

## *Delayed by the Ibex: Tarah*

*And they departed from Tahath and pitched at Tarah,  
Numbers 33:27.*



Do you have close relatives who worship the gods of this world? Abraham did. His family, like so many today, was divided between the worship of the Creator YAH and the human-made gods of popular culture. He was called out of this environment to his new home in Canaan. We are being called to follow his exit out of Babylon. This spiritual calling is evident from a verse of Scripture in the New Testament:

*By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is YAH, Hebrews 11:8-10.*

As Abraham did before us, may we swiftly follow *Yahweh* out of Babylon and into Canaan. Let us not be delayed, in this journey, by “the Ibex,” as the Children of Israel were at *Tarah*. But, let us not get ahead of our story. First, we must pause and explain the significance of the Ibex in the region of Abraham’s home, Mesopotamia.





In ancient Mesopotamia, the region now known as the Middle East, the moon was worshipped. The false god of the moon was originally known as *Sin* (pronounced “Seen”), as was explained in *Called to Canaan*, Volume One. Because its curved horns were shaped like the crescent moon, the people of this region associated the ibex with their god, *Sin*, later called *Allah*. Thus, the ibex was an early Islamic idol, as is shown in the images on the left and on the previous page. The relief carving from a Sumerian Seal (previous page), shows three “sacred” Ibexes. The image on the left is a Mesopotamian relief carving of a king holding a “sacred” ibex, as an offering to his idol “god.” The

lower far right image (previous page) is an altar stand supported by an idol Ibex, dating to 2600-2350 B.C. It is made of arsenical copper, inlaid with shell and lapis lazuli. It was manufactured by a sophisticated method of metal work now known as the “lost-wax technique.”<sup>98</sup>

Temple rituals during the Early Dynastic period included making offerings of food, drink, and, probably, incense to the gods. This Mesopotamian stand, with four rings held by an ibex, would have supported lamps or bowls containing offerings or incense and may have been used in temple or in banquet rituals.<sup>99</sup>

*Terah (also spelled Terah), was a region of Mesopotamia named after Abraham's father.*

Genesis 11:26 states that Terah had three sons: Abram (later called Abraham), Nahor, and Haran. Terah lived in “Ur of the Chaldees,” the location which later became known as Babylon. There his youngest son, Haran, died. After Lot’s father, Haran, died, the rest of the family relocated with Abraham, taking their pagan gods with them.

In spite of Abraham's righteous influence, Terah continued his worship of pagan gods throughout his life.<sup>100</sup> In fact, Terah's livelihood came from manufacturing and selling the idolatrous images he worshipped. Terah's idolatry is well documented in the Book of Joshua.

*And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith (Yahweh) (El) of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old times, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods, Joshua 24:2.*

The mention of "the flood" in the above text is actually a reference to the River Euphrates (as the *Strong's Concordance* states in the meaning of the word). Now, let us bring these historical strands together, showing plainly how they fit into the context of Abraham's life and travels, and, later, the Children of Israel's encampment at *Tarah*.

Along with the other inhabitants of this region, Terah embraced the pre-Islamic religion of the moon-god, Allah, symbolized by the ibex. In the Talmudic *Oral History of the Jews*, Terah was known as, not only an idol-worshipper, but also a manufacturer and seller of the idols associated with pre-Islamic worship. The following tale has been passed

down by the Hebrew people from generation to generation. Translated into English, the story is as follows:

*Abraham's father,  
Terah was an idol-  
merchant in the  
pre-Islamic religion  
of the moon "god,"  
Sin, now called  
Allah.*

Terah once went away and left Abraham (then called Abram) to mind his store. A woman came with a plateful of flour and asked Abraham to offer it to the idols. Abraham took a stick, broke the idols, and put the stick in the largest idol's hand. When Terah returned, he demanded that Abraham explain what he had done. Abraham told Terah that the idols fought among themselves and the largest broke the others with the stick.

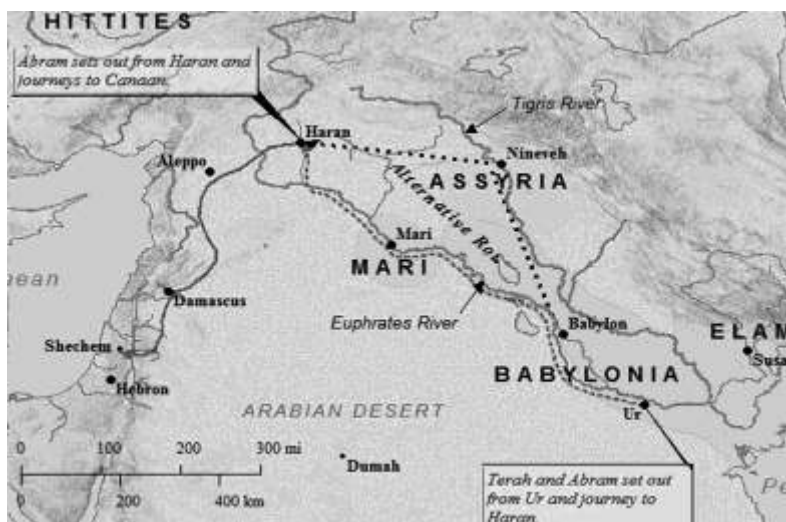
“Why do you make sport of me?” Terah cried, “Do they have any knowledge?”

Abraham replied, “Listen to what you are saying!”

Terah then delivered Abraham to King Nimrod for punishment.<sup>101</sup>

Shortly thereafter, Abraham heeded *Yahweh’s* Call and left the borders of Babylon. Terah sought a new market for his idolatrous craft and worship, while Abraham sought the “Better Land” and deliverance from idolatry. With opposite intentions and goals from his father, Abraham became not only the prototype of all who will be called out of spiritual Babylon, but also a forerunner of all the future “seed of Abraham” who would overcome the challenges of a spiritually divided home.

Abraham’s journey out of Babylon is shown on the map below:



The experience of Abraham and his family gives us a picture of what it may be like in many families where one or more are led by the Holy Spirit to flee “Babylon,” while take their idolatry with them. It seems to follow the “Many-are-called-few-are-chosen” principle, with an added twist:

*For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household, He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me, Matt. 10:35-37.*

Those who follow *Yahweh* today are called the “seed of Abraham” just as they were in ancient times. The Covenant promise of Salvation applies only to this spiritual “seed,” (Galatians 3:16). Thus, it is vitally important that we be counted among Abraham’s seed. A mere verbal claim upon this title is not sufficient in Heaven’s Eyes. The Bible says that in order to be the spiritual “seed of Abraham,” we must: 1) be baptized into the Body of *Yahshua* (Galatians 3:27-29), and 2) do the faith-filled “works” of Abraham.



1) be baptized into the Body of *Yahshua* (Galatians 3:27-29), and 2) do the faith-filled “works” of Abraham.

*They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. [Yahshua] saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham, John 8:39.*

What righteous works did Abraham demonstrate in respect to the Allah-worshipping practices of his father? He departed from it utterly, even though it set him “at variance against his father.”

What does this mean to the spiritual “seed of Abraham” in the last generation? If Babylonian idolatry is being practiced by a “beloved enemy” in the home, may we, like Abraham, still love the Saviour best. When comes the test of love and loyalty, may we always choose *Yahweh*, even when it means we must sever from cherished relationships and influences that would keep us in “spiritual Babylon.” Otherwise, we may try to foolishly tote Babylon along with us, while

still hoping to attain the purity of the Promised Land. This was the test of both Abraham and the Children of Israel after him, when they came to their 23<sup>rd</sup> encampment at *Tarah*.

## ENCOMPASSED BY ICONS AND IDOLS

Israel's 23<sup>rd</sup> encampment, called *Tarah* (an alternate spelling for *Terah*), is named after Abraham's moon-worshipping father, who once settled in this region. Interestingly enough, the Muslim religion (Islam), Judaism, and Christianity all claim Abraham as their father. Yet, in actuality, it was not Abraham, but *Terah*, who led in the worship of the moon "god," *Sin* or *Nanna*, later called Allah, whose religion took root in this region. Spiritually, *Terah*, not Abraham, was the progenitor of Islam.<sup>102</sup>

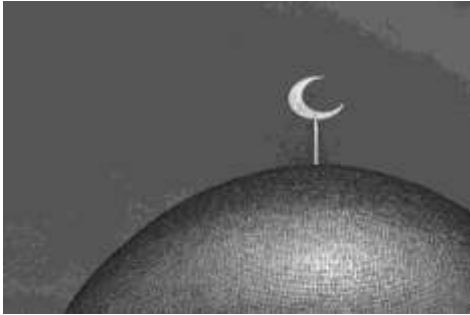
In Hebrew, *Tarah* means "delay." In English, we would say "to tarry."<sup>103</sup> This encampment name implies a delay in which Israel sojourned among the idolatrous pre-Muslims, for a time. Such a delay bears a noteworthy parallel for *Yahweh*'s people in the End.

Today the worshippers of the god of the "ibex" are growing in numbers and power world-wide. As we navigate this "wilderness," we will be accused of indifference or intolerance toward that which others count equally sacred, the "no gods" of Galatians 4:8 and 2 Chronicles 13:8, 9. Could that have happened to the Children of Israel, in *Tarah*, 3500 years ago?

"Muhammad," we are told, "grew up worshipping many pagan gods in the *Kabah*, including the moon, called "*Hubal*" or "*Allah*." After his conversion to monotheism, through the influence of Christianity, we are told that Muhammad stopped worshipping the moon. The same is claimed by all Muslims down to the present day. Regardless

*The emblem of the ancient Mesopotamian moon "god" was the crescent moon. This well-known icon is still the universal symbol of Islam.*

of their claim, the crescent moon is still the universal symbol of Islam. *Allah* is still their god. Muslims will argue that there is no evidence to



associate the crescent moon symbol with Islam today. If that were true, why do Muslims still use the crescent moon, anciently associated with moon-god and ibex horn, as their symbol? This is amply demonstrated on contemporary Islamic mosques and flags.

As we have already begun to demonstrate, it can be easily proven that the crescent moon and the ibex horn have symbolized the moon-god, *Allah*, as far back as the time of Abraham. One can clearly see the evidence through ancient artifacts from this region.



By way of illustration, consider the picture on the left. This image is a commemorative stone stele, from Babylon, southern Iraq now, dating to about 900-800 B.C. The “divine” symbols above the two priests are a solar disk for the sun-god, *Shamash*, a crescent of the moon for the moon-god *Sin*, with a lion-headed mace on a pedestal.<sup>103</sup> This piece is now housed in the British Museum in London, Great Britain.

The Ziggurat at Ur is pictured on the following page. It was one of the two major centers of moon worship in the days of Abraham. There, the moon god, “*Sin*,” was worshipped, the ziggurat being called the “holy hill,” (See Leviticus 26:30). The principle deity of both Babylonia and Assyria, “*Sin*,” the moon-god,

was worshipped at centers in Ur and in Harran, and was then called “Nanna.”<sup>104</sup>

Like the crescent moon symbol, ziggurats were also prevalent in the worship of the sun and moon in ancient Babylon. Many of them were quite monumental, their very size revealing the importance of this worship to these ancient people.



The infamous Tower of Babel is thought to have been a great, high ziggurat built in tribute to this moon-god. By its description in *The Book of Jasher*, it took many years to build since its height was many “stories.” In addition, according to Jasher, traveling its circumference required a “three days’ walk.”<sup>105</sup>

As history clearly testifies, it is wrong to deny the obvious connection between the ancient crescent moon symbol of pagan moon-god worship, the ibex, and the icons of modern Islam. The connection is so powerful that only the “blind” would dispute it.<sup>106</sup>

Thus, we see that the idolatrous religion of Terah is still alive and well in the realm once called *Tarah*. Now, as then, it is still in complete opposition to the worship of the true Creator of Heaven and Earth.

## MESSAGE BY NUMBER

Into this hostile environment of astrological signs and omens came the worshippers of the True YAH. There must have been some encounter with the worshippers of Allah to cause a “delay” in Israel’s progress. Since this is the 23rd campsite and twenty-three signifies “death,”<sup>107</sup> we may imply that the Children of Israel faced some very real danger, hostility, or threat in this land of the ibex and the moon god.



In Hebrew, the number 23 suggests a “turning away from,” or “rejecting.” 32, is its mirror image. Significantly, in Hebrew, 32 stands for the “Covenant relationship.” Thus, the mirror image of that Covenant number would mean to “turn away from the Covenant,” and bear the consequences: death.<sup>108</sup> This would certainly cause a dangerous “delay” in the journey to Canaan.

*The number 23 represents "turning away from" or "rejecting" the "Covenant."*

The 23<sup>rd</sup> verse of Genesis, Chapter One, brings us to the end of day five in the Creation Week. This is the day living creatures in the sea and air were created and told to “be fruitful and multiply.” This verse records YAH’s command to reproduce “life” after each kind. It was only after the fall of man that the number 23 came to be associated with rebellion, bearing the fruit of death. Probably the best-known Scripture associated with the “number 23,” is the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm. It is, no doubt, the most quoted text at funerals.

The meaning and seriousness of number 23 is born out in Romans 1:28-32, where Paul explains twenty-three sins that are “worthy of death.” By engaging in these 23 points of rebellion, we “turn away from the Covenant relationship” with *Yahweh*. When we do this, there are two possible outcomes. At best, we “delay” our journey to ultimate Canaan. At worst, we jeopardize it entirely. Here is Paul’s list:<sup>109</sup>

- |                                |                               |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Filled with unrighteousness | 13. Despiteful                |
| 2. Fornication                 | 14. Haters of <i>Yah</i>      |
| 3. Wickedness                  | 15. Without understanding     |
| 4. Covetousness                | 16. Proud                     |
| 5. Envy                        | 17. Boasters                  |
| 6. Deceit                      | 18. Inventors of evil         |
| 7. Murder                      | 19. Disobedient to parents    |
| 8. Malignity                   | 20. Covenant breakers         |
| 9. Debate                      | 21. Without natural affection |
| 10. Maliciousness              | 22. Implacable                |
| 11. Whisperers                 | 23. Unmerciful                |
| 12. Backbiters                 |                               |

We must not overlook the hidden meaning of little details that give wisdom to the prudent. Not only is “death” associated with the meaning of the “number 23;” but also, “extinction” is implied. Number 23 signifies the death of one, with the annihilation of the seed, as well.<sup>110</sup>

What can End-Time, spiritual Israel learn from this message in the number? Like Abraham, our spiritual forefather, and the Children of Israel at *Tarah*, we will all be tested and threatened by the Islamic religion of the “ibex.” Sooner or later, we will also stand in the realm of *Tarah*. When we are likewise surrounded by these teachings, we will have to make a choice to “tarry” or quietly press on.

*Well-known  
Protestant Christian  
ministers now  
speak... using the  
name Allah  
interchangeably  
with God.*

### THE THREAT OF THE IBEX

So, how does the ancient religion of the Ibex threaten spiritual Israel today? One hundred years ago, the idea that Christianity could be blended with Islam would have seemed as absurd as trying to fit a square peg into a round hole. But today, a previously unimaginable union is forming between contemporary Christianity and the religion of Islam. The new blended religion is called “Chrislam.”

Certainly, for such a strange merger to be possible there must be great modifications made within one or both of the belief systems. Notably however, it is not the Muslim faith which has been adjusted. Alterations are being made within the teachings of fundamental Christianity facilitating this strange union.

Unsurprisingly, the papacy is at the helm, spearheading the changes within Christian beliefs. To demonstrate the new Christianity’s agreement with Islam and co-worship of their “god,” on May 14, 1999, Pope John Paul II kissed the Koran, the holy book of the Muslim religion. This is not an unusual act in itself. After all, devout

Muslims frequently express their commitment to *Allah* and his “word” by kissing the Koran.<sup>109</sup>

In the photograph on the right, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, expresses his Muslim devotion by kissing the Koran. The act of kissing their “holy” book holds well-known significance.



But, when the pope, who claimed to worship the Christian God, kissed the Koran, he demonstrated plainly that he worshipped and honored the same god as the Muslims. This is the stance of many professedly Christian leaders, today.

As Albert Mohler, President of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary wrote, “A retiring Roman Catholic bishop in the Netherlands has been making headlines around the world in recent days with his suggestion that Dutch Christians should pray to *Allah*.” Bishop Muskens also commented, “*Allah* is a very beautiful word for YAH... What does YAH care what we call him?”<sup>112</sup>

Practicing Muslims will be the first to testify that they well know that *Yahweh* and *Allah* are two **different** gods. *Allah* is the moon god, specifically, while *Yahweh* is the Creator, the Almighty. As any Muslim well knows, Christians are being fooled into switching gods, when they pray to *Allah*, thinking it is only a generic term.

Well-known Protestant Christian ministers now speak before their mega-church congregations using the name “*Allah*,” the Muslim word for “THE GOD” interchangeably with God or *Yahweh*. Certainly, they are retreating into the land of *Terah*, the land of the moon god. This is a grave danger, leading many unsuspecting Christians into idolatry.

Bill Wilson, online Christian commentator of *The Daily Jot*, made the following comment on the rise of “Chrislam” in the United States:

During the weekend of November 13, 2010, many Christian churches across the United States began a series of sermons aimed at bringing about reconciliation between Muslims and Christians. These misguided Presbyterian ministers are trying to focus on a relationship between the Holy Bible and the Koran they call “Chrislam.” They are saying that because the Koran mentions “Jesus” that there is common ground with Christianity. To prove their point, they are placing Korans alongside the Holy Bible in their pews. And they are teaching that you can be a follower of Christ without necessarily believing that *Yahshua* is the Messiah, the Son of *Yahweh*, who died for our sins offering the gift of eternal salvation.<sup>113</sup>

As Dwight Nelson, the trend-setting senior pastor of the Pioneer Memorial Church in Michigan, flatly stated, “Allah is God.”<sup>114</sup> Perhaps more shocking than this statement itself was the reaction of the listening congregation. So complete and insidious had been this coup of the new Chrislam beliefs, that no one even objected!



Not only have Chrislam teachings been gaining ground in the churches, there is a movement some have called the “Islamization of America” within the political arena, as well. Commentator Norm Olson noted, “The Chrislam movement has gained impetus by statements from President George W. Bush that Christians, Jews, and Muslims all worship the same YAH, and by Rick Warren’s reference to “Isa” (the Muslim name for Yahshua) in his prayer at the inauguration of President Barack Obama.”<sup>115</sup>

But, the claim of the current Chrislam leaders is incorrect! Allah is not merely an interchangeable name for *Yahweh*. The two are not one and the same. And “Isa,” of the Muslim Koran, is not the same as the

*Yahshua* (Jesus) of the Scriptures. In the Koran (alternate spelling Quran), *Yahshua* is reduced to a prophet, of the magnitude of Moses. He is not worshipped as *YAH* manifested in the Flesh (1 Timothy 3:16). Norm Olson explains:

“Jesus, in the Quran, is neither the only-begotten Son of *YAH* nor the Messiah who was divinely appointed to restore the House of David. He is rather viewed as a prophet who was appointed by Allah to prepare mankind for the coming of Mohammad. In the Quran, Jesus neither suffers nor dies on the cross but is rather raised alive into heaven. The victim at Calvary, Islam teaches, was either Simon of Cyrene or Judas Iscariot. The Quran mentions that Jesus was born of the virgin Maryam—not by an immaculate conception, but rather, by the will of Allah. Jesus, they claim, performed miracles to show



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the Jewish people that He was a *maseh* in the manner of Moses and Ibrahim (Abraham).”<sup>116</sup>

In fact, according to the Koran, the teaching that *Yahshua* was *YAH*, manifest in the flesh is “blasphemy.” The Koran fully denies the divinity of *Yahshua* (Jesus)!

It is blasphemous, indeed, to say that Allah is Christ the son of Mary. The Koran goes on to say:

“Who then hath the least power against Allah, if His will were to destroy Christ the son of Mary, his mother, and everyone that is on the earth?” For to Allah belongeth the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and all that is between. He createth what He pleaseth. For Allah hath power over all things.<sup>117</sup>

For, according to the Bible, anyone who teaches that *Yahshua* was not fully *YAH*, equal to the Father (Philippians 2:6) is of the spirit of antichrist!

*Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of YAH: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of YAH: Every spirit that confesseth that (Yahshua) is come in the flesh is of YAH: And every spirit that confesseth not that (Yahshua) is come in the flesh is not of YAH: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world, 1 John 4:1-3.*

*Who is a liar but he that denieth that (Yahshua) is the Christ? He is antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [but he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also]. Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father, 1 John 2:22-24.*

*The Allah of the  
Muslim is not the  
Yahweh of Israel.*

With this vital distinction, we are able to fully unmask the threat of the ibex against the true worship of *Yahweh*. The treat of the moon god has not taken on a new identity. It is the same that Gideon destroyed in the battle with the Midianites, Judges 8:8-26, whose camels wore their sacred ornaments. These emblems Srong's Concordance identifies as the crescent moon icons.

There can be no question that Allah of the Muslim is not the *Yahweh* of Judeo-Christianity! In denying the Divinity and Death of *Yahshua*, the teachings of Islam cannot possibly be from *Yahweh*. As the Bible says, if we deny the Son, we do not have the Father either! Clearly, there is a tremendous threat to *Yahweh's* End-time followers by the religion of the Ibex! We must take great care not to "delay" in the

region of the moon “god,” nor espouse any of its Chrislam teachings, no matter how charismatic its teachers, -lest we be “turned away from the Covenant” and head back to Egypt!

## HOPE IN THE REALM OF *TARAH*

Amid all the dire warnings against dallying in the realm of the Ibex, the Heavenly Father has also threaded silver strands of hope and help into this camp message. We may take comfort in the fact that *Tarah* was also a place of “good, sweet water.”<sup>118</sup> Water, the very symbol of life which flows from the pure Word (Ephesians 5:26-27, Proverbs 30:5), yields Protection and Truth to those who seek it.

The presence of life-giving water at *Tarah* is reminiscent of *Elim* (Israel’s 5<sup>th</sup> Camp), the oasis with twelve wells and seventy palm trees. But what a contrast stands between Israel’s experiences at these two oases! *Elim* was a place only of peace and tranquility. But at *Tarah*, there is Heavenly refreshment in the midst of danger and threat of death. But, be careful! Don’t relax at *Tarah*.

Fittingly, the message for this 23<sup>rd</sup> camp-lesson is recorded in the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm. We may take great comfort knowing that our Good Shepherd “prepares a table” for His children even in the “presence of their enemies.” And even “though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death,” His “Rod and Staff” will comfort those who trust in Him completely..

Thus, we find hope for our End-time experience in spiritual *Tarah*. For the unwary, their advance in Truth may be delayed and even blocked, by the intrusion of paganism. But, for the spiritually alert and faithful pilgrim, passage through this idolatrous realm will be sustained by the life-giving, pure Word of Truth, which flows directly from the Throne of Grace (Hebrews 4:16).

“Your worst days are never so bad,  
That you are beyond the reach of (*Yahweh*’s) Grace.  
And your best days are never so good,  
That you are beyond the need of (*YAH*’s) Grace.”<sup>119</sup>



## SUMMARY OF CHAPTER NINE

- Israel's 23<sup>rd</sup> wilderness encampment was called *Tarah*. This is an alternate spelling of Terah, Abraham's father.
- The population of this region embraced Terah's moon "god" called *Sin*, *Nanna*, or later Allah. Terah was a merchant-manufacturer of these idols.
- The name "*Tarah*" refers to the warning against being delayed in the land of the ibex, a symbol of moon-"god" worship.
- The number of this encampment (23), in Hebrew, means to "turn away from the Covenant." Those who embrace the worship of the moon-god are indeed turning away from the Covenant relationship with *Yahweh*.
- One way the worship of the ancient moon-god threatens to turn End-time spiritual Israel away from the Covenant relationship with *Yahweh* is through the Islamization of Christianity, known as Chrislam.
- Be careful: Allah and *Yahweh* are not the same god. To tolerate that belief is blaspheme to the Creator God of the Universe.