The Portents Before the Fall: Josephus, Tacitus and the Apocalypse — a groundwork note on relations, with the archive's dates for Revelation (v1.0)

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Abstract

Josephus (BJ 6.288–315) and Tacitus (Hist. 5.13) report the signs before the fall of the Temple, and Suetonius (Vesp. 4.5) the oracle that closes both lists. This groundwork note, in the manner of Two Lists of Stones (#1592), sets their words beside the Apocalypse's in thirteen rows and records for each the chronological warrant the historian gives it, its older relative in the seated scriptures (2 Maccabees 5:2–4 for the armies in the air; Jeremiah 25:10 for the silenced bridegroom and bride, the lamp included; Ezekiel 10:18 and Jeremiah 51:45 for the voice of departure; Zechariah and Daniel for the four winds; Ezekiel 40:3 for the measuring reed), and the operation that joins the historian's sign to the Apocalypse's: shared duration (a light and a silence each lasting half an hour, at the altar), composite (the lamb born in the sanctuary against the slain Lamb and the woman giving birth), transposition (the gate opened of itself; the door opened in heaven), change of speaker and object (μεταβαίνομεν ἐντεῦθεν and excedere deos; Ἐξέλθατε ὁ λαός μου ἐξ αὐτῆς), reversal (the sanctuary made four-square as the sign of capture; the four-square city without a sanctuary). Josephus's festal sequence (Passover to Pentecost) stands before the revolt he dates to Nero's twelfth year: the spring of 66; the son of Ananias runs from 62 to the siege, the squared sanctuary belongs to the siege of 70, the oracle is undated; Tacitus gives the signs a narrative place in 70 and no date of their own. Rev 8:1–5 is read continuously against BJ 6.290 and 6.299. The note records the archive's dates for Revelation, early throughout the Revelation First thesis (#407, #10, #636, #202, #1217, #1735), with the conventional c. 95 entering only as unsupervised contamination in work not about the date (#683, #1362, #584, #589, recorded as errata), and the held date of 66 CE, proposed and subject to formal argument. The reading, that the historians describe the book, is deferred, with its four steps stated.

Body

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tlg0526.tlg004; Tacitus and Suetonius, Perseus canonical-latinLit at commit bfdcd06; Nestle 1904 EA-CORPORA-01/04; Swete EA-CORPORA-01/05; WLC EA-CORPORA-01/09) and verified before writing. The juxtaposition of the three witnesses, the reading that the historians describe the book, the held date of 66 CE, the correction that the c. 95 entries are contamination, and the instruction to set relations in the manner of Two Lists of Stones are Lee Sharks's. version: v1.0 related_ids: "#1592 (Two Lists of Stones); #202, #1217, #1735 (Revelation First); #407; #10; #636; #644; #683, #1362, #584, #589 (errata of 2026-11-04)" axn_schema_version: v2 protocol_version: alexanarch-deposit-protocol/v1 keywords: - Revelation - Apocalypse of John - Josephus - Jewish War - Tacitus - Histories - Suetonius - portents - prodigies - fall of the Temple - 66 CE - Jesus son of Ananias - half hour - the voice of departure - four-square - oracle of world rule - 2 Maccabees - Jeremiah - groundwork note - relations - Revelation First - dating *** # The Portents Before the Fall: Josephus, Tacitus and the Apocalypse — a groundwork note on relations, with the archive's dates for Revelation (v1.0)

The Portents Before the Fall: Josephus, Tacitus and the Apocalypse — a groundwork note on relations, with the archive's dates for Revelation (v1.0)

Lee Sharks · v1.0 · 2026-11-04 · relations established, the reading deferred · Greek of Josephus from the seated *Bellum Iudaicum* (Perseus tlg0526.tlg004, seat josephus, text/BJ.txt); Latin of Tacitus from the *Historiae* (Perseus canonical-latinLit phi1351.phi004.perseus-lat2, Fisher 1911, commit bfdcd06, to be seated as EA-CORPORA-33/01) and of Suetonius from the *Divus Vespasianus* (Perseus phi1348.abo020.perseus-lat2, same commit); Greek of the Apocalypse from the seated Nestle 1904 (EA-CORPORA-01/04, Rev.txt) and of the Septuagint from the seated Swete (EA-CORPORA-01/05); Hebrew of Jeremiah from the seated Westminster Leningrad Codex (EA-CORPORA-01/09)

Abstract

Josephus (BJ 6.288–315) and Tacitus (Hist. 5.13) report the signs that preceded the fall of the Temple, and Suetonius (Vesp. 4.5) reports the oracle that closes both lists. This note sets their words beside the Apocalypse's in thirteen rows. For each row it records three things: the chronological warrant the historian gives that item, the older relative the item has in the scriptures, and the operation that joins the historian's sign to the Apocalypse's (shared duration, change of speaker, reversal, composite, near-identity). Josephus dates the festal signs to the spring before the revolt, which he places in Nero's twelfth year: 66 CE. Other items carry other dates: the son of Ananias from 62 to the siege, the squared sanctuary to the siege of 70, the oracle to no date at all. Tacitus gives the signs a narrative place in the year 70 and no date of their own. One cluster is read continuously: Rev 8:1–5 against BJ 6.290 and 6.299. The note then records the archive's own dates for Revelation, and the held date of 66 CE. Established here: the correspondences, their warrants, their relatives and their operations. Proposed: 66 CE as the working date of composition. Deferred to the paper that will argue it: the identification of the historians' written source with the book, and what that identification would imply for the book's date.

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1. The conventional reading, first and in full

Roman historiography reports prodigies before a disaster as a matter of form, and Tacitus's *Evenerant prodigia* belongs to that genre. Josephus writes for a Flavian readership, and his list serves an argument he states in it: God warned the people and they would not read the signs (BJ 6.288, 6.310, 6.315), and the ambiguous oracle meant Vespasian (6.313). The three Roman-era versions of the oracle are close enough to stand in a relation of dependence or a common source; J. W. van Henten, treating Josephus BJ 6.300–315, Tacitus Hist. 5.13 and Suetonius Vesp. 4.5 together, argues that Josephus is the most probable source of the Latin accounts, and that the oracle's content is too general to trace to a single passage of the Hebrew Bible ("The World Leader from the Land of the Jews," in G. H. van Kooten and P. Barthel, eds., *The Star of Bethlehem and the Magi*, Leiden: Brill, 2015, 359–386; read at its public abstract, dare.uva.nl, the full text not consulted). The signs themselves have older relatives in the scriptures: armed horsemen running through the air over Jerusalem for forty days in 2 Maccabees 5:2–4, the four winds in Zechariah and Daniel, the measured sanctuary in Ezekiel 40, the glory leaving the house in Ezekiel 10–11, the silenced bridegroom and bride in Jeremiah. On this reading the overlap with the Apocalypse is the overlap of a shared stock, prophetic and Roman, and the Apocalypse, on the majority dating, is written a generation after the events, under Domitian.

Every row below is consistent with that reading. What the rows add is a finer account of the overlap: which items the historians date and how, which have relatives that already supply the match, and what operation the Apocalypse's version performs on the historian's.

2. The witnesses

Josephus, BJ 6.288–315, in the seated text. The people, ὡς ἐμβεβροντημένοι, *as if thunderstruck*, did not attend to the signs (6.288). The list:

- J1. ὑπὲρ τὴν πόλιν ἄστρον ἔστη ῥομφαίᾳ παραπλήσιον καὶ παρατείνας ἐπ' ἐνιαυτὸν κομήτης — a star like a sword stood over the city, and a comet a year long (6.289).
- J2. πρὸ τῆς ἀποστάσεως, at the gathering for the feast of unleavened bread, ὀγδόη δ' ἦν Ξανθικοῦ μηνός, at the ninth hour of the night, so great a light shone round the altar (τὸν βωμόν) and the sanctuary that it seemed bright day, καὶ τοῦτο παρέτεινεν ἐφ' ἡμίσειαν ὥραν — and it lasted half an hour (6.290).
- J3. At the same feast a cow led to sacrifice ἔτεκεν ἄρνα ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ μέσῳ — gave birth to a lamb in the middle of the sanctuary (6.292).
- J4. The eastern gate of the inner sanctuary, bronze, barred with iron, closed with difficulty by twenty men, ὤφθη κατὰ νυκτὸς ὥραν ἕκτην αὐτομάτως ἠνοιγμένη — was seen at the sixth hour of the night opened of itself (6.293).
- J5. μιᾷ καὶ εἰκάδι Ἀρτεμισίου μηνός, before sunset, ὤφθη μετέωρα περὶ πᾶσαν τὴν χώραν ἅρματα καὶ φάλαγγες ἔνοπλοι διάττουσαι τῶν νεφῶν — chariots and armed battalions seen aloft over the whole country, darting through the clouds (6.296–298).
- J6. At Pentecost the priests entering the inner sanctuary at night πρῶτον μὲν κινήσεως ἔφασαν ἀντιλαβέσθαι καὶ κτύπου, μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα φωνῆς ἀθρόας μεταβαίνομεν ἐντεῦθεν — perceived first a movement and a crash, and then a voice all together: *we are going*

from here (6.299). The seated text reads μεταβαίνομεν, the indicative. κτύπος is the word for a crash and for a thunderclap.

- J7. Jesus son of Ananias, πρὸ τεσσάρων ἐτῶν τοῦ πολέμου, at Tabernacles, began to cry φωνὴ ἀπὸ ἀνατολῆς, φωνὴ ἀπὸ δύσεως, φωνὴ ἀπὸ τῶν τεσσάρων ἀνέμων, φωνὴ ἐπὶ Ἰεροσόλυμα καὶ τὸν ναόν, φωνὴ ἐπὶ νυμφίους καὶ νύμφας, φωνὴ ἐπὶ τὸν λαὸν πάντα (6.300–301); before Albinus he answered every stroke αἰαὶ Ἱεροσολύμοις (6.305); he cried it ἐφ’ ἑπτὰ ἔτη καὶ μῆνας πέντε, until the siege, and was killed by a stone from an engine as he added αἰαὶ δὲ κἀμοί (6.308–309).
- J8. The Jews made the sanctuary τετράγωνον μετὰ τὴν καθαίρεσιν τῆς Ἀντωνίας, having it written in the oracles that the city and sanctuary would be taken ἐπειδὰν τὸ ἱερὸν γένηται τετράγωνον (6.311).
- J9. What most drove them to the war was χρησμὸς ἀμφίβολος ὁμοίως ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς εὑρημένος γράμμασιν, that at that time one from their country would rule the inhabited world (6.312); Josephus applies it to Vespasian (6.313).

Tacitus, Hist. 5.13, in the Perseus text. *Evenerant prodigia, quae neque hostiis neque votis piare fas habet gens superstitioni obnoxia, religionibus adversa. visae per caelum concurrere acies, rutilantia arma et subito nubium igne conlucere templum. apertae repente delubri fores et audita maior humana vox excedere deos; simul ingens motus excedentium. quae pauci in metum trahebant: pluribus persuasio inerat antiquis sacerdotum litteris contineri eo ipso tempore fore ut valesceret Oriens profectique Iudaea rerum potirentur. quae ambages Vespasianum ac Titum praedixerat.* Armies seen clashing in the sky, weapons glowing red, the temple suddenly lit by fire from the clouds; the doors of the shrine suddenly opened, a voice greater than human heard, *that the gods were departing*, and at once a great movement of their departure. Most held it was contained in the ancient writings of the priests that at that very time the East would grow strong and men setting out from Judaea would possess the world.

Suetonius, Vesp. 4.5, the control for the oracle. *Percrebruerat Oriente toto uetus et constans opinio esse in fatis ut eo tempore Iudaea profecti rerum potirentur. id de imperatore Romano, quantum postea euentu paruit, praedictum Iudaei ad se trahentes rebellarunt.* Suetonius has the oracle and no portents. His wording of the oracle (*Iudaea profecti rerum potirentur*) is Tacitus’s. Josephus locates it in the sacred writings; Tacitus in the ancient writings of the priests; Suetonius in an old and settled opinion across the East.

3. The dates, item by item

The witnesses give two kinds of chronological information. Josephus gives event chronology: festivals, months, spans. Tacitus gives a narrative location: the prodigies stand in the pluperfect, *evenerant*, inside the year that opens Book 5, *Eiusdem anni principio Caesar Titus, perdomandae Iudaeae delectus a patre* (5.1), the year 70. The two are different kinds of information and do not compete.

Josephus’s warrants, item by item:

- **J2–J6, the festal sequence.** The eighth of Xanthicus at unleavened bread (6.290), the same feast (6.292), the twenty-first of Artemisius *not many days after the feast* (6.296), Pentecost (6.299). The frame is πρὸ τῆς ἀποστάσεως καὶ τοῦ πρὸς τὸν πόλεμον

κινήματος (6.290). The war took its beginning δωδεκάτῳ μὲν ἔτει τῆς Νέρωνος ἡγεμονίας, in Artemisius (2.284): the spring of 66 CE. The sequence runs Passover to Pentecost of that spring, and no year is written in it; 66 is the year the frame implies.

- **J1, the star and the comet.** Undated; a year long.
- **J7, the son of Ananias.** From four years before the war (62 CE, at Tabernacles), seven years and five months, to his death in the siege of 70.
- **J8, the squared sanctuary.** After the Antonia was pulled down, which Titus ordered during the siege (6.93): 70 CE. This item belongs to the siege narrative and does not share the spring warrant.
- **J9, the oracle.** Its existence is prior and undated (found in the sacred writings); its effect is dated to the outbreak (it drove them to the war); Josephus's application of it to Vespasian dates from after 69.

The dossier therefore does not inherit one date. Five items carry the spring of 66, one runs from 62 to 70, one belongs to 70, one is undated, and one has three dates for its three aspects.

4. The correspondences

Thirteen rows. The count is an editorial inventory: several rows divide one episode (J6 gives two, J7 three), and several Revelation entries gather passages from different chapters. Josephus supplies all thirteen; Tacitus seven; Revelation all thirteen, distributed across the book in an order of its own. The table records a constellation; no preserved order is claimed.

4a. The words.

	sign	Josephus, BJ 6	Tacitus, Hist. 5.13	Revelation
1	the sword	ἄστρον … ῥομφαίᾳ παραπλήσιον (289)	—	ἀστέρας ἑπτά … ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ ῥομφαία δίστομος ὀξεῖα (1:16)
2	the light at the altar, the half hour	φῶς περιέλαμψε τὸν βωμὸν καὶ τὸν ναόν … ἐφ' ἡμίσειαν ὥραν (290)	*subito nubium igne conlucere templum*	ἐγένετο σιγὴ ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ ὡς ἡμιώριον (8:1); ἐγεμίσθη ὁ ναὸς καπνοῦ ἐκ τῆς δόξης τοῦ Θεοῦ (15:8)

	sign	Josephus, BJ 6	Tacitus, Hist. 5.13	Revelation
3	the birth in the sanctuary	βοῦς … ἔτεκεν ἄρνα ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ μέσῳ (292)	—	Ἀρνίον ἑστηκὸς ὡς ἐσφαγμένον, ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ θρόνου (5:6); σημεῖον μέγα ὤφθη ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ … καὶ ἔτεκεν υἱόν (12:1, 12:5)
4	the door opened of itself	ἡ ἀνατολικὴ πύλη τοῦ ἐνδοτέρω ναοῦ … αὐτομάτως ἠνοιγμένη (293)	*apertae repente delubri fores*	θύρα ἠνεῳγμένη ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ (4:1); ἠνοίγη ὁ ναὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ ὁ ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ (11:19; 15:5)
5	chariots and armies in the sky	ἅρματα καὶ φάλαγγες ἔνοπλοι διάττουσαι τῶν νεφῶν (298)	*visae per caelum concurrere acies, rutilantia arma*	ὡς φωνὴ ἁρμάτων ἵππων πολλῶν τρεχόντων εἰς πόλεμον (9:9); τὰ στρατεύματα τὰ ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ … ἐφ’ ἵπποις λευκοῖς (19:14)
6	the crash	ἐμβεβροντημένοι (288); κινήσεως … καὶ κτύπου (299)	*simul ingens motus excedentium*	ἐγένοντο βρονταὶ καὶ φωναὶ καὶ ἀστραπαὶ καὶ σεισμός (8:5); ἐλάλησαν αἱ ἑπτὰ βρονταὶ τὰς ἑαυτῶν φωνάς (10:3)
7	the voice of departure	φωνῆς ἀθρόας μεταβαίνομεν ἐντεῦθεν (299)	*audita maior humana vox excedere deos*	ἐξῆλθεν φωνὴ μεγάλη ἐκ τοῦ ναοῦ (16:17); Ἐξέλθατε ὁ λαός μου ἐξ αὐτῆς (18:4)

	sign	Josephus, BJ 6	Tacitus, Hist. 5.13	Revelation
8	the voice from the four winds	φωνὴ ἀπὸ ἀνατολῆς … ἀπὸ τῶν τεσσάρων ἀνέμων (301)	—	κρατοῦντας τοὺς τέσσαρας ἀνέμους τῆς γῆς (7:1); ἀναβαίνοντα ἀπὸ ἀνατολῆς ἡλίου … ἔκραξεν φωνῇ μεγάλῃ (7:2)
9	bridegroom and bride	φωνὴ ἐπὶ νυμφίους καὶ νύμφας (301)	—	φωνὴ νυμφίου καὶ νύμφης οὐ μὴ ἀκουσθῇ ἐν σοὶ ἔτι (18:23)
10	woe	αἰαὶ Ἱεροσολύμοις (305, 306); αἰαὶ πάλιν τῇ πόλει καὶ τῷ λαῷ καὶ τῷ ναῷ (309)	—	Οὐαὶ οὐαὶ οὐαὶ τοὺς κατοικοῦντας ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς (8:13)
11	the squared sanctuary	τὸ ἱερὸν … τετράγωνον ἐποίησαν … ἐπειδὰν τὸ ἱερὸν γένηται τετράγωνον (311)	—	μέτρησον τὸν ναὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ … καὶ τὴν αὐλὴν … ἐδόθη τοῖς ἔθνεσιν (11:1–2); ἡ πόλις τετράγωνος κεῖται (21:16); ναὸν οὐκ εἶδον ἐν αὐτῇ (21:22)
12	the oracle of world rule	ἀπὸ τῆς χώρας αὐτῶν τις ἄρξει τῆς οἰκουμένης (312)	*profectique Iudaea rerum potirentur*	ἔτεκεν υἱόν, ἄρσεν, ὃς μέλλει ποιμαίνειν πάντα τὰ ἔθνη ἐν ῥάβδῳ σιδηρᾷ (12:5); Ἐγένετο ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ κόσμου τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν καὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ (11:15)

	sign	Josephus, BJ 6	Tacitus, Hist. 5.13	Revelation
13	the writing that holds the oracle	ἐν τοῖς λογίοις … ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς εὑρημένος γράμμασιν (311, 312)	*antiquis sacerdotum litteris contineri*	Μὴ σφραγίσῃς τοὺς λόγους τῆς προφητείας τοῦ βιβλίου τούτου (22:10)

4b. Warrant, relative, operation. For each row: the chronological warrant of the historian's item (§3); the nearest older relative in the seated scriptures, where one exists; and the operation that joins the historian's sign to the Apocalypse's.

	warrant (Josephus)	older relative	operation joining Josephus to Revelation
1	undated	—	a star like a sword becomes a sword from the mouth of one holding seven stars: the two elements kept, their relation changed
2	spring 66 (Passover)	—	shared duration, different phenomena: a light lasting half an hour, a silence lasting half an hour; both at the altar (§5)
3	spring 66 (Passover)	—	composite: the lamb born in the sanctuary is matched by two separate scenes, the slain Lamb standing in the middle of the throne and the woman giving birth
4	spring 66	—	the gate of the earthly sanctuary opened of itself; the door and the sanctuary opened *in heaven*: transposition of place

	warrant (Josephus)	older relative	operation joining Josephus to Revelation
5	spring 66 (21 Artemisius)	2 Macc 5:2–4: horsemen running through the air over the whole city for forty days, armed in companies, and *all prayed that the manifestation had come for good*	near-identity with an older relative already present; Revelation’s armies follow a rider (19:14)
6	spring 66 (Pentecost)	—	a crash heard in the sanctuary; thunders as utterance, voices with them (8:5, 10:3)
7	spring 66 (Pentecost)	Ezek 10:18 καὶ ἐξῆλθεν δόξα Κυρίου ἀπὸ τοῦ οἴκου; Jer 51:45 (WLC) □□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□ ,□□□□□□ *go out from her midst, my people*; Isa 52:11 ἐξέλθατε ἐκ μέσου αὐτῆς	change of speaker, addressee and object: in Josephus a voice in the sanctuary says *we* are going; in Tacitus the gods are departing; in Revelation a voice from heaven tells *my people* to come out of the city (18:4), and a voice from the sanctuary says Γέγονεν (16:17)
8	62–70	Zech 6:5 οἱ τέσσαρες ἄνεμοι τοῦ οὐρανοῦ; Zech 2:6 φεύγετε … ἐκ τῶν τεσσάρων ἀνέμων; Dan 7:2	a voice *from* the four winds; four angels holding the four winds back: from source of the cry to restraint of the wind

	warrant (Josephus)	older relative	operation joining Josephus to Revelation
9	62–70	Jer 25:10 (LXX) ἀπολῶ ἀπ’ αὐτῶν … φωνὴν νυμφίου καὶ φωνὴν νύμφης, ὀσμὴν μύρου καὶ φῶς λύχνου; Jer 7:34; 16:9	Revelation’s verse (φῶς λύχνου … φωνὴ νυμφίου καὶ νύμφης, 18:23) stands closer to Jeremiah 25:10, the lamp included, than to Josephus; the son of Ananias cries *against* bride and bridegroom, and Revelation and Jeremiah announce their silence
10	62–70	—	αἰαί, the lament, in Josephus; οὐαί, the prophetic woe, threefold, in Revelation
11	70 (after the Antonia)	Ezek 40:3 κάλαμος μέτρον	reversal: an oracle that the sanctuary’s becoming four-square means its capture; a city that is four-square and has no sanctuary in it (21:16, 21:22); between them the measured sanctuary and the outer court given to the nations (11:1–2)
12	undated / 66 / after 69	(van Henten: too general to trace)	the one from that country who will rule the world; the son who will shepherd all nations with a rod of iron

	warrant (Josephus)	older relative	operation joining Josephus to Revelation
13	undated	—	the historians locate the *oracles* in writings they do not name; Revelation names itself a book of prophecy and forbids its sealing

Five rows have a seated older relative, and in two (5 and 9) the relative supplies the match as closely as the Apocalypse does. Four rows (1, 4, 7, 11) join their terms by a transformation: a changed relation, a transposition from earth to heaven, a change of speaker and object, a reversal. Row 3 is a composite of two scenes. Row 2 shares a duration and differs in its phenomenon.

5. A local cluster: Rev 8:1–5

The second row is the one that should be read continuously. Rev 8:1–5 in the seated text:

Καὶ ὅταν ἤνοιξεν τὴν σφραγῖδα τὴν ἑβδόμην, ἐγένετο σιγὴ ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ ὡς ἡμιώριον (8:1). The seven angels are given seven trumpets (8:2). Another angel ἐστάθη ἐπὶ τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου with a golden censer and much incense, for the prayers of all the saints ἐπὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον τὸ χρυσοῦν (8:3); the smoke of the incense goes up before God (8:4); the angel fills the censer ἐκ τοῦ πυρὸς τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου and casts it to the earth, καὶ ἐγένοντο βρονταὶ καὶ φωναὶ καὶ ἀστραπαὶ καὶ σεισμός (8:5).

Against which, in Josephus, two items of the festal sequence: a light round the altar and the sanctuary at the ninth hour of the night, lasting half an hour (6.290); and in the inner sanctuary at Pentecost a movement, a crash and a voice (6.299).

The cluster holds in five verses what Josephus spreads across one spring: a half hour, an altar, fire, a crash or thunder, voices. The words differ at the altar. Josephus's altar is τὸν βωμόν; John's is τὸ θυσιαστήριον, the Septuagint's word for the altar of the God of Israel, which Josephus also uses elsewhere. The half hour is a light in one and a silence in the other. Josephus's light and Josephus's voice are Passover and Pentecost apart; John's silence and John's thunders are four verses apart.

6. Relations, set down

The witnesses agree on what was seen. Josephus gives the signs an event chronology, item by item (§3). Tacitus gives them a narrative place in the year 70 and no date of their own. The Apocalypse gives them no historical date and sets them as what John was shown (Ἀνάβα ὧδε, καὶ δείξω σοι ἃ δεῖ γενέσθαι μετὰ ταῦτα, 4:1).

The historians locate oracles in writings. Josephus: the squared sanctuary *written in the oracles*, the world-rule oracle *found in the sacred writings*. Tacitus: *antiquis sacerdotum*

litteris contineri. Suetonius: an old and settled opinion. None names the writing, and all three say it meant Vespasian. What they place in writing is the oracle; the portent list itself they report as seen and heard.

The interpreters split. In Josephus the common people read the light and the gate as good and the learned read desolation (6.291, 6.295); in Tacitus *pauci in metum trahebant*. In 2 Maccabees 5:4, before any of these, the people pray that the airborne armies came for good. Each account carries a split between a reading in which the signs promise and a reading in which they warn.

The transformations. Where Revelation's version differs from the historian's, the difference has a shape: the departing voice becomes a command to leave the city (7); the squaring that signals capture becomes a square city without a sanctuary (11); the star like a sword becomes a sword in the mouth (1); the earthly gate becomes a door in heaven (4). These are the points a reading must explain.

7. Established, proposed, deferred

Established: the thirteen correspondences at the word, each with its warrant (§3), its relative where one is seated (§4b), and its operation (§4b); the cluster of §5.

Proposed: the archive holds 66 CE as its working date of composition for the Apocalypse, provisionally, subject to the case being formally argued (the operator's ruling of 2026-11-04). It is the year Josephus's festal sequence implies.

Deferred: the operator's reading, that the historians are describing the book. A paper making it has four steps to take, and they are distinct: the date of the reported events (here: the spring of 66 for five items, other dates for the rest); the existence and date of a written account of the portents; the identification of that account with the Apocalypse; and the implication of that identification for the Apocalypse's composition. An event dated to 66 does not by itself date a text that describes it; the third step supplies the textual relation that would carry the date across. The paper will also have to show what the festal sequence of 66 has to do with the Apocalypse's own order of seals, trumpets and bowls, and to explain, row by row, the operations of §4b: why rows 5 and 9 stand as close to 2 Maccabees and Jeremiah as to Josephus, and why the transformations of §6 run the way they do.

8. The archive's dates for Revelation

The archive's thesis on Revelation, developed over a decade and deposited as Revelation First (#202, #1217, #1735), has placed the book early from the start. The conventional date entered the archive only in work that addressed Revelation without being about its priority or its date, where it was set down unmarked, by convention, without the thesis being consulted. Those entries are a contamination of the record, and they are recorded as errata. The record, by deposit:

deposit	date given	form
#407, The Revelation Room (2026-01-26)	“Revelation (68-73 CE) → Epistles (70-90 CE) → Gospels (75-110 CE)”	a sequence
#10, Fractal Navigation Map (2026-01-28)	“Revelation was written first (68-73 CE)”	a core claim
#636, Space Ark (2026-04-08)	“written before the destruction of the Temple (pre-70 CE)”	hypothesis
#644, TANG: Revelation Studies (2026-04-10)	the Domitianic, Neronic and Hadrianic positions mapped beside the pre-70 revolutionary position	a dating map
#202, Revelation First ≠ Revelation Early (2026-06-14)	the internal evidence “permits, and in several places favors, a pre-70 CE reading”: the temple stands (11:1–2), the number is Nero	an argument
#1217, the Work Plan (2026-06-17)	the pre-70 reading restated; the full dating survey planned	a work plan
#1735, Revelation First (2026-11-03)	the chronological gate “priced, not dissolved”; “A pre-70 date for Revelation does not by itself establish priority over Paul”	a priced hypothesis
#683, #1362, the Secret Book of Walt work plan	“c. 95 CE”	erratum of 2026-11-04: the conventional date, unmarked, in a planning table
#584, #589, Combat Scholasticism, Lectio II.6	“~95 CE”	erratum of 2026-11-04: the conventional date, unmarked, in a commentary

The held date of 66 falls inside the pre-70 range of #636 and #202 and outside the 68–73 of #407 and #10. Those deposits stand as recorded, as the positions they held when deposited; the working proposal of 66 supersedes their range as the archive’s held date without revising them.

Texts

Josephus, *Bellum Iudaicum*: Perseus tlg0526.tlg004, seat josephus (data/corpora/josephus, text/BJ.txt), read at 2.284, 6.93 and 6.286–316.

Tacitus, *Historiae*: Perseus canonical-latinLit phi1351.phi004.perseus-lat2 (C. D. Fisher, Oxford, 1911), commit bfdcd062840c67dc85993eb942fcc75e68457f6d, read at 5.1 and 5.13; to

be seated as EA-CORPORA-33/01 (tacitus).

Suetonius, *Divus Vespasianus*: Perseus canonical-latinLit phi1348.abo020.perseus-lat2, same commit, read at 4.5.

Revelation: Nestle 1904, EA-CORPORA-01/04 (Rev.txt), read at 1:16, 4:1, 5:6, 7:1–2, 8:1–5, 8:13, 9:9, 10:3, 11:1–2, 11:15, 11:19, 12:1, 12:5, 15:5, 15:8, 16:17, 18:4, 18:23, 19:14, 21:16, 21:22, 22:10.

Septuagint: Swete, EA-CORPORA-01/05, read at 2 Macc 5:2–4, Isa 52:11, Jer 7:34, 16:9, 25:10, Ezek 10:18, 11:23, 40:3, Zech 2:6, 6:5, Dan 7:2. Hebrew: Westminster Leningrad Codex, EA-CORPORA-01/09, Jer 51:45 (not in the Septuagint's Jeremiah).

J. W. van Henten, "The World Leader from the Land of the Jews: Josephus, Jewish War 6.300-315; Tacitus, Histories 5.13; and Suetonius, Vespasian 4.5," in G. H. van Kooten and P. Barthel (eds.), *The Star of Bethlehem and the Magi* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 359–386, DOI 10.1163/9789004308473_016; read at its public abstract (dare.uva.nl).

Companion: *Two Lists of Stones* (#1592), whose manner this note follows; Revelation First (#202, #1217, #1735).

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