There seems to be several mainstream and alternative theories about history being altered, with added or missing periods of history with scarce documentation left behind and little growth and development, or the mysteriously sudden disappearance of whole civilizations from their intact cities or in the opposite case, their cities & buildings burned down to the ground, allegedly only due to the invaders and never as a result of catastrophic natural events, much less related to comets. There are also theories that several “Dark Ages” were fabricated. I think that it is heart braking to think that we are denying the suffering our own ancestors had to live through, as they survived those horrendous periods of catastrophic times, that have been recorded by many ancient historians. I will briefly refer to King Arthur and try to make sense of it as being included in this period of Dark Ages.

From the historic records left to us in thousands of clay tablets, stone writings, petroglyphs, Sacred texts, Mythologies, Epics, Ecclesiastical books and manuscripts, (intended to be read only by certain groups of people who could speak Greek or Latin, -except for the petroglyphs, who were left by common people trying to survive in caves), we can see that the inhabitants of planet Earth have been, in the last 7000 years, bombarded by ongoing catastrophes and plagues. The reason is that Earth and other planets of the Solar system were captured by the Sun & Jupiter’s binary system, together with hundreds of thousands of new comets, planets & moons that must have previously orbited Saturn, Uranus & Neptune, and that are up till this day entering the Solar system and causing havoc to all the planets, and bringing with their tails an array of toxic elements and mutated or new strains of viruses which have been
responsible for the frequent, awful diseases known as the black or bubonic plagues (pandemics) and pestilence of the past. This is the reason that some tribes, since ancient times, avoid eating pork & certain animals, or maintain a kosher diet. For example, the Maya and the Chinese knew about this relationship; and even now, when Earth passes yearly though the tail of Venus, viruses cause the bird flu, & the human flu. Unfortunately, humans have weaponized these viruses as well, as it is not enough the many miseries humans have to endure already.

The name “passover” and its religious celebration, is intimately related to the “passing” of comets over Earth. This is also the reason why certain people and groups (i.e. royalty and the clergy) that possessed the scientific and astronomical knowledge (occult knowledge) since the beginning of civilization, would live away from cities, up in mountains (monasteries, castles, hermitages), with access to caves and underground living spaces that had a source of water, which acted as survival bunkers; where they could protect themselves from the radiation, viruses, pandemics, pestilence, meteors, fireballs, hurricane force winds, (earthquakes), floods, tsunamis, electric discharges (thunderbolts), etc. Some mounds and cave cities seen worldwide, also had the same purpose. Of course, survival wasn’t always assured, and depended on the severity of the catastrophes. This is the reason piles of broken bones and "mass burials” are often found inside mounds or inside caves, or even spread outside these mounds; these were the unfortunate people that didn’t survive.

Influenza: 1743, borrowed (during an outbreak of the disease in Europe), from Italian influenza "influenza, epidemic," originally "visitation, influence (of the stars/comets),” from Medieval Latin influentia in the astrological sense.

An Article from Rome informs us that a Sort of Plague has broke out there, which destroys Abundance of their People, and they call it Influenza. (“The Gentelman’s Magazine,” April 1743.)

Used in Italian for diseases at least since 1504 (as influenza di febbre scarlatina “scarlet fever”) on notion of astral, occult, or atmospheric
influence. The 1743 outbreak began in Italy. The term has been often applied since mid-19c. to severe colds.  
https://www.etymonline.com/word/influenza

The concept of panspermia is well known & accepted by scientists. Another example is the bird flu, which first infects birds, mutates and then infects other animals, like pork, cows/ deer, wildlife and humans. So, the inhabitants of planet Earth (and perhaps Mars, Ganymede and other planets and moons of the solar system, have constantly gone though practically ‘hell’ and extreme suffering, such as worldwide pestilence, plagues, droughts, famines & cannibalism, fires, flooding, earthquakes, tsunamis, massive volcanic eruptions, mega-storms, extreme cooling; darkening of the skies, accompanied by wars, enslavement of populations and invasions of peoples trying to survive themselves or taking advantage of the weakened territories and their inhabitants. We will find a very good explanation from virtually unknown information about the many series of phenomena & planetary events that took place in the past. I will focus on this book in the short period of 200 years, between 400 AD and 600 AD. We will examine possible reasons for the creation of the Christian Calendar, Anno Domini (Year of the Lord), by Dionysius Exiguus, as a dating system in 525 AD, based on the calculations of Cyril of Alexandria from 440 AD.

As I have discussed in Mythos & Cosmogony & based on the amazing research of Immanuel Velikovsky, the reformations and creation of historical calendars have been due to changes to the axis or the orbits of the Earth or the Moon, at the time of close approaches of a comet or a planetary body, like Venus and Mars, (called in historic texts, unusual “Planetary Conjunctions”or Blazing stars).

“In the 7th year of the Emperor Justin, A. D. 525, appeared a comet, and the same year Antioch was again overwhelmed in ruin by an earthquake. Some authors relate that 300,000 persons perished in this catastrophe, and among them Euphrasius, the bishop.—This event happened on the 29th of May, about 12 o'clock. A conflagration (fires) followed and consumed what was left of the city. In the same shocks, Dyrrachium, now
Durazzo, the Epidaurus of high antiquity, Corinth and other cities were greatly injured."

Kometographia: https://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=evans;cc=evan

In the year 526 a comet was also seen, earthquakes in Turkey killed 250,000. (*Noah Webster book)

In this short period, there were constant catastrophes and pandemics (plagues), but one pandemic that started in 543 AD, lasted for over 52 years, until 596 AD, decimating the world’s population, destroyed whole cities, castles and churches, due to fires. It caused migrations of whole territories, such as the one from Scandinavia to England.

Regarding Anno MUNDI being changed to Anno Domini.
And why is the end of the world still being expected and the skies observed by infrared telescopes that can see red or brown dwarf stars? Besides the incoming comets, moons and planetary bodies entering the solar system, could there be a “surge” in the Birkeland currents our Sun is about to receive, emitted cyclically by the Galactic Core?

The Maya believe that Hunab-Ku was the supreme and ultimate Creator, the Mother Womb or Star at the Galactic Core, which is constantly giving birth to new stars and it gave birth to our own Sun and planet Earth as well as the other planets found in our solar system. They also believed that the ultimate Creator directs everything that happens in our galaxy from its center through the emanation of periodic energy bursts. Hunab-Ku also represented the gateway to other Galaxies beyond our Sun. The Maya also knew that our Sun “followed” & belong to the Pleiades Star system; & the length of the “Great Year” of 25,626 years, which was the length of time our Sun makes one orbit around (or behind) the Central Sun -Alcyone of the Pleiades- and this is why we have the “Precession of the Equinoxes”. The Maya knew that all energy (Ether) moves in spirals, like Birkeland currents. The planets must also spiral as they travel behind the Sun’s Birkeland currents. And the Sun must also spiral behind the star Alcyone’s Birkeland currents and the arms of the Galaxy must also spiral behind Birkeland currents that exist in the Universe and give birth to Galaxies; similarly to the way Galaxies give birth to Stars and planets along the
strings of Birkeland currents… Perhaps when our Sun travels though Birkeland currents that connect to Alcyone, periodically receives an excess of electricity or plasma (originating from the Galactic Core?) which triggers instabilities in the Stars stringed along the Birkeland current, including Alcyone, the Sun and all the other planets and gas giants like Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune (previously red Dwarfs.) The surge of energy causes rearrangements to the Solar systems in the Galaxy and the “World Creations” or the “new Suns” spoken of by the ancients of many cultures.) Please refer to the work of Physicist Eugene Bagashov who has presented the ongoing analysis he and several colleagues are conducting into the presence of Birkeland currents within the Milky Way galaxy, and close to our solar system. This includes evidence that the Local Interstellar Chimney, where our solar system is situated, may represent a giant plasma filament, including the possible role of these currents in catastrophic planetary events, both in the past and potentially in the future. 

www.researchgate.net/profile/Eugene_Bagashov2

http://www.plasmascape.com/

Seems the mathematicians and astronomers were expecting the “End of the World” according to their calculations of past and recurring planetary catastrophes:
“The immediate cause was the looming “calendrical end of the world” due to the arrival of Anno Mundi 6000! A date linked to the resurrection at the return of Jesus Christ, from the chronology of Africanus that dated Christ’s birth to AM (Anno Mundi) 5500. Influencing this was the ancient cosmological doctrine (secret or occult astronomical knowledge *see Mythos & Cosmogony for full explanation) attributing the origin, beginning, and end of the time to an alignment of all the “classical” planets (Mars, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, Mercury, the Sun, and the Moon), which induced Dionysius to investigate and calculate a future conjunction (close approach & electric interactions?) of all planets and to determine
the beginning date for Anno Domini, 2000 years before this conjunction. The interpretations of the Gospel and the Revelation of St. John, as well as the early medieval rate of precession, were central to the theme. The planetary massing in May 2000 was the focused date of the end of the world, according to the calculations of Dionysius Exiguus. This theory is confirmed with many quotations and images.”

https://www.academia.edu/25609570/The_Scythian_Dionysius_Exiguus_and_His_Invention_of_Anno_Domini

A little about Jesus / Yeshua:
The reason that they called the new Christian Calendar Anno Domini, is because they chose Yeshua or Jesus as the messiah or “Christ” (The word "Christ" means anointed. It comes from the Greek Χριστός, christos, and is a translation of the Hebrew word for Messiah, מֶשְׁכָּה, meshiyach, which means anointed or chosen one, it was used in Ancient Egypt and since Sumerian times, each time the world was expected to end by planetary catastrophes. These messiahs or Saviour(s) job was to convert the souls of “sinners” in order to be saved to a specific religion.
The Essenes used Pythagorean astrological knowledge to calculate the approach of Comets or Planets (Mars, Venus?), that would bring the apocalypse (as preached by John the Baptist) & catastrophes to End the World, bringing a New World Order, the “Day of the Lord” & proclamation of a Saviour Messiah. John the Baptist was a Pythagorean Astronomer or Prophet, who expected the World to come to an End at the time of Yeshua/Jesus; or around 30 AD, his message was to repent, baptize & convert the people of Israel for the coming of the Lord (the Comet or Planet that would cause the catastrophe).
John the Baptist was a Pythagorean Astronomer or Prophet who expected the World to come to an End at the time of Yeshua/Jesus; or around 30 AD, his message was to prepare (baptize & convert) the people of Israel for the coming of the Lord (the Comet or Planet). He re-calculated the End Times to 33 AD (during the Jewish Passover), & expecting an apocalypse started his ministry and Yeshua’s ministry for that reason. The apocalypse would take place during the comet’s electric interactions with Earth. The Gospels make clear Jesus was crucified during the Jewish festival of
Passover. That was the reason for the Last Supper. When the recalculation of the End of Times did not come to pass, due to the comet changing orbit, Yeshua was crucified; John The Baptist was beheaded in 36 AD by Herod of Antipas. The comet caused a 3 hour eclipse of the sun: The Gospel of Luke (23:44) describes the phenomenon like this: “And it was now about the sixth hour, and darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour, the sun being obscured....”

https://freethinkingministries.com/the-eclipse-the-resurrection-of-jesus/
http://mzchurch.org/biblerd/2015/02/26/john-the-baptist/
https://www.simpletoremember.com/articles/a/from_paul_to_constantine/

Yeshua /Jesus, like Julius Caesar in 44 BC, was said latter by the Christian Church, to have translated or resurrected into a Star or the comet seen during his crucifixion. A famous depiction of Christ’s Ascension is the Christus Helios, a late third century Roman ceiling mosaic, which is said to show Jesus as the sun god Helios (Sol or Sol Invictus) riding to heaven in his chariot. We find the iconographical predecessor in the first century BC, a relief depicting the apotheosis and ascension of Caesar as Divus Iulius (“God”) riding to heaven in his chariot. Julius Caesar claimed descent from Athena/Venus human ruler, through Trojan prince Aeneas. The main characteristics are exactly the same: god, chariot, wheel, horses with raised forelegs, plants, and the general theme of ascension.

https://divusjulius.wordpress.com/2010/05/13/ascensionschristcaesar/

Caesar received his state funeral and resurrection as god on the third day after his death, the day of the Liberalia, a Roman festival for the god Liber Pater, an early syncretistic variant of Dionysus. The rays coming out from Jesus’ head might not be the rays of the sun, but depict a comet, similarly to the sidus Iulium (“Julian star”), the great comet of 44 BC. Caesar was officially consecrated in 42 BC, which was the apotheosis of the Roman imperial cult that also included the ascension of Julius into the god & Star. But the comet, which appeared in July 44 BC during Caesar’s funeral games, was seen by the people as Caesar’s soul in heaven, a popular ascension before the senatorial consecratio one and a half years later. During this time Octavian crowned all statues of Divus Iulius with replicas
of the comet, and this was the origin of the rayed iconography in early Christianity. Note: Many early Christians used to pray toward the east, and not toward Jerusalem, awaiting Jesus as the "Light from the East", can be explained by the fact that Caesar in heaven, "the brightest star of the universe" (Val. Max. 6.9.15), appeared in the northern sky and moved from east to set in the west (Ramsey-Licht 1997, 130–32).

I don’t know why the Jewish born Apostle Paul, who became a Roman Citizen, chose Jesus as the Messiah, instead of John the Baptist, or Jesus’ brother James. It seems that John the Baptist was the favourite of the masses until he was killed by Herod Antipas. And James likewise, had the favour of the people and was murdered by the High Priest Ananus. The followers of John the Baptist, Jesus, and James, in contrast to those influenced by Paul, shaped their post-crucifixion hopes and future expectations on an apocalyptic Messianic vision that focused on the arrival of the Kingdom of God on earth and the fulfillment of the promises of the Hebrew Prophets (Isaiah 2:2-4; Zechariah 14; Isaiah 11; Micah 5:2-4; Jeremiah 30-31).

A little about Constantine:
In 323 AD, a Comet appeared in the sign of Virgo. After which the Arian Heresy prevailed exceedingly, so that the Christian world (as Jerome speaks) sighed to see it self become an Arian. The memorable wars between Constantine and Licinius happened about that time, which issued in wonderful (?) changes, the whole Empire being turned upside down (plagues, etc.) The marvellous things spoken of in the twelfth Chapter of the Revelation were now accomplished.”

“A comet is also noted in 321 AD, and a universal famine in Britain in 325 AD. People must have been told the end of the world was at hand, Constantine “converted” to Christianity and proclaimed himself “the Saviour” after he saw twice, the comets of 321 AD & 323 AD with tails that looked like a cross superimposed on a sphere of light) on the eve of a battle with his rival for the throne of Rome. Eusebius describes one of Constantine a visions while marching at midday in which "he saw with his
own eyes in the heavens and a trophy of the cross arising from the light of the sun, carrying the message, In Hoc Signo Vinces” ("with this sign, you shall win” —a slanted X). He asked his oracle (astronomers?) the meaning of the “vision.” He also had a dream of Jesus followed by a vision of the comet and was told by the oracle (the oration) who moved away from the Tetrarchy (the twin dynasties of Jupiter and Hercules) and proclaimed that Constantine experienced a divine vision of Apollo (Sol Invictus/Sun) an omen for victory granting him laurel wreaths of health and a long reign. As Apollo, Constantine recognized himself as the saving figure to whom would be granted "rule of the whole world.” In his early reign, the coinage of Constantine advertised Mars as his divine lineage. From 310 AD on, Mars was replaced by Sol Invictus (The Unconquered Sun) or Apollo. There is little reason to believe that either the dynastic connection or the divine vision and the proclamation strengthened Constantine’s claims to legitimacy and increased his popularity among the citizens of Gaul.

In 337 (or 335) AD a stupendous Comet (omen of the death of Constantine) and terrible to behold, was seen in the sign of Aries continuing for the space of six Months. Immediately after which followed the death of Constantine, sir named the great, whose death made way for great Divisions in the Roman Empire, and infinite miseries upon all Christendom. His Son Constantius being an Arian, quickly became a Persecutor.

For more on the subject please read from the links below:


http://waysoflife.info/Literatur/WhyPaulWroteRomans.html

https://www.simpletoremember.com/articles/a/from_paul_to_constantine/

https://secretsun.blogspot.com/2010/05/john-baptist-secret-messiah-part-1.html

KING ARTHUR:
The Legend of King Arthur and Camelot must be based in truth, as most legends and epics are. I believe that King Arthur was real. As in most cases of governing kings and Lords since the beginning of civilization circa 8000 years ago), a King was represented by a Blazing Star, Planet or Comet, and was also the hero who fought & defeated a monster or Dragon (a Comet).

In the 12th Century AD Geoffrey Monmouth wrote about King Arthur in the History of England, were he includes the list of Kings. He also wrote about a Welsh astrologer & prophet Merlinus (Merlin) in Prophétia Merlini, & Life of Merlin. Merlin was the son of a human princess and a giant/ demon. Merlin interpreted the appearance of a comet in the form of a fiery Dragon, as heralding the death of the Britain’s last Roman General Aurelius (Ambrosius Aurelianus) the ascendancy of Uther Pendragon and and the coming of King Arthur, who was the son of Uther Pendragon, who disguised (with the help of Merlin) as the king (duke of Cornwall) entered Tentansil Castle and slept with the queen (duchess) while the king was away. [https://geoffreyofmonmouth.com/tag/merlinian-prophecy-prophetia-merlini/](https://geoffreyofmonmouth.com/tag/merlinian-prophecy-prophetia-merlini/)

There are also many other historic texts about Merlin in the 6th Century. Regardless of what the details & true stories of King Arthur are, he probably existed and his father and himself were linked to the Comets (Pendragons, Dragons) that caused much destruction and death during the 6th Century, worldwide including England.

There is probably little surviving proof of any remains of Camelot (as far as the public has been told) because everything and everyone got destroyed by the fires, floods, tsunamis, and catastrophes usually accompanied by a comet connecting electrically with Earth and/or with the Sun. It also seems that new technologies like LIDAR need to be used in England because so much has been buried under tsunamis and floods in past catastrophes, even in recent historical times.

Lee Pennington’s book “King Arthur in America” deserves some attention, even though I might not agree with all his conclusions: He presents compelling evidence that in 562 AD Britain was the site of a catastrophic event (most likely a comet devastating the Island country). The land was devastated. The king at the time was none other than the legendary King
Arthur. King Arthur’s brother, Prince Madoc, was at the time the fleet admiral of a substantial Welsh Navy. Madoc was at sea when the comet devastated the country and was blown totally off course and was gone for ten years. England was mainly uninhabitable, and Arthur took his people and army into Landahl, which is now Normandy. Records say that in 572 Arthur returned to Wales, and he and Madoc gathered 700 ships at Milford Haven and sailed west to Anwan, “that which is beyond.” Having missed Ireland, there is only one place, sailing west; they could have gone to North America! Other records tell of King Arthur being killed in Anwan and being brought back to Wales in a celebrated voyage described in some extant manuscripts. Lee Pennington will present compelling evidence that the Welsh records are totally correct in stating that Wales’ most famous king did indeed come to America and was killed in America.

https://www.unityofeastlouisville.org/sites/unityofeastlouisville.org/files/Events/DrPennington/King%20Arthur%20in%20America%20Presentation%20by%20Dr%20Pennington.pdf

Global cooling events in the 6th Century AD (linked to a comet):

https://www.historicalclimatology.com/blog/something-cooled-the-world-in-the-sixth-century-what-was-it

The Dust Veil Environmental Disaster of AD 536 linked to a comet and volcanos: According to written records and supported by dendrochrolology (tree ring dating) and archaeological evidence, for 12-18 months in AD 536-537, a thick, persistent dust veil or dry fog darkened the skies between Europe and Asia Minor. The climatic interruption brought by the thick, bluish fog extended as far east as China, where summer frosts and snow are mentioned in historical records; tree ring data from Mongolia and Siberia to Argentina and Chile reflect decreased growing records from 536 and the subsequent decade. Massive migrations of survivors followed worldwide, including the Viking Diaspora in AD 536. https://www.thoughtco.com/dust-veil-environmental-disaster-in-europe-171628

Irish Dendrologist Dr. Baillie, has searched the written record and traditions embodied in myths. There he has found evidence that the dates of the environmental downturns were around 2354 BC, 1628 BC, 1159 BC, 208
BC, and AD 540. The evidence suggests that these environmental downturns were wide-ranging catastrophic events; the AD 540 event in particular is attested in tree-ring chronologies from Siberia through Europe and North and South America. This event coincides with the second largest ammonium signal in the Greenland ice in the last two millennia, the largest being in AD 1014, and both these epochs were accompanied by cometary apparitions which were associated with collapses of civilizations or turning points in history. The AD 540 event, for example, may have been associated with a catastrophe that ushered in the Dark Ages of Europe. His book, *Exodus to Arthur: Catastrophic Encounters with Comets* (Batsford, 1999), relates the findings of his tree-ring studies to a series of global environmental traumas over the past 4400 years that may mark events such as the biblical Exodus, the disasters which befell Egypt, collapses of Chinese dynasties, and the onset of the European Dark Ages. *The Celtic Gods: Comets in Irish Mythology* (Tempus, 2005), co-authored with Patrick McCafferty, focuses on the AD 540 event as recorded in the historical records and myths of Ireland and shows that the imagery in the myths and the times between events are consistent with a comet with an earth-crossing orbit.  

Now, I will go into the descriptions of the catastrophes & plagues linked to an insane amount of comet sightings, included in Noah Webster’s book, and in Kometographia by Increase Mather (*see sources), beginning in the year 400 AD, and if you previously doubted the Dark Ages, perhaps reading the historic accounts of death and catastrophes that took place within 200 years, you might reconsider:

“We are now arrived at another singular and distressing period of the history of man. In the year 400, under the administration of Arcadius and Honorius, a comet appeared of a prodigious size and horrible aspect. Its immense coma seemed to sweep the earth, and Baronius, the pious author of Ecclesiastical Annals, remarks, that many of the Gentiles were terrified into christian baptism and (conversion?) During 〈◊〉 or appearance, happened one of the most… on record. The 〈◊〉 Sea was
covered with (blood?) 10 days. A drouth is mentioned under the same period, which was so severe that the heavens were like (fire?) Unfortunately historians have often neglected to arrange these phenomena in due order, throwing them into a general description.

The same period was marked by deluges of rain, and from the narration, it appears that the rains preceded the hard winter of the year 400. The rivers were so swollen as to prevent the imperial generals from passing into the east to attack Sardis. Severe earthquakes occurred in the same year. A.D. In In 402 (Circiter) An exceeding bright Comet in form like a Sword was seen. After this Gainus made an attempt upon Constantinople. Stilicus waging war with the Goths, overcame them. The Emperour Arcadius died. An Army consisting of no less then two hundred thousand Barbarians under Radagiso made a fearful irruption upon the Roman Empire. Now was the first Trumpet (which John speaks of in the Apocalypse) sounded. These terrible shakings in the Roman Empire being fitly set forth by that of a storm of Hail, and Fire, and Blood, Rev. 87. as Mr. Mede interpreteth. A great Persecution was raised against the Christians in Persia. Also the Persecution raised by the Donatists in Africa, was within a year or two of this time.

Baron. vol 4. 20. P. Diac. lib. 13. About the year 407 or 408, near the close of the reign of Arcadius, a celestial phenomenon of a singular species presented itself to the view of an astonished world. It was called a comet, but did not resemble one of the ordinary figure. It resembled a cone or pillar, but had not the appearance of a star, so much as of the flame of a lamp. Its motion was not regular—it began to move from the point of the heavens where the sun rises at the equinoxes, and passing the tail of Ursa, proceeded to the west. It measured (covered) the heavens—its vertex, at some times, extended to a great length; at others, was contracted into the figure of a cone. After being visible for four months, it disappeared. This is the description of it, nearly in the words of Nicephorus. Meteors were observed at the same period. Accompanying and following these phenomena, were some of the most distressing calamities. Violent
earthquakes leveled cities—inundations of rivers and the sea, followed by intolerable cold storms of hail, and a drouth that blasted vegetation, by which means multitudes of people perished. Pestilence raged in every quarter, and faminee so severe, that the populace demanded that human flesh should be sold in market (omg!). Palestine was devoured by locusts. Nicephorus has employed a chapter to describe the physical evils, and the miseries of man, in this singular period. He declares that almost all Europe perished.—"pasa de ὀλετο ἐ Εὐρωπῆ." and no small part of Asia and Africa.

A.D. 409. There was an amazing Eclipse of the Sun, so that the Stars were seen in the day time. This was attended with a fearful Comet appearing like a Sword in the sign of Virgo, blazing for the space of four months (viz, June, July, August, September.) The greatest Calamities followed that had been heard of in the World. All Europe, a great part of Asia, and Africa, was overwhelmed with Judgments. A sore Drought, and Famine and Pestilence, and wars amongst the Nations swept away infinite number of Men. Rome was taken by Alaricus the Goth, who set up whom he pleased as Emperor there. Now did the second Angel sound the Trumpet, and the Roman Empire suffer a violent death, and is therefore resembled unto a Sea made bloody by the fall of a great Mountain all in a flame, as the aforementioned great Interpreter doth expound, Rev. 8.8.

In 418 appeared a comet; in 419 several cities of Asia were overturned by an earthquake, and in 420 there was an eruption of Etna. There was also an inundation of the sea in Hampshire, in England, in 419. Famine and pestilence prevailed also in this period.—A great storm of hail is mentioned under the year 418, and deep snow.

A.D. 418. A Comet was seen in Libra, in the Month of September. Great Sedition and Commotions followed throughout Italy, and in Spain. The Africans prepared a formidable Fleet and marched towards Rome. Not long after this, Famous Hierom died. The Pestilent Heresie of Pelagius occasioned much trouble in the Churches.
A.D. 423. A horrible Comet was seen flaming: Immediately upon which the Emperor Honorius died. Castilus with an Army cometh upon the Vandals and made great slaughter in Spain. The Scots and Picts grievously infest the Britains. A.D. 423. This Year upon a great Eclipse of the Moon, a Comet appeared, after which Prodigious showers of Blood were rained down upon Tholous in France for a whole day together. A terrible Persecution was raised against the professors of the truth in Africa, by Genseticus. Theodoricus the King of the Visigoths warring against Attila, was slain.

The next period of general pestilence commenced in the reign of Theodosius the younger, about the year 445—or a year or two earlier. A comet in 442, ushered in a severe winter, in 443, the snow fell to such a depth and continued so long in Illyricum, that multitudes of men, women and children perished. The year preceding, the Huns had ravaged the country and destroyed the provisions, which added to the public calamities. An irruption of the Sea in North and South Wales, 441, preceded the first comet, a second comet appeared in 444. In 445, severe famine and plague distressed Constantinople, and pestilence appeared in all parts of the world. In 446, Sept. 17, occurred a tremendous earthquake, which demolished the greatest part of the walls of Constantinople, with fifty seven towers. The shocks continued unremittingly for six months, and extended to a great part of the globe. Many cities were overthrown, the earth, in some places, was thrown into large hills; in others, it opened and swallowed up whole towns. Islands disappeared and were lost in the ocean: the sea receding, left ships on dry land, springs of water were dried up and new fountains appeared, and in this violent concussion of the elements perished innumerable multitudes of fish.

The pestilence attending, and which rarely fails to attend such agitations of the earth, was universal and of several years duration. In this period, the plague in England was correspondent to the terrible operations of subterranean fire (volcanic eruptions.)
In 448-9, it carried off incredible numbers of people, so that the living could scarcely bury the dead.—And it must not be omitted that the plague was preceded by the greatest abundance of provisions. This was in the reign of Vortigern, and in time of peace.

A.D. 448. A Comet was seen in the sign of Leo, continuing many days. There followed a Prodigious Earth quake in the East. Attila oppressed and destroyed a great part of Italy. The Venetians perished by a Flood. The Eutichean Heresie began to prevail.

An important fact here occurs. In 446, the Picts and Scots had overrun and desolated England, so as to occasion a dearth of provisions. But this famine produced no pestilential disease. It is particularly noticed by the historian, that the plague did not occur, till a year of great plenty had intervened. This is one strong proof among others, that famine is not the cause of plague; but often accompanies, and sometimes increases the disease. It often happens that, during extraordinary agitations of the earth, the elements of vegetable life appear to be defective (crop failure). The same cause which affects human health, seems to prevent the growth or vitiate the pabulum of vegetables.*

The close of this period was peculiarly distressing in Italy, Phrygia, Cappadocia and Galatia, where the famine compelled parents to devour their own children. The pestilence made great havoc, at the same time, and no remedy or alleviation could be found. The body was universally inflamed and covered with tumors. The disease destroyed the eyes. A cough succeeded the eruption, and ended life on the third day.

This was in the beginning of the administration of the Emperor Marcian, which commenced in 450, in which year another comet was displayed in the heavens and a singular light or flame, a severe drouth "ingens siccitas," afflicted the earth, and the calamities of this period continued for several years. It must be remarked here that Functius has placed this
comet and the beginning of Marcian’s reign, in 454. Such differences in chronology cannot fail to embarrass an inquiry like the present, the results of which depend much on correctness of dates. (Niceph. lib. 15 ca. 10.)

A.D. 454. (circiter) There were divers appearances of a Blazing Star which was attended with Earthquakes. The Emperor died. Attila after he had destroyed seventy Cities in the East, and conquered the Northern parts, came with five hundred thousand Soldiers, and making fearful devastations in Germany, was himself slain in a bloody Battle with Attius. Rome was taken and spoiled by Gensericus. Historians make mention of two other Comets observed in this Century. The comet of A.D. 459. which was followed with a sore Pest amongst miserable Mortals. The other A.D. 488 After which great troubles were raised by Arian heretics. Gundamond the King of the Vandals became the Author of a great Persecution.

Nicephorus and Evagrius give a particular account of an earthquake which laid great part of Antioch in ruins in the second year of the Emperor Leo, which was AD 458. A comet is noted under the preceding year. But they say further, that this event took place 347 complete years after the destruction of the city in the reign of Trajan, which was in 117. Now 347 years added to this number, give 464, for the year of the last catastrophe.

Niceph. lib. 15. 20. Evag. lib. 2. 12 and 14. Byzantine Hist. vol. 15. Evag. lib. 2. 14: In the 311th Olympiad, which comprehends the years from 465 to 468 inclusive, appeared a comet. Whether the destruction of Antioch was in 458 or 464, the extent of the shock, through Thrace, Hellespont and the Grecian isles, together with the deluges of rain which are said to have swept away whole towns in Bithynia, leave no room to question the approximation of a comet at or near the time.

This latter period was distinguished for pestilence which raged in Rome, about the accession of Anthemius to the empire, and according to Baronius in the year 467.
In the following year, a number of houses were overthrown by an earthquake at Vienna. Of the extent and duration of the pestilence, I have no particular description. A great eruption of Vesuvius is mentioned in 472, and a severe winter of four months duration, in 473 with deep snow.—The plague succeeded in Rome.

In the year 480 Constantinople again suffered great damage by an earthquake, which demolished a great number of buildings.

In 480 or the following year another comet was visible; or probably two years later. In 484 occurred a drouth most terrible and distressing—not a vine nor an olive branch retained its verdure—the earth was pale and desolate, and the sun assumed a melancholy face. Africa was almost abandoned, in consequence of this event and an attending plague.

Baron. vol. 6. 343, 426 and 7. Baronius places the earthquake at Constantinople in 477, but others place it in 480, which is most probably correct. The difference in the chronology of different authors, who relate the events of these early ages, is seldom less than two, three and four years.—The plague infested Scotland in 480.

In 494 an earthquake overturned Laodicea, Hierapolis and Tripoli. According to Functius, this event was in 496.

In 499 appeared a comet, which was soon followed by an earthquake which destroyed Neo Cesarea, in Pontus, and an eruption of Vesuvius laid waste all the adjacent country. (Magdeb. vol. 3. Cent. 6. ca. 13.)

Zonoras lib. 3. Baron. vol. 6. 541. Magd. Cent. 6. ca. 13. p. 789. A comet is noted in 502, and a severe winter in 507, but I have no account of any public calamity, attending either of these phenomena, except a pestilence among men and cattle in Scotland, in 502.

In 517 is recorded a five year's drouth in Palestine.

Encyclopædia Chronologica: In 518 a comet; and in Dardania, now Maesia, a series of earthquakes demolished twenty-four castles, divided mountains and in one place opened a fissure of thirty paces in length and twelve in breadth.
A.D. 519. A Bearded Comet appeared 26 days, in the East, pointing westward. After which there was a wonderful Earthquake, whereby many (not only persons but) whole Cities perished.

Baronius vol. 6. 702. In 519 two cities in Cilicia were overthrown; Edissa was inundated and part of its buildings and inhabitants overwhelmed.

Zonoras, Tom. 3. Magd. Cent. 6. p. 791. Evagrius places the inundation at Edissa, in the following period, after the destruction of Antioch, and as the historians do not always specify the year in which a particular event took place, I am inclined to believe the account of Evagrius.

Lib. 4. ca. 3. In the 7th year of the Emperor Justin, A.D. 525, appeared a comet, and the same year Antioch was again overwhelmed in ruin by an earthquake. Some authors relate that 300,000 persons perished in this catastrophe, and among them Euphrasius, the bishop.—This event happened on the 29th of May, about 12 o’clock. A conflagration followed and consumed what was left of the city. In the same shocks, Dyrrachium, now Durazzo, the Epidaurus of high antiquity, Corinth and other cities were greatly injured.

Baronius vol. 7. 109. 110. 111. Niceph. lib. 7. 3. Evag. lib. 4. Zonoras Tom. 3. A severe winter happened the same year.

In 528 Antioch was again shaken and suffered considerable injury. An inundation of the Humber in England is noted about this time.

In 531 appeared the resplendent comet, whose revolution is fixed at 575 years, supposed to be the same comet (Venus!) which was visible in the year 44 BC, after the death of Julius Cesar. This was the fifth year of the reign of Justinian. Famine and a slight plague prevailed in Wales. It was also seeing 1680 AD, two years before the Gregorian calendar began.

At this period Gibbon commences his lively, but unphilosophical description of the formidable and destructive calamities, which afflicted the whole earth in the 6th century. See his history, vol. 4. ch. 43.
Not long after the approach of the comet (Venus) in 531, the sun assumed a pale color, and shone with a feeble light. In a translation of Cedrenus, this phenomenon is thus described. "Toto anno eo, sol lunae instar, sine radiis, lucem tristem praebuit, plerumque defectum patienti similis."

During the whole year, the sun gave a gloomy light, like the moon, and appeared as if eclipsed.

Byzantine Hist. 3. 293. Procop. de bell. Vandal. lib. 4. **It is remarkable that tradition has preserved a faint account of a similar phenomenon, during the approach of the same comet (Venus), at the time of the Ogygean inundation, 1767 BC (correct dating of the Ogygean flood is 1500 BC about 50 years before the Exodus of 1450). It is said, that the planet Venus changed her color, size and figure. An account is preserved in tradition, of a phenomenon of the same nature, during the approach of the same star (Venus), in a subsequent revolution (two approaches 50-52 years apart. The Maya Tzolkin Calendar, was created to track the orbit and approaches of Venus. Pakal’s tomb in Palenque, depicts him looking through a telescope at the planet Venus, symbolized as the winged serpent). Gibbon in the chapter above cited.—Pliny, as I have already remarked, mentions a similar phenomenon, about the time the same comet (VENUS?) appeared, soon after the death of Julius Cesar.

The appearance, in the period under consideration, is a well authenticated fact, and witnesses a singular change in the properties, and reflecting powers of the atmosphere, or denotes an essential alteration in the face of the sun, which is improbable. In either case, it seemed a prelude to the most dreadful calamities, famine, earthquakes, and pestilence. I am not without suspicions that Europe might have been overspread with a vapor like that in 1783, during the eruption of Heckla.

A. D. 533. A formidable Comet appeared in the Month of December, in the sign of Sagittarius. This was followed with an Earthquake. A popular tumult in Constantinople. A Plague at Antioch and in other places. The Huns cause troubles in Europe.

In 534 is recorded one of the most distressing famines, that ever afflicted the earth; it continued many years, and destroyed multitudes of the human
race. Pompeiopolis was this year overwhelmed in ruin by an earthquake, and great numbers of its inhabitants perished. Paul. Diac. lib. 16.

About this period, Vesuvius began to utter hollow rumbling noises, the precursors of an eruption.

Baron. vol. 7. 218. Procop. de Bell. Goth. Magdeb. Cent. 6. p. 793. Excepting a slight plague in Wales—no pestilence is mentioned by the authors I have consulted, until the year 542. But the famine, in great severity, had raged eight or nine years before—a proof that something more than famine is necessary to generate the plague.

In 539 appeared another comet, and the famine now raged with double horror. The country of Italy had been ravaged, the year before by the Goths and Burgundians, and the lands left untilled. This might have contributed towards the dearth which followed. It is recorded that many persons fed on human flesh, some districts of Italy were deserted, 50,000 people perished in Picenum, and greater numbers in other districts. The bodies of the famished people became thin and pale; the skin was hardened and dry like leather, and clave to the bones; the flesh assumed a dark appearance like charcoal, the countenance was senseless and stern, the bile redundant.

Procop. de Bell. Goth. lib. 1. Among these frightful effects of hunger, no plague yet appears—a circumstance that the philosopher should not pass unnoticed.

Baronius says, the crops failed, corn ripened prematurely, and was thin; in some places, it was not harvested, and that which was gathered, was deficient in nourishment. Those who subsisted upon it became pale, and were afflicted with bile. The body lost its heat and vigor, the skin was dried, the countenance stupid, distorted and ghastly, the liver turned black. Many perished by hunger; many betook themselves to the fields to feed on vegetables, and being too feeble to pull them, lay down and gnawed them off with their teeth.

Baronius, lib. 7. 326. This is the most probable account of the famine. Repeated instances are on record, which evidently mark a pestilential state of the elements, as fatal to vegetable, as to animal life. In many periods of the
world, there has been a universal defect in the powers of vegetation. Famine and pestilence are equally the effects of some general cause; a temporary derangement of the regular operations of nature.

An eruption of Vesuvius is noted under the year 532, the year after the appearance of the great comet.—It is probable that the paleness of the sun was owing to a vapor from some volcanic eruption, as in 1783; and it is remarkable that both of these periods alike produced famine from defective vegetation.

During the remaining part of this century, a series of most calamitous events afflicted the earth. A mountain in Rhodes burst open, and a part of it rolled down upon the inhabitants below. Many places suffered by inundations, one of which overwhelmed the borders of Thrace for an extent of four miles.

A.D. 541. A notable Comet appeared on Easter Day. There followed an universal Earth quake in which Epidammon, Corinth and Anazerbum, did above other places suffer damage. Totilas overcame Demetrius in a Sea-fight, took several Cities and Countries. The memorable changes wherein Belisartus was concerned, happened about this time. Totila the King of the Goths was called Flagellum dei Gods Scourge. He raised a cruel Persecution against the Christians which were at this time in Italy.

In the year 543, the whole earth was shaken by earthquakes. This was the year in which the plague broke out in Constantinople; but it commenced in Egypt, the preceding year.—In 543 there was a dearth of (??) and oil. The plague again ravaged Constantinople in 547.

In 545 there was an inundation of the Thracian sea, and a severe winter. A terrible dysentery in France in 548.

See Cedrenus, and Paulus Diac. lib. 16. In 550 an earthquake convulsed Syria and Palestine; and Greece in 551. In 553 appeared a singular meteor in the north and west, which was preceded by a winter so severe that wild
beasts and fowls might be taken by the hand. Inundations marked this period. Constantinople was shaken 40 days in 554.

A.D. 555. A Comet in the form of a Lance or Spear was seen in the North, pointing West ward. After which Rome was taken by Totila. The Huns wasted Francia and Tharingia.

Paul. Diac. Madeburgh Cent. 6. ca. 13. In 557 Constantinople was almost laid in ruins by an earthquake. In 558 a comet appeared, a severe winter followed and universal plague, especially in Constantinople, where the living could not bury the dead. This year the Danube was covered with ice.

In 560 an earthquake destroyed Berytus and injured Cos, Tripoli, and Balbus. An excessive drought in 562, and a plague began which spread over the whole world. There was a dark day in the same year.

The year 565 was distinguished for a calamitous plague, in France, Germany and Italy, which Baronius calls "vehemens pestis inguinaria."

In 580 Antioch was again laid in ruins by an earthquake, and a shock was felt in Scotland. The plague again prevailed, from that year to 583, in Gaul and Germany and other countries.

A.D. 586. A Comet appeared for a Month. It is observed, that this Comet was attended with the death of many Princes. And the War between Mauritius and the Persians. Also, a fearful inundation, and the Plague in Italy happened not long after. In 587 it ravaged Italy. Earthquakes attended this period.

In 590 appeared a comet; an inundation, from deluges of rain, overspread Rome, covering the walls of the city, and lodging innumerable serpents on the plains. In the next summer, happened the severest drouth ever known; it lasted from January to September; and the most deadly plague ravaged all Italy. In this pestilence, died Pope Pelagius. This is a general sketch of the phenomena recorded of the period under consideration. Of the universal and destructive plagues which dispeopled the world in the reign of Justinian I and the succeeding age we have
accurate accounts by contemporary historians: From two of which, Procopius and Evagrius, I shall transcribe the particulars.

Procopius relates, "That this pestilence, which almost destroyed the human race, and for which no cause could be assigned but the will of God, did not rage in one part of the world only, nor in one season of the year. It ravaged the whole world, seizing all descriptions of people, without regard to different constitutions, habits or ages; and without regard to their places of residence, their modes of subsistence or their different pursuits. Some were seized in winter, some in summer; others in other seasons of the year.

It first appeared in Pelusium in Egypt and thence spread westward to Alexandria and all parts of Egypt; eastward towards Palestine, and extended to all parts of the world, laying waste to islands, caves, mountains, and all places where men dwelt. If it passed by a particular country at first, or slightly affected it, it soon returned upon it with the same desolating rage which other places had experienced.—It began in maritime towns and spread to the interior country. It seized Constantinople in the spring of 543.

Most persons were seized suddenly without any premonition, nor was there any change of color or sense of heat; for until evening the fever was so slight that the patient was not ill, nor did the physician, from the pulse, apprehend danger. But in some cases, the same day; in others, the next; in others, at a later period, a bubo arose, either in the groin, the armpits, or near the ear, or in some other part. All patients alike had these symptoms. Some were seized with drowsiness and slumbering; others with furious distraction. The slumberers forgot all things—some would eat if desired; others were neglected and starved.

Neither physician nor attendant caught the distemper by contact of the sick or dead; and many, encouraged by their wonderful escape, applied themselves with assiduity to the care of the sick and the burial of the deceased. Many were seized, they knew not from what cause, and suddenly died. Some who were given over by physicians unexpectedly
recovered; others who appeared to be in no danger speedily expired. Many died for want of relief; others recovered without assistance. No cause of the disease could be devised by human reason—no means of prevention or cure. To some, bathing was beneficial; to others, injurious. Many leaped into water and the sea—In many turned into a gangrene, and these died with excruciating torture.

The physicians opened the bodies of some, and found within the sores huge carbuncles. Those whose bodies were spotted with black pimples, of the size of a lentil, lived not a day. Those who had running sores escaped, and these were the most certain signs of recovery. Some had their thighs withered; others lost the use of their tongues. To women with child, the disease was certain death. This disease in Constantinople lasted four months, raging three months with extreme mortality. In the beginning, few died more than usual; but the disease gradually increased, till it swept off 10,000 persons in a day.”

Persic. lib. 2. ca. 22. Authors mention the early effects of this disease on the brain; the patients, on the first attack, saw phantoms of evil spirits, which made them imagine themselves smitten by some person.

Procopius, as an eye witness, described the pestilence of 543 in Constantinople. It did not continue incessantly to rage in every place, for this would have soon left the earth without an inhabitant; but after an interval of a few years, it returned and revisited the same places. The plague described by Evagrius was many years subsequent to that mentioned by Procopius. He wrote about the year 594. His descriptions however are general.

A.D. 594. A formidable Blazing Star appeared in January, for a Month together, and was seen both in the morning and in the evening. After this, Italy was afflicted with Armies of Locusts. A sore Drought, Famine, and the Sword were the woful attendants of this Prodigy.

See Hist. Eccles. lib. 4. ca. 29. "I will now describe the plague, which has
prevailed in these times, and already raged fifty-two years, a thing never before known, and has already depopulated the world. Two years after the taking of Antioch by the Persians, a pestilential disease began to prevail, in some respects resembling that which Thucydides has described, in other respects different. It had its origin in Ethiopia, according to common report, and spread over the whole world, falling on different places by turns, and sparing none of the human race.

Some cities were so severely assailed by this disease, that they were left without an inhabitant. Some districts however were more slightly affected. The pestilence did not always begin its attacks at the same season of the year, nor cease to rage, in all places in the same manner. In some places it broke out in the midst of winter; in others, in the spring; in some, it began in summer; in others, in autumn; and in some cities, it attacked certain parts of the town, and left others untouched.

Very often we might observe, particular families all perished, in a city where the disease did not prevail, as an epidemic. In some places, one or two families only perished, while the rest of the city escaped. But we observed particularly that the families which escaped, the first year, experienced the same calamity in the year succeeding.

But what above all appeared singular and surprising was, that the inhabitants of infected places, removing their residence to places, where the disease had not appeared, or did not prevail, were the only persons who fell victims to the plague, in the cities which were not infected. And these effects were particularly observable, both in cities and in other places, in the cycles of the Indictions. Especially in the second year of each indiction, was the plague extremely mortal. Of this I am myself a witness, for it may not be improper, when the occasion seems to require it, to interweave into this history what concerns myself. At the commencement of this calamity, I was seized with the inguinal plague; and in the diseases, which have at different times prevailed, I have lost many of my children, my wife and great numbers of my kindred, of my servants and laborers: the cycles of indiction parcelling out my calamities among themselves.
At the time of writing this account, the disease had already invaded Antioch the fourth time; the fourth cycle of indiction had passed, after the first invasion of this disease, when I lost a daughter, and her son.

This disease was a compound of various others. For in some persons, seizing the head, it rendered the eyes sanguineous and the face tumid: Then falling upon the throat, soon put an end to life in all that were thus seized. Some were afflicted by discharges from the bowels. In others an abscess formed in the groin, a raging fever followed, and the second or third day, the patient died, with his body and his mind apparently sound, as tho they had not felt disease. Some were seized with delirium and expired. Carbuncles also arising on the body extinguished the lives of many. Others recovered once and again, and afterwards died of the same disease.

The modes of contracting the disease were various and all calculation was baffled. Some perished by once entering infected houses, or remaining in them—some by only touching the sick. Some contracted the disease in open market. Others, who fled from the infected places, remained safe, while they communicated the disease to others who died. Many who remained with the sick, and freely handled them as well as dead bodies, wholly escaped the disease. Others who had lost their children and dependents, and in despair sought death, by attempting to throw themselves in the way of infection and assiduously attending the sick, found all their efforts in vain; they could not contract the disease.

The distemper has already prevailed fifty-two years, to this time, exceeding all preceding plagues: For Philostratus was surprised that, in his time, that calamity had prevailed for fifteen years. What will happen hereafter is uncertain, since all things are at the disposal of God who understands the causes of things and the events."

Thus far Evagrius. See also Nicephorus lib. 17. ca. 18. The reader is desired to attend particularly to the foregoing relation of facts, as some important conclusions will, in the sequel, be drawn from them, and other authorities hereafter to be cited.
It will be remarked that although authors speak of this pestilential period, as of fifty-two years duration, as Evagrius and Gibbon have done, yet this is not accurate. Evagrius, from whom this number is copied, says, the pestilence had then prevailed fifty-two years; but it was still raging, and what was to happen afterwards, he could not determine.

The years remarkable for mortality are specified by historians, viz. 542 and 543, 547, 558, 562 to 565, 582, 583, 587, and finally one of the most destructive periods of all was 590 and the few following years. Altho this was a long and severe period of calamity, yet from the best accounts I can obtain, I see no reason to believe the mortality, in any given term of five or ten years, from 542 to 600, to have been greater, than in some other periods of the same duration. More people probably died in a short space of time, in the reign of the Antonines—in that of Gallus and Volusian—and far more, in the dreadful plague of 1346 to 1350.—It is even probable that in the last 50 years of the 16th century, the earth sustained as great a loss of inhabitants as in the same space of time in the 6th century. General descriptions are rarely correct, and Mr. Gibbon's unphilosophical, tho eloquent flourishing description of the miseries of the human race, in Justinian's reign is calculated to mislead a careless reader.

Evagrius indeed says, this plague exceeded all preceding ones. This is natural; Thucydides said the same of the disease in his time. But we are more able to form a correct comparison between the different epidemics that have prevailed, than the contemporaries with any particular one.

Agathius relates that in the pestilence at Constantinople in 558, many died suddenly as with an apoplexy. The most robust constitutions survived only to the 5th day. The critical period in the Athenian plague was the 7th or 9th. Thucydides makes no mention of the stupor at the beginning of the distemper, nor of the volutatio humi, whirling of the earth, or dizziness, nor of buboes, nor of the effects of the disease on pregnant women.

Freind's Hist. of Medicine 416 et seq. Baron. vol. 7. 357, 358. Warnefred relates of this pestilence, in Liguria, where it was particularly mortal, that there appeared suddenly certain marks "quaedam signacula," upon the doors of houses, on garments, and utensils, which could not be washed out but grew
brighter by washing. The next year, appeared in men's groins, or other
delicate parts of the body, tumors like nuts or dates, which were soon
followed by intolerable fever, which extinguished life in three days. If the
patient survived the third day, he had hopes of recovery.

I should have ranked this account among the fictions of a disturbed
imagination, had not more recent and well attested facts given me reason
to credit it. The description of the terrible effects of this disease in Italy by
the same author, is melancholy and painful to the reader.

The dysentery which raged in France in 548 was accompanied with signs
of the plague, and was nearly equal to it in mortality. The plague raged
this year at Munster, in Ireland.

Short vol. 1. 67. Smith's Hist. Cork 10. The desolating plague of 590 was mortal
almost beyond example, and preceded or attended with extraordinary
phenomena. In 588 Antioch was overwhelmed by a violent earthquake,
and 60,000 people buried in its ruins. The inundation of the Tyber
exceeded all that had been known, as did the drouth of the succeeding
summer. The intervening winter was equally remarkable for its severity
—"qualem vix aliquis prius recolbat fuisse," says Warnefred; such as the
oldest persons could scarcely recollect. Violent tempests overturned
buildings. About the same time, swarms of locusts appeared in Trente and
devoured every species of vegetable. In some parts of Italy, they
continued their ravages for five years. Cedrenus adds, that fish died, and
this mortality he ascribes to the freezing of the waters,—Modern
observations prove the fallacy of the reason here assigned; fish do not die
beneath a cover of ice; but the death of fish by means of earthquakes, and
of sickness, is a common event.

related was this—the earthquake at Antioch—deluges of rain and
inundations, tempests, a most rigorous winter, with a comet, excessive
drouth, pestilence.

See also Echard's Rom. Hist. vol. 4. 246. Africa was almost depopulated by this
plague. So sudden and rapid was the disease in its action, that during a
procession in Rome, instituted by St. Gregory, on account of that calamity, no less than eighty persons fell dead in the street.

Authors relate that the serpents, washed from the mountains by the flood, and lodged on the earth, putrefied, and contributed to the subsequent plague. Gregory of Tours relates, that the plague, at that time, was introduced into Gaul by a vessel and her cargo, but it did not spread regularly from house to house, but started up in distant and detached places, like fire in a field of stubble. Marseilles and Lyons were made waste by its mortality. It was most fatal to the poor.

The following facts are related of the pestilence in Rome in 581, in the collection of German writers by Pistorius. Men died suddenly, at play, at table, and in conversation. Sometimes they fell dead in the act of sneezing, "dum sternutabant," so that when one heard another sneeze, he turned to him and exclaimed, "God help you"—which was the origin of a custom still observed in some countries.* Sometimes persons expired in the act of nodding or gaping; which gave rise to the practice of making the sign of the cross, on such occasions—a custom not yet obliterated.

In 599, the plague in the east, in Africa and Rome, was dreadful. The death of the Emperor Mauritius, in 602, was preceded by the appearance of a comet. A severe winter, about this time, killed the vines, and grain suffered by frost and blight. The army of barbarians, marching to besiege Constantinople, was so harassed and weakened by the plague, as to be compelled to abandon the enterprise. Cayanus their commander lost seven sons.

A.D. 600. (circiter) A Comet Horrendous to behold, appeared six Months together. Mauritius (the Emperor) was by the Bishop of Romes instigation Murdered by Phocas. Great contentions were kindled between the Bishops of Rome and Constantinople. The former, was now declared to be the universal head of the Church. Ever since this time the Bishops of Rome have been no better then Blazing Stars. Four Years after this, another Comet was seen in the Months of April and May, & again in November & December, Not long after which Cotroes the King of Persia grievously infested the Roman Empire, He delivered ninety thousand Christians into
the hands of the Jews, to be by them with wicked hands slain and murdered. A.D. 620. Another Comet appeared. About this time Mohamed began to diffuse his Doctrine. He had an apostate Monk to help him in composing his Religion, whereby much of that part of the World, which had been enlightened with the Sun of Righteousness was overwhelmed again with the darkness of Infidelity. He is therefore fitly set forth in the apocalypse, by the type of a Star falling to the Earth, & a smoke arising therefrom, whereby the Sun & the Air was darkened; And it is not to be wondered at, if so great a Plague to the World as Mahometism, is, was preceded and attended with Blazing Stars, as in the after Relations will appear. Never was the dominion of any Nation spread so far, and in so short a time as that of the Saracens.

A.D. 633. A Blazing Star in form of a Sword standing towards the South appeared for Month. This was attended with an Earth-quake for thirty days together. About this time the Saracens subjugated Jerusalem, Damascus, and all Syria...

Sources

*For a COMPLETE and amazing detailed compilation of comets and catastrophes recorded since 3600 years ago, please see book by Webster, Noah, 1758-1843. “A BRIEF HISTORY OF EPIDEMIC AND PESTILENTIAL DISEASES; WITH THE PRINCIPAL PHENOMENA OF THE PHYSICAL WORLD, WHICH PRECEDE AND ACCOMPANY THEM, AND OBSERVATIONS DEDUCED FROM THE FACTS STATED.”
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