts of Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh.

**Was this an accidental pattern? Or did GOD design it?**

The story continues in *The Three Stars of Bethlehem* booklet.