

COMETS AND ASTEROIDS

AND THE COSMIC CRASH ON JUPITER - 1994
& THE JANUARY 2008 - ASTEROID 2007 TU24

Including reports from *Maranatha Prophetic Alert*, July & August 1994



THE COSMIC CRASH OF JULY 1994

“A shattered comet is about to hit Jupiter, creating the biggest explosion ever witnessed in the solar system. The cataclysmic explosion will serve as a warning to Earth. It could happen here!”

These were the headlines of *TIME* magazine's cover story (23 May 1994).

July 16 was the date scheduled for the crash of **Comet Shoemaker-Levy 9** into Jupiter, the largest planet in our Solar System. Jupiter, in fact, is 300 times bigger than the Earth. The core of the planet is actually about the same size as the earth, but the mass of the planet is a 60,000-km-deep blanket of gas - 90% hydrogen and 10% helium.

The comet (SL9) was discovered on March 25, 1993 by astronomers Eugene and Carolyn Shoemaker, and David Levy.

Most comets in our system orbit the sun, but SL9 was evidently enticed into an orbit around Jupiter in about 1984. The long, elliptical orbit of the comet took about two years to complete.

Scientists believe that July 1992, as the comet passed very close to Jupiter, (25,750 km), it shattered into at least **21 pieces**. These mountain-sized fragments measuring 1 to 4 km in width, lined up something like a "comet train." They were been described as natural megabombs that would pepper the huge planet like a round of automatic gunfire.



THE COSMIC TRAIN

Hubble Space Telescope image of Comet Shoemaker-Levy 9, taken on May 17, 1994.

When SL9 was discovered in 1993 it was about 40 million km from Jupiter. But now, in 1994, on its return journey, SL9 was destined to plunge into the gassy planet. The comet was travelling at 60 km a second (216,000 km per hour); and the combined energy of the 21 explosions on Jupiter would be up to **20,000,000 megatons**.

By comparison, the largest hydrogen bomb ever detonated on earth - by the Soviet Union in 1961 - was a 50 megaton.

In July 1994, virtually every major telescope in the world focused on Jupiter. Unfortunately the comet's first fragments hit on the back side of the planet, and thus the first impacts were not seen directly from earth. But as Jupiter spins quite fast, the results came into view shortly after the impacts. Some of the later results were viewed directly. The initial impact was photographed by the spacecraft *Galileo* which was perched at 240 million km from Jupiter at the time of the collision.

TIME said: "Crippled by mechanical problems, Galileo can take a picture only every 2.3 seconds, and its transmissions back to Earth will be painfully slow. These pictures may not be processed for months."

The results of the impact were awaited eagerly by the scientific world in particular.

Earlier scientists had come up with different predictions. Some of the possibilities were:

* **Meteor showers**. The 21 fragments could begin to disintegrate as soon as they hit Jupiter's upper atmosphere. The breakup could create spectacular "fireworks."

* **Crack-up and shock wave**. Because of the speed of the comet, the entry would create shock waves, and "the whole planet would ring like a bell."

* **The chunks of the comet could plunge about 25 km into the planet**, causing a nuclear explosion and a massive fireball which would literally blow a hole in the Jovian atmosphere.

* **The comet's fragments could plunge as deep as 300 km into the gaseous and liquid interior of the planet**, creating a mushroom cloud that would rise 2,4000 km above the planet, and causing a flash that would make Jupiter twice as bright as normal, and an **atmospheric vortex (whirlwind)** that would last 100 years.

There were, of course, some prophets of gloom and doom who were warning that the collision will have drastic results on earth. Astronomer-religious mystic, Sofia Maria Gabriel Richmond, for one, said a fireball from Jupiter will head towards the earth. These cosmic events, she said, will serve as a final warning ultimatum from God to all governments to turn to reduce their crime, cruelty and corruption.

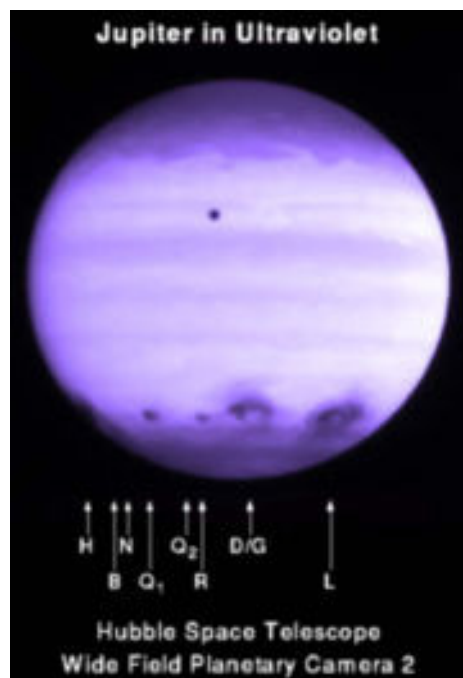
But it was the secular *TIME* magazine's alarm that could not be easily dismissed: "If such a comet train hit one of Earth's oceans, tidal waves would deluge and destroy the closest coastlines. If it hit land, it could incinerate whole countries and kick up a cloud of dust that would blot out the sun and bring on nuclear winter. Millions, perhaps BILLIONS, of people would die ... The cataclysmic explosion will serve as a warning to Earth. [It could happen here.](#)"

JULY 2004

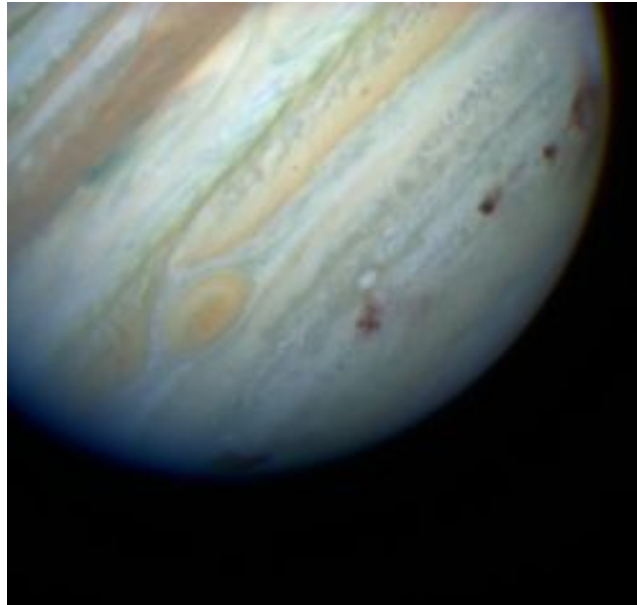
BATTERED AND MARRED !

Scientists were not disappointed. It was more spectacular than most predicted. It was an inferno on the giant planet - the most violent event in the Solar System ever recorded by man.

It had a wallop of millions of megatons of nuclear power. Some of the fireballs were, for some moments, brighter than the whole planet, and some of the hot spots on Jupiter were as big as the earth. Some of the colour pictures released were brilliant. Yes, Jupiter was battered and marred; and I am glad I was not on the giant planet in July 1994! And I don't want to be on earth during the Great Tribulation, when the earth's turn to be peppered by asteroids comes!



Jupiter in Ultraviolet (about 2.5 hours after the impact)



Impact sites on Jupiter

WHAT IF A COMET HITS EARTH?

After the Jupiter impact, *TIME* magazine repeated its earlier warning :

AUG 1, 94. "Imagine that one of Shoemaker-Levy 9's bigger pieces - a mile or two in diameter - is streaking in at 209,000 km/h, except that the target is not Jupiter but EARTH.

This mammoth chunk of rock and ice tears through the atmosphere and smashes into the ground with the force of 6 million H-bombs, gouging out a crater some 65 km in diameter and throwing so much pulverized real estate into the stratosphere that the sun is blocked for months and Earth goes into a **worldwide deep freeze**. If the comet hits an ocean, a pall of dust rises from underwater sediment, and a **tidal wave about 900 m high** races across the sea and hundreds of kilometers inland."

If that sounds like science fiction, think again. Comets and asteroids have crashed into Earth in the past. Craters marking the points of impact are mostly hidden by vegetation, their edges softened by erosion. But the size of some of the holes suggest that Earth has been hit by intruders some 5 km in diameter - as big as S-L 9 before it broke up.

There are about 2,000 large bodies that cross the orbit of Earth, which could, in theory, hit us. That is why Shoemaker and his colleagues have for years been urging a stepped-up program to search for Earth-crossing comets and asteroids. Now S-L 9 has spurred the U.S. Congress to listen.

Last week (in 1994) the U.S. House of Representatives Sub-committee on Science, Technology and Space added an amendment to the NASA appropriation bill requiring the space agency to come up with a plan to find and catalog all menacing heavenly intruders within a decade.

What if one turns out to be on a collision course with Earth? Star Wars scientists think a nuclear warhead, sent out to blow the comet off course, might work, but others doubt it. Even if no one has a good answer yet, U.S. lawmakers have taken the first step: acknowledging that the threat is real."

THE NEAR IMPACT of March 23, 1989

Scientists, newspapers and movies are regularly telling us about the threat to the earth from asteroids. Some of the articles I have with me say that there are tens of thousands of asteroids that form an "asteroid belt" around the sun. And there are asteroids bombarding our planetary space every day. Most of these "stars" burn up in the high atmosphere. But sooner or later a big one will get through and cause colossal damage to the earth.

In fact there was an asteroid that almost hit the earth on **March 23, 1989**. It missed us by six hours. If it had hit the earth it would have been the equivalent to **1 million atom bombs**. It could have wiped out whole cities, or, if it had hit the sea, it would have created tidal waves hundreds of meters high, and washed away whole islands.

– *TIME 1989*

LATEST ASTEROID GIVES EARTH A CLOSE SHAVE

JANUARY 2008 - ASTEROID 2007 TU24

A huge "potentially hazardous" asteroid measuring up to 600m in length rushed past the Earth on 29 January, giving astronomers a rare and relatively close-up glimpse of such a large object in near space.

Even amateur astronomers should have been able to spot the asteroid when it was at its closest point to the Earth - around 534,000 kilometres (334,000 miles). That's about 1.4 times the distance between the Earth and the Moon.

Asteroid 2007 TU24 was discovered only last October by the Nasa-sponsored Catalina Sky Survey at Arizona University.

An asteroid this size would inflict devastating regional damage if it were to hit Earth, but fortunately in never put humanity at risk.

Scientists were hoping to use the fly-past to work out how best to defend the planet against asteroids in the future. Nasa monitored it closely in an attempt to determine whether it is a solid object or simply a loose pile of space rubble.

There are hundreds of thousands of asteroids in the solar system orbiting the Sun, but 2007 TU24 is one of an estimated **7,000 near-Earth objects**.

Objects of this size come close to Earth about every five years or so, on average. But the next time a presently-known **potentially hazardous asteroid** comes so close to the earth will be in 2027.

THE CLOSEST PASS BY A RECENT ASTEROID

According to the Paris-based International Astronomical Union (IAU), the closest detected approach by an asteroid was on **March 31, 2004** by 2004 FU162, which came within 6,500 kms (4,000 miles) of Earth.

ASTEROID MISSES MARS

On January 30, (2008), another asteroid "2007 WD5" had a close encounter with the planet Mars. It came to within 26,000 kms (16,250 miles) of Mars, a distance that is less than a whisker in space terms. Initial calculations had suggested the object may collide with the red planet. But it gave Mars a miss.

Measuring about 50 metres (165 feet) across, it would have delivered an impact equivalent to a three-mega-tonne nuclear weapon. A rock of that size exploded over

Tunguska, Siberia, in 1908, felling around 80 million trees over 2,200 square kms (850 square miles).

The dangers, according to scientists and astronomers, are very real indeed. But actually, most scientists don't realise the real danger that lies ahead! They don't read the Bible! The real danger is not merely of a single comet, meteor or asteroid, or group of such objects hitting the earth. The prophecies above are speaking about an upheaval in the universe, and of the earth being pelted by dozens or hundreds "stars" - space objects.

This, of course, is scheduled to happen during the Great Tribulation. It is all part of the judgment of this present rebellious planet.

More important than TIME magazine scenarios, and newspaper reports, however, are the Bible's prophecies. The Word of YHWH, the Almighty, says a cosmic upheaval WILL take place, and it **will** shake the earth - on a scheduled day in the endtimes – during the Great Tribulation:

BIBLE PROPHECIES

LUKE 21:25-26

"And there will be signs in the sun and moon and stars, and upon earth despair among nations, with perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. Men's hearts will faint from terror, being apprehensive of what is coming upon the world; for the *very* powers of **the heavens will be shaken.**"

HAGGAI 2:6-7

"For thus says YHWH of Hosts, 'In a little while I will once more shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land. And **I will shake all the nations** ..."

REVELATION 6:12-17

"I watched as He broke the sixth seal; and there was a great earthquake; and the sun turned black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became blood-red; and **the stars of the sky fell to earth**, as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a strong wind. The sky vanished like a scroll being rolled up; and every mountain and island were moved out of its place.

"Then the kings of the earth, the great men, the generals, the rich, the mighty, and every slave and free man hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains. They called to the mountains and to the rocks, 'Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him (*the Almighty*) who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of His wrath has come; and who is able to stand *before it?*'"

But TODAY is the DAY OF SALVATION!

"Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God now commands all people everywhere to repent (*that is, to change their minds and to amend their ways with abhorrence for their sins*), because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead." (Acts 17:30-31)

FOR SALVATION MESSAGE, READ ARTICLE,

“THE WAY TO GOD”

