THE CLOCK OF THE HEAVENS

A STUDY OF BIBLICAL ASTRONOMY AND CHRONOLOGY

BOOK II

By

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Second Edition

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to my sweet wife, Elizabeth, who bought me my first astronomy computer program and telescope, and probably wishes she hadn't! She has been most patient through many of my years of star-gazing, research, and writing. To her goes much of the credit for the inspiration and production of this book.

Thanks is also especially awarded to dear friends, Dr. Greg and Marcia Falk of Canyonville, Oregon, who made the first printing of this book possible.

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PREFACE/EXPLANATION

It has always been a need of mine to know and remember the specific time and place that certain events have occurred in my life. Though I have never authored a diary or journal, there are times when I have wished I had, for many an argument might have been settled later. Otherwise, I don't know completely why it seems so important to me to have a correct record of the past. But somehow I require it. Reference points in chronological time must be necessary for some of us to form a framework for life; a mental template to provide context and meaning to personal experience.

Lawmakers need accurate and specific records. Accounting demands it. The boards and committees that govern various organizations record minutes to ensure that an action can be clarified or consulted later. For similar reasons, the study of history requires accurate, orderly records, in order to make the most sense of it. Sadly, history leaves us many mysteries because inadequate attention was given to recording timely information; or because the information was somehow allowed to be destroyed or lost.

Some thinkers in the areas of history, religion, philosophy, and science assert that attaching specific chronological information to certain events is not at all important. All that is important to them is the "meaning" of the event. It matters little to them to ask exactly when Abraham lived, or when Alexander reigned, or when Columbus sailed the ocean. The fact that it happened or might have happened somewhere, sometime, somehow is enough for them.

But while this subjective ambiguity about history may satisfy some, it does not satisfy others. It has never satisfied me. Therefore, to some degree I think chronological dating matters.

Let me suggest at least one reason for this. A problem arises when no reliable skeleton exists to support the whole body of history. History

becomes a meaningless array of bones and flesh, with no form and no function. When no specific chronology is found to be trustworthy, the tendency is to invalidate the historicity of the events themselves. Soon, certain ones begin to assert that important events formerly assumed to have occurred on our planet actually never happened. Especially has such a sentiment taken wings in last two centuries in the study of biblical history. Demythologization has become so rampant that entire pages recording factual events are literally torn from the context of history.

The greatest and the worst consequence of this, in my opinion, is that when the historicity of the Bible and other sacred works are over-questioned, the essential informative material it contains is also discounted in the process. Because the source and context are considered unreliable, the truths of eternal life have little weight. This leaves millions, I believe, devoid of any real hope and opportunity of eternal life.

The study in the following pages brings together two separate disciplines (both favorites of mine) in a way and to a degree that a few years back never occurred to me as even being possible. The first discipline is the study of the Biblical Record. The second is the study of Astronomy. I have since become convinced that the ancient "star pictures" in the ancient zodiac not only teach the Gospel story, but together with the sun, moon, and planets mark the timing of certain events as well.

The principal elements of ancient astronomy (or astrology) pre-date much of recorded biblical history and yet so amazingly and independently correlate with it. I believe this argues powerfully for some divine superintendence over the affairs of men. It is impossible that all the startling predictions in the heavens were self-fulfilled by the later ingenuity of man. Nor did the Bible writers simply borrow its concepts, because many events now confirmed by the heavens were not astronomically understood so at the time they happened. While I was cautiously incredulous toward some of what I found at first, I have since been jolted out of my skepticism time and time again. While I will never claim that such a study as this *proves* anything, I still think it supplies a wonderful argument for Intelligent Design in our universe. It argues for

the reliability of faith and the truth of what many of us have already adopted as valid for other and better reasons.

Another surprise has come my way as a result of this study. Not only has it increased my faith in the "times" declared in the Word of God, but it has also added significant understanding to the meaning of the events themselves. That astronomy could inform or validate theology was a serendipity of no small magnitude to me.

I do not claim to be an expert in any science. No doubt, at times, certain technical inaccuracies may appear to the more knowledgeable reader. But I don't believe such discrepancies will be found to invalidate the whole concept presented in the following pages. The premise presented does not rest on one chapter or one example. Please don't choke on the bones.

I welcome honest criticism and scrutiny. After all this is only a beginning, and I know of no other work quite like it. When one cogitates the awesome magnitude of scheme and design in the universe he can only feel very small; always a student and never a teacher. As high as the heavens are above the earth, so are God's thoughts and his ways above ours---and especially mine.

My wish is that the reader will find the following subject as interesting and as challenging as it has been for me. I also entertain the hope that the reader will also be able to exclaim that indeed "the heavens declare the glory of God." I pray most of all that the reader will come to know more intimately the Maker of it all.

Steven E. Behrmann

It Just Happened?

Once an unbeliever visited Isaac Newton, the great English scientist and Christian. Newton had a mechanical model of the solar system in his study.

The unbeliever asked, "Who made this?"
"Nobody," Newton replied promptly.

"You must think I'm a fool!" the unbeliever said. "It would take a genius to make this."

Newton said, "This is only a puny imitation of a much grander system. I cannot convince you that this mere toy is without a designer; yet you profess to believe that the great original from which this design is taken has come into being without a designer or maker." ***(Source unknown)***

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THE CLOCK OF THE HEAVENS

Introduction

Nearly every civilized home or business of modern times has a clock. Our lives are practically dependant upon these timepieces. Whether a digital bedside alarm clock, a kitchen timer, a time clock at our place of employ, or a watch upon our arm; we rely on the governance and regulation that clocks provide. The measurement of time is important in planning and completing our day; it provides reference points from which we can define the length of a class period, a work opportunity, a game, or a contest.

We are familiar with clocks and use them regularly. Some clocks are beautiful and ornate. Others are impressive for their size or accuracy. Some are novel or extraordinary. But there is a greater and more magnificent clock that exceeds in every way our relatively simple timepieces. This elaborate clock surpasses in every way our manufactured clocks, even the great Strassburg Clock.

The Strassburg Clock

One of the most remarkable manufactured timepieces ever created is the great Strassburg clock in the tower of the cathedral of Strasbourg in France (Strasbourg---a more modern spelling--- is in Alsace, and was once part of Germany). Here is one description of this gigantic clock first built in the 13th century:

> "Thirty feet high, it is 15 feet wide at its base. A flight of winding stairs on one side is surmounted by five columns; a Gothic pillar with panels, on the other, is full of figure paintings.
>
> In the center at the base a globe represents the heavens and indicates the time of the rising, passage, and setting of the principal stars crossing the

meridian of Strassburg. Behind this calendar shows the 12 months of the year, the days of each month, the dominical letters, and various church festivals. A statue of Apollo, the pagan sun-god of long ago, points out the day of the month. The calendar, in the form of a circular band, is arranged to show various astronomical events.

In the gallery above the calendar, seven figures represent the seven days of the week, which pass in order from left to right of the beholder. On every Sunday a chariot drawn by the horses of the sun appears, with the sun-god himself as the charioteer. On Mondays the chariot of the moon-goddess appears, drawn by stags. On Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays in turn are seen Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, and Saturn, each in his own chariot and on his own day of the week.

Above the symbols of the planetary gods a clock dial shows the time of day. On each side of it sits a winged genius. The one on the left side strikes, with a wand, the first note of each quarter-hour. The one on the right side holds an hourglass, which he turns upside down every 60 minutes, at the hour. Above the clock is a large circle divided in 12 parts to show the position of the sun in relation to the 12 constellations of the zodiac.

On the next level are seen a planetarium, or model of the solar system, and a globe that records the four phases of the moon. Above them movable figures represent the four ages of man. In succession they strike the quarter-hours by hitting a bell. The first, a baby, strikes a bell with a rattle at the first quarter-hour. A youth gives the stroke for the second quarter-hour. He is followed by an old man, whose stroke comes at the third quarter-hour. The last, Death, hits the bell with a bone at the hour.

In the highest compartment is a figure of Christ. At noon of each day a procession of the 12 apostles passes before Him, and all bow at His feet, while a cock perched atop a turret at the left flaps his wings, ruffles his neck, and crows three times."

(From Robert Leo Odom, *The Lord's Day on a Round World*, 1946, pp. 11,12.)

The Celestial Clock

Such remarkable clocks, however wear out. The Strassburg clock has been rebuilt several times. Not all of it is probably working to this day. While incredibly accurate for it's time and place (within one second in one hundred years), it would be a formidable task to try to keep such a device running smoothly over extended time. In the same manner, the many other timepieces we use must be periodically repaired, maintained, or re-calibrated to match the universal time parameters.

But there is a clock that is infinitely more accurate and complicated than the most precise and extravagant timepiece in this modern era. This is the clock of the heavens, the celestial timepiece of the orbiting sky. The movements in the starry heavens represent a giant clock marking day by day the grand orchestration of the universe.

In fact, the source for the time measurements of our standard times throughout the world have been traditionally set, not according to the arbitrary caprice of men, but according to the stars themselves. These markings of the heavenly bodies are carried out with such precision as to amaze the investigator. So regular and consistent are these predictable motions that variations that exceed hundredths and even thousandths of a second over significant periods of times can scarcely be detected.

The earth's rotation itself is quite invariable, though not absolutely perfect. But the stars in their prescribed paths provide a series of movements, which continue century after century and that regulate consistently the passage of time. "Atomic" clocks are presently being used to validate and check the accuracy of the celestial system (by counting oscillations in *cesium* atoms). The regularity of the heavens is incredible, especially when considering its staggering enormity. It is of such universal proportions that we cannot begin to comprehend it.

THE CLOCK OF THE HEAVENS

The Movements of the Heavens

The sun is, of course, the most significant "hand" on our celestial clock. Our spinning globe orbits this gigantic source of light and warmth in an elliptical fashion. This takes very close to 365 ¼ days to complete this cycle, the solar year.

The Bible itself indicates that the sun, moon, and stars were given for "signs and for seasons" (Gen 1:14). It is the purpose of this study to show that this statement means more than many realize. It is suggested that God had much more in mind when he made these celestial bodies than light and warmth. They were made not just as lights, but as He himself specifies in Genesis, to be the elements for a "heavenly calendar," marking seasons and years. And as I hope we shall see from the existing evidence, very much more than this.

The sun follows a course through our stellar heavens that is consistent. This path of the sun (and in a sense the moon, and planets also) through the sky is called the ecliptic. However, as the seasons come and go the sun passes through (as we view it) varying backdrops of stellar configurations we call constellations. Now, of course, during the day we do not see these stars, but astronomers have always known where the sun is positioned throughout the year. At sundown, we can often see the stars that rise in the east. These constellations are 180 degrees from the current position of the sun and the sun's position can thus be easily calculated visually.

Since the earliest of times this path of the sun through the particular constellations on the ecliptic has been known as the circle of the zodiac. The word "zodiac" seems very mystic and pagan so many have avoided learning about it or understanding it. True, it has been associated with cultic and heathen practices for millennia. But the word "zodiac" simply

means "a path."[1] It represents well "the circle of life" and marks the seasons of our yearly cycle of spring, summer, fall, and winter. As the year progresses the sun passes through the entire zodiacal circle. This circle from ancient times has been divided into twelve equal parts that correspond roughly to our months of the year.

These divisions are very ancient[2]. The Sphinx in Egypt is thought by some to be a young woman (head and face) attached to the elongated body of a lion. This strange figure can be explained as representing the beginning point of the year in the ancient zodiac. This possibility is significant because this is exactly when the year indeed began for many cultures, between the time when the sun is in Leo (the Lion) and the next constellation of the zodiac, "Virgo," or the Virgin.

Unfortunately, these constellations and their original meanings have been largely adulterated by nearly every culture over the centuries. But by studying these figures in the sky more carefully it has come to the realization of modern Christians that these are not just heathen concepts. Such works as *The Gospel in the Stars*, by Dr. Joseph Seiss, and *The Witness of the Stars* by E.W. Bullinger essentially prove that these constellations of the heavens were originally catalogued and understood as pictures of the Gospel of Christ and the Plan of Salvation.

These exhaustive works are ponderous, subjective, and very interpretive. At times they are hopelessly ambiguous. Yet they still provide such an overwhelming amount of evidence in this regard that we can be assured

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[1] D. James Kennedy, *The Real Meaning of the Zodiac*, p. 14. It comes from an ancient root, *zoad*; Heb. *sodi*; in Sanskrit it means "a path." The word is often associated with the idea that the zodiac is a circle of animals; from which we get another association; "zoo." It seems also related with the Greek word for life and living things.

[2] Job, likely the oldest Biblical book refers to the *Mazzaroth*, the Hebrew word meaning the twelve constellations of the zodiac. "Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion. Canst thou bring forth *Mazzaroth* in his season? Or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?" Job 38:31, 32. "Canst thou bring forth *Mazzaroth* in his season?" Job 38:32a. (KJV)

that such pictures of the Gospel in the heavens are valid even though we cannot today be sure of all of their original significance. Hundreds if not thousands of star names, in Persian, Babylonian, Arabic, Hebrew, Egyptian, and other languages all unmistakably point in their totality to the ancient Gospel story.

Examples are so numerous that one must read certain of these works to fully appreciate the evidence. Many star and constellation names have been lost. But the testimony of the heavens is clearly shown to be about the Savior of the world. In the heavens, the star pictures as imagined by the ancients all universally point to a coming redeemer that would sacrifice himself for his people, who would destroy "the Twisting Serpent" and would atone for sin.

Ancient star names such as those in Virgo point to the nativity of Christ and his first coming. Names of certain of these stars mean such things as "the Branch," "the One who will come down," "the One who bruises (the Serpent's head)," "the Desire of Nations," etc.

Star names and constellations throughout the heavens picture in many and various ways the work of Christ in judgment, in his incarnation, or his sacrifice. These symbols are labeled with the actual messianic terms used in the Bible prophecies. Again, these must be studied thoroughly to be properly appreciated.

One prominent example is that of the sub-constellation, the Serpent-Holder (*Ophiuchus)*. In this constellation a god/man is pictured, struggling with a great serpent that wraps entwined about his arms. At the same time the serpent's head is reaching greedily for a crown of glory. The names of the stars in this constellation all contribute to tell the same story, which is unmistakably the gospel story in a cosmological nutshell. In fact, a drama representing the entire great controversy between good and evil is present.

Other constellations present such examples as a shepherd tenderly holding sheep or young goats in his bosom, while at the same time a serpent is bruising his heel. In Leo, a lion is treading upon and subduing an angry

serpent. And these examples are but a few. The pictures written in the sky are simply marvelous, I believe, and fulfill by all appearances what the Psalmist (who no doubt watched his flocks by night and gazed at these same pictures in the sky) said:

> "*The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night SHEWETH KNOWLEDGE."* Psalm 19:1ff. (KJV)

Evidence exists that these star pictures are traceable back to the patriarchs Enoch, Shem, and perhaps even Adam himself. That even the heavens add to the wondrous revelation of Christ is to this writer a fascinating theme. And shouldn't all creation speak with grandeur of its Creator? It is for this reason that the world is without excuse, for even in the things that are made, are found testimony to the provision of a redeemer from sin (Read Romans, ch.1).

It is known also according to Josephus that Abraham was learned in the way of the heavens and was sought out in his day as an authority on such things. God spoke to Abraham using the stars as an example of his offspring, which was to include the Holy Redeemer. Through Abraham's seed all the families of the earth were to be blessed.

Many of the ancient star names are modernly preserved by the secular science of astronomy for some of these famous and well-known stars. If only astronomers themselves would hear their testimony! Some of these names should be studied with a certain reverence for they are very ancient. However, there is further reason for such respect. Says the word of Scripture:

> "*He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names*." Psalm 147:4 (KJV)

> "*Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all*

> *by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth*." Isaiah 40:26 (KJV)

It is possible that in at least some cases the stars that are named in these great heavenly pictures were named by God himself and preserved through the holy line of patriarchs such as Adam, Enoch, and Abraham. The thought is not only intriguing, but also seemingly validated in the evidence provided in the principal constellations and in virtually all of the constellations spanning the night sky.

A great mistake has been made by Christians to ignore this ancient testimony and to relegate its themes merely to fancy and occultism. A fear of this subject has led many to ignore one of the most powerful and obvious evidences of the existence of Divinity.

Yes, the Scriptures categorically condemn the practices of astrology and heathen idolatry[3]. The heavenly bodies were never to have been worshipped, or used for predictions. They should have never been twisted into the ridiculous, ludicrous gimmicks they have become. This adulteration is the work of an enemy. This book wishes to avoid as much as possible the perversions offered by the false science of astrology. The claims of popular astrology are erroneous and misleading. It is impossible that a star found on the horizon the day you are born can have any significant influence upon your personality, your career, and your fortunes. The idea is mythical, self-centered, and categorically absurd.

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[3] "*Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves . . . lest thou lift up thine eyes unto the heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven, shouldest be driven to worship them, and serve them*." Deuteronomy 4, 15,19. *"Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee. Behold, they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame. . ."* Isaiah 47: 13,14. Cf. also Amos 5:26 that condemns the worship of Saturn (Chiun); likewise Isaiah 65:11,12 condemns fortune-telling by the stars.

The Clock of the Heavens

But the idea that lessons of revelation can be learned from the stars, as from other forms of writing, and that they have faithfully marked the events of the plan of salvation I think is very possible. This is actually what the Psalmist claims in Psalm 19. The evidence for this we will presume to investigate shortly.

Moon and Planets

Before we continue, however, let us say just a word about the moon and the planets. The moon to our view, like the sun, follows a path in the heavens along virtually the same track as does the sun. However, as the earth rotates the sun and the moon do not maintain the same position relative to each other in our eyes. The moon traverses the heavens at a pace slightly slower in appearance to us than the sun (the sun takes approximately 12 hours the moon ca. 13 hrs.). Thus the moon marks its own divisions as it passes through the zodiacal circle in the heavens. Ancient lore called these 28 divisions the "lunar mansions.[4]"

In addition, the moon, to state it simply, takes about 29 days to completely orbit the earth. As it does this it goes through its various phases, starting with the crescent moon building to the full moon and back again. This constitutes a month (moonth). Our present months are regulated by a fixed calendar unlike ancient times when the literal lunar month was observed. All this must be considered when making astronomical reckonings.

Most of the stars in our heavens are what we consider fixed stars. To our view they do not move in relationship to each other except over great periods of time (actually they are moving at great speeds). However as the world turns, these stars do parade across our sky, yet stay in their appointed places relative to each other.

[4] A description of these is available in Dr. Joseph Seiss, *The Gospel in the Stars*, p. 142.

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But in our own solar system are planets, that over shorter periods of time move through the various "houses" in the ecliptic as do the sun and moon. These planets are Mercury, Mars, Venus, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto (now demoted from "planethood"). The last three mentioned are fairly recent discoveries and were not known by the ancient peoples. But the movements of the five well-known planets greatly impressed people of old, and our days of the week are named after them. Together with the sun and the moon there were seven heavenly bodies that moved according to their various habits through the heavens.

All of these major planets vary one from another in their pattern and motion through the sky. Some planets make a full revolution through the zodiacal circle in a short time, such as Venus, in less than a year. However other planets like Jupiter take about 12 years to make a revolution. Saturn takes almost 30 years to make a similar revolution from our perspective.

Therefore one can see how many combinations of circumstances are possible in how the planets, the sun, and the moon all relate to one another. Sometimes they seem to be almost grouped together, other times they are spread out great distances from each other along the ecliptic. In addition they all take turns in various parts of the twelve divisions of the zodiac. Sometimes they are not even visible during the day or night hours respectively.

The result of all of this is that these configurations create a mechanism for relative measurement. It is in studying these movements that astronomical calculations are made. Consequently, in the heavens we have a giant clock, the clock of the heavens. It is on a very grand scale yet its movements are very accurate and predictable. For centuries men have been able to observe these movements. With astronomical tables and with computer generated astronomical tools this clock becomes all the more interesting and readable today.

It is an extraordinary "clock" we have then in the sky! What a wondrous timepiece given us to measure our times and our seasons! What an amazing testimony is written where all can see! This cosmic "Strassburg"

clock is of great interest, at least to the writer of these pages, as it chimes out the hours, days, months, years, and epochs in the grand scheme of our Lord's design. To this we will proceed further to bend our thoughts.

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, O Lord my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honor and majesty who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain. . . . He appointed the moon for seasons: the sun knoweth his going down.. . . . O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches." Psalm 104:1,2,19,24 (KJV)

2

GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST

I am indebted in part to the writer, Dr. Ernest L. Martin, for the inspiration and concepts explored in this book. In his book, *The Star That Astonished the World*, Martin makes a case that the star of Bethlehem can find an explanation in the stellar movements around 2-3 B.C.

I do not agree with his principal conclusion regarding that star; that it was essentially a conjunction of planets, as striking as that confluence might have appeared. The appearance of the miraculous star was no doubt a supernatural event. Says the inspired pen of one writer:

" . . . *A luminous star appeared, and lingered in the sky. It was not a fixed star nor a planet, and the phenomenon excited the keenest interest. That star was a distant company of shining angels, but of this the wise men were ignorant."* --Ellen G. White, The Desire of Ages, p. 60

I also respect the reports of tradition that the star of Bethlehem was not a conjunction of planets and that it's duration was relatively short and that it finally vanished from sight. Writers indicate that this star appeared in Coma, the first decan[1] of Virgo (the Virgin). Coma is the particular sign and symbol of the mother and the child appearing in the zodiacs of all ancient peoples and found on many existing monuments.

But the recognition of unique stellar activity during the time of Christ's nativity cannot be denied. This is where Martin and others who have noticed these phenomena are to be commended. During the four or five years just prior to the Christian era (AD), many significant conjunctions of planets occurred. These configurations were of such a nature that the

[1] A "decan" is one of three divisions in a given principal zodiacal sign. Amounting to about ten astronomical degrees, there were thirty-six of these in the ancient zodiac; three for each of the twelve major signs. *Virgo*, for example, has associated with it 1) *Coma*; 2) *Centaurus*; 3) *Bootes*. Cf. Appendix C.

Magi and others likely noticed them. It is, in fact, highly improbable that they did not observe them considering the evidence that exists.

The premise of Martin and others is that these movements were not only observed, but that these motions of the heavenly bodies produced an extraordinary stir of excitement in Middle Eastern circles. Herod the Great could hardly have been agitated to the desperate and despotic state known in the Christmas story by simply entertaining the notion that there might be a coming king. This was always possible. It is believed that he took this astronomical show seriously enough to inflict death upon countless infants.

The most significant contribution by Martin, however, is his treatment of the traditional 4 B.C. date for the birth of Christ and the death of Herod the Great. He demonstrates through several modalities the dubious nature of this date. If accepted almost insurmountable historical problems surface.

His main argument centers on the premise that historians have traditionally erred in adopting the wrong eclipse associated with the death of Herod the Great in the writings of Josephus. Rather than the March, 4 B.C., date typically accorded on the basis of this eclipse, one is urged to revise the reckoning to a more significant and better-placed eclipse that happened ca. Jan 10, 1 B.C. This revision solves a score of historical and prophetic problems. I feel there is validity in his findings, which can be verified and examined astronomically.

This eclipse also accommodates the possibility that Jesus was born as late as 2-3 B.C., and not only corrects and validates the 70 week prophecy of Daniel 9 more exactly, but also places the above related stellar phenomena with an event worthy of their significance.

THE CLOCK OF THE HEAVENS

The Birth of Christ

Now let us consider some of these markings in the heavens at the probable time of Jesus' birth. These findings are nothing short of astounding:

Most are aware of the symbolic description of the first advent in Revelation 12:1-2:

> "*And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars*
>
> *And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered."* (KJV)

Now please note the following observations:

The Bible itself designates this vision of a woman in the sky as a "SIGN IN THE HEAVENS." The minimizing of this description as being merely theological; or the notion of its being totally unrelated to astrological thinking is an absurdity. Any person living at the time that the book of Revelation was written would have viewed this statement at least partially in this light. The early part of the chapter describes symbolically the birth of Jesus, the Messiah, and the efforts of Satan, speaking through a dragon (i.e. the Roman empire, particularly Herod the Great) to destroy him. This event is historically valid from the biblical record, which accurately describes the Christ event.

Astronomically and biblically speaking, the sun is described as being mid-bodied to an expecting woman, yet a pure virgin. The principal constellation clearly associated with a maternal aspect is Virgo—Latin for "virgin." (For those ever-present skeptics of religion, please note that even the stars for millennia have proclaimed the expected <u>virgin</u> birth of a great deliverer! To simply deny this all as impossible is an inadequate answer).

Glory to God in the Highest

The vision also provides the aspect of the moon pictured under the feet of the woman. The constellation Virgo is one of the twelve principle constellations of the zodiacal circle, and lies (horizontally) along the ecliptic. The ecliptic we have noted is the path of the sun, moon, and planets through the heavens. Thus the moon can at times take such a position; i.e. "under her feet."

In fact, it can only be found in this position once every lunar month. However, in this specific relationship, sun and moon together, much less. The sun is in Virgo only one month a year, and so there is only one day in the year where both the sun and moon can together be mid-bodied and at the feet of the woman respectively. And some years, because of the varied position of the moon as it passes through the constellation at night, it may not align as appropriately during its visual path to fit perfectly the above description.

However, in the specific time parameters of Jesus' birth this configuration occurs once which is most accurate as relates to the description in question. That was on Sept. 11, 3 B.C. What is incredibly unique about this fortuitous occurrence is that in this year (3 B.C.) this alignment happens on the first day of the 7th biblical month, *Rosh Hashanah*, *New Year's Day*, the day when kings took office and the civil year began. This also was the first day of the Feast of Trumpets.

According to some, *Rosh Hashanah* was customarily the day on which king's were coroneted! No wonder Herod was nervous when information, no doubt similar to this, was relayed to him by the Magi and other prognosticators! It was probably also a deadline or appointed day for civil business which in part explains why Jesus' parents were involved in registration requirements toward the civil government and had traveled to Bethlehem to comply. Since Joseph was of the seed of David, the kingly line, he was particularly required to go to Bethlehem to swear allegiance to the sovereignty of Rome. Ironically, God used this rival circumstance to actually introduce the true King of Kings to the world!

THE CLOCK OF THE HEAVENS

On September 11 (Martin says the 11th, some might opt in their calculations of the visual appearance of the new moon that month for the 12th), 3 B.C., such an event appeared briefly in the evening sky just following sunset. This perhaps not only gives us the day, but the time of day Jesus was born, for the shepherds were watching their flocks by night when the angels heralded the glorious birth of the Savior. The phenomenon was visible about 6 to 7 pm. So concludes Dr. Martin.

Jupiter

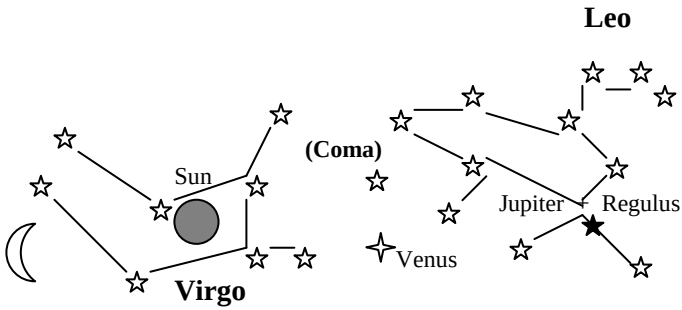
But the heavens are not through speaking on this unique date. The planet Jupiter is at this very moment in conjunction with the fixed star, *Regulus*, in the constellation *Leo* (the Lion). *Regulus* is the most significant star in the direct path of the ecliptic, and comes from the same root as "regal." It was in essence the "king star." It was then in the "king constellation," Leo the Lion.

Jupiter was considered the chief of the gods in many heathen pantheons. But in Christian lore, as we shall observe, Jupiter stands for the supreme deity or God, the supreme ruler or governor (Remember that prophecies of Christ spoke of him as a governor, that government would be upon his shoulders, that as the Messiah, he would "rule thy people Israel;" Micah 5:2). It is then in a sense the "king planet." Therefore we have the "king planet" conjunctive with the "king star" in the "king constellation" on the "king day!"

(Near this general time, because of our earthly perspective of planetary motions, Jupiter's retrograde motion at the winter solstice caused it to form a halo effect or circle just above Regulus. The "king planet" in effect placed a "crown" on the "king star." Quite amazing! (Cf. Martin, *The Star That Astonished the World*).

Figure 1

Ca. September 11, 3 B.C.



Further Considerations

I would like to add at least one further observation to that of Martin's, which specifies I believe more exactly this year in consideration. This has to do with the planet Venus, which in its motions takes varied positions throughout any given year. Venus is the brightest body in the heavens, (except, of course, the sun and moon) and is known as the "bright and morning star," the "phosphorus," or the "day star;" and is equated I believe with the person of Jesus. In ancient heathen folklore, Venus was the goddess of love, a female deity. This is a perversion. However, the association with love, and at times the female aspect represented in deity and in events, is not totally without validity and symbolic value.

Yet, Venus, on this day (Sept. 11), is positioned in the first *decan* of Virgo itself. The relationship then of the Bright and Morning Star is not only to the birth of "the coming branch"(all the stars in Virgo through their ancient names employ this meaning) and the "Root of David," as defined in the

constellation Virgo, but it is in a more specific placement correlating to the sub-constellation, Coma, known in all ancient zodiacs as the picture of the virgin mother holding an infant, the promised seed.

In all this incredible combination of circumstances is so appropriate that there can be little doubt but that it marks a time very close to the nativity of the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth (Nazareth comes from the Hebrew word, *nazar*, branch or root), Son of God, to whom all the signs and symbols of the heavens I believe were intended to point. The stars give magnificent testimony of the advent of their Creator to this world. The stars themselves seem to testify accurately of the exact *time* that Jesus came incarnate to this world.

Other Possibilities?

Is it possible that the above confluence of astronomical signs is the only one given us for consideration; or are there other dates and events that can be detected and measured by the "clock of the heavens?" To this our study will proceed in the following chapters.

But, in any event, the markings of the heavens around the likely time of Christ's birth are quite compelling, and could hardly be mere chance. It is quite possible, that when considering the position of all the visible planets, and the relative positions of the sun and moon at this time in history, that we have a combination of alignments that happened only in this time and only in this way. Thus the stars of the heavens, both in angelic form, and in cosmological form declared with one voice on that stupendous evening long ago, "*Glory to God in the highest (the heavens), and on earth peace, good will toward men*" (Luke 2:14).

3

ASTRONOMICAL CONFIGURATIONS AND THE DATE FOR THE DEATH OF CHRIST-Part I

Since we are now wandering in the celestial and fanciful realm of "baptized" astrology, it is of interest to search the heavens in regard to the debated chronological dates for the death and crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

To begin with, such dates and historical positions are in themselves inconclusive. No one has ever "proven" any of the historical dates during the time of Christ. It is difficult to know with exactness even the year of the particular Passover at which Jesus was crucified. But several chronological factors place it necessarily within a space of a few years. (For more detailed discussions of the possible Passover dates see the *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 5, or other similar discussions in other works). We will not discuss these matters in detail here. But there are available parameters; such as the procuratorship of Pontius Pilate (26-36 A.D.), and the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar (ca. 27 A.D; Luke 3:1); and their relationship to John's and Jesus' ministry. All such data can be related to the general timeline of Jesus' ministry, especially as chronicled in the Gospel of John.

The best dates offered for the crucifixion seem to be A.D. 30 (April 7), and March/April A.D. 31. Some promote dates as late as A.D. 33 but this, I believe, is irresponsible. However for the certain reasons I am quite convinced that a date of ca. April 25-27, 31 A.D. is the best candidate in part for the following reasons:

1. The prophetic interpretation of the 70 week prophecy of Daniel 9 predicts a "cutting off" of the Messiah "in the midst of the week," thus requiring A.D. 31, if the A.D. 27 date for the beginning of Christ's ministry represents best the result of the proper inspection of the prophetic and secular data.

2. The chronological timeline of the Gospel of John---apparently three and one half years; three Passovers mentioned, and possibly another referred to as "a feast of the Jews."

3. The correlate statements of the prophetess, Ellen G. White.

4. The typological necessity of the testing times of Christ's ministry being 3 and ½ years, as in other prophetic examples, 1260 years, 42 months, etc.

5. And finally, the "astronomical" considerations pertaining to this date.

"Astrological" Signs of A.D. 30

Tracking the stellar movements around April 7, A.D. 30 supplies no extraordinary demonstration of significance. At least my untrained astrological eye notices but few.

Aries is appropriately marked, but the sun would naturally be there anyway. The planets are scattered and don't seem to mark what we might expect at the time in question. Some significant planets are in a dead space almost between zodiacal signs and have little striking import in their setting.

"Astrological" Signs of A.D. 31

The case for A.D. 31 may be much more significant for several reasons:

First is the position of Jupiter, always one of the most significant indicators in ancient folklore and history. Jupiter, (in the Greek pantheon, Zeus) represents good and positive forces in human life, but particularly in ancient circles the supreme God, the positive essence of deity and kingship.

Jupiter

At the suggested time of ca. April, A.D. 31, Jupiter is appropriately passing through Aries (the Lamb). During the month it finds itself in near conjunction with the sun itself. To the eyes of the ancients it essentially DISAPPEARED for a while and hid itself in the sun. The conjunction is actually nearest at the beginning of April, but because of its propinquity with the sun would have been rarely visible if visible at all to the observer.

The interpretation of such an event may be nefarious, but in the case of the cross we have both the most dire and tragic of events occurring, while at the same time something of great good is also transpiring. The brutal and unjust death of the Son of God occurs, yet at the same time a victory at Calvary assures eternal life to the believer.

In such a way one might interpret the movements of Jupiter. Because while in astrological terms, closeness or conjunction of a "good" planet with the Sun (oneself, etc.) usually means a favorable indication to the person or circumstance; the loss and "hiding of the face" of the supreme God of the universe for a time might signal a perceived rejection and abandonment by this same God. So is reflected the words of Jesus, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Yet in it all, the cosmos was receiving the blessing of salvation and light.

Saturn, Venus, Mars

Of particular note, though, is the position of the three planets, Saturn, Venus, and Mars. However, first we must generally note their particular astrological associations that are easily discernible and known by the most elementary of those acquainted with astrological lore.

Saturn and Mars

Many astrological textbooks will commonly ascribe "negative" associations with Saturn and Mars. The two "positive" planets are Venus and Jupiter. They are associated with positive power, god, love, and fortunate circumstances. But Saturn and Mars are the two "negatives."

Saturn was often associated with evil, loss, misfortune, and disaster. It is the dark, evil, and sinister force in nature. One will find the associations with Mars somewhat related to this. Mars was not so evil in general terms as Saturn, but was definitely associated with despotic power, force of will, violence, and war. In fact Mars always in mythology is the god of war and aggression.

The choice of terms for these planet/gods in astrological works is consistent and particularly interesting. Saturn and Mars are referred to as "malefics;" that is, things that are against and opposed to good. To be further specific, Saturn is called "the greater malefic," and Mars is called the "lesser malefic."

Venus

Venus, of course in the fanciful escapades of mythology often takes on the connotations and recognition of love, and most particularly the feminine qualities. Though this was most often turned to the erotic and sexual form of love in legends and folklore, the common association of "Venus" qualities can be ascribed to any being, those being characterized by love and strong emotional bonds.

However, we are more interested in biblical backgrounds and associations, only referring to the pagan adulterations of these things in the interest of recovering the original cosmic and gospel intentions of these signs in the heavens.

The Date for the Death of Christ-1

Consistent to biblical datum, Venus, the brightest planet or heavenly body in our night sky besides the sun and moon, is associated clearly with Jesus Christ himself:

- *"I am the Root and Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star" Revelation 22:16*
- *"Until the day dawn and the Day Star (Greek; phosphorus, always Venus) arises in our hearts" 2 Peter 1:21*
- *"The Dayspring from on High" Luke 1:78*
- *"A Star shall arise out of Jacob" Numbers 14:34*

So we might, according to the biblical reckoning, identify Venus with Christ himself in his *divine love* and messianic and earthly revelation. We will comment more on this momentarily.

Other Planets

Mercury, was generally not particularly good or bad, but as the swift "messenger" of the Gods, like the prophets, brought news and warnings.

The planets, Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto are recent astronomical discoveries, and while modern astrologers assign them great significance, the ancients obviously did not consider them in their interpretation of signs and events.

THE CLOCK OF THE HEAVENS

The A.D. 31 Configuration

What is here offered for consideration is the potential significance of astronomical events around the very days of the Passover festival of Friday, ca. April 25[2], A.D. 31:

Focusing on or about this time, the position of Venus, Mars and Saturn are thus:

Though not in direct conjunction they are passing close to each other at this particular time. What is interesting is that Venus is positioned central to the other two, with the other two on a similar plane, and Venus slightly elevated to them. In other words, they are grouped three, in the same constellation; the good planet Venus in a position that would not be a particularly good omen, between the two "malefics."

Of further consequence is the movement of the planets. By Thursday, ca. April 24, the planets are positioned with Saturn somewhat stationary on one imaginary line in the constellation Gemini, and Mars approaching the opposite imaginary line or character in Gemini, and Venus somewhat between them. But not until about Friday evening does the configuration reach the most symmetrical relationship, with Venus being more exactly mid-spaced between the two:

Venus
•
Saturn • • Mars

Furthermore one must mention here the somewhat unusual likelihood of such a unique positioning. And this pertains especially to the planet Saturn. Saturn is by personal observation a very slow moving planet. In fact it seems to take about 29 years to make a complete revolution around us, thus it passes through the full cycle of the ecliptic in so many years. In

[2] Thought to be April 27 on most calendars.

other words it is in the vicinity of the constellation Gemini for about a year every thirty years. Venus and Mars, of course, pass this way much more often, but hardly ever, or at least very rarely has the same configuration appeared in this particular place and as described above. In the years ca. 1, A.D., (excepting 30,31 A.D.), 60 A.D., 90 A.D., and so forth they simply do not bear the same relationship in passing this spot.

But 31 A.D. is virtually the only time they converge, near each other yet not in dramatically close conjunction, and in this particular way.

CONSENSUS

Obviously what seems to be the picture is a depiction of a good deity of love and light taking the unfortunate position between the two *malefics*; a greater and a lesser, *malefics* who represent violence, destruction, loss and personal aggression. It is often said that Jesus was slain between two "malefactors," and the violent thieves could not be better represented than with the two *malefics*, one the symbol of aggression and war, the other the symbol of loss and evil misfortune. This all seems to have been depicted in the Western horizon of the evening sky at exactly this time.

As the weekend progresses and on into the next week, Venus and Mars drift away from this spot and the relationship of the planets changes. Also at about this time, (esp. by the possible Resurrection Sunday) Jupiter, which has been hiding in the sun starts to separate itself from the sun's parameters and appears preceding the sun in the morning light (a morning star!).

Gemini

There is another important factor to consider here: It was mentioned that the approach of Saturn, Venus, and Mars to each other happens central to the confines of the constellation Gemini. What might this signify? At

first this might seem inappropriate but upon some reflection it may not be by accident. Because mythologically and theologically the constellation Gemini tells a story.

Gemini is a Latin term, meaning, "the twins." In Greek mythology they are the famous "DIOSCURI," meaning the "two sons" of Zeus. The story takes several forms and with typical mythological license represents a bizarre tale. The common elements, however, true in virtually all the legends are these: They are the two sons of Zeus, the supreme God of the universal pantheon. These two sons are united by a strong friendship through all their adventures. Their names are Castor and Pollux. These names survive astronomically in the two brightest stars in the constellation Gemini at the top of the star cluster and directly opposite each other. The difference between the two "brothers" was this: Castor was mortal, and Pollux was immortal. They shared many adventures, but in perhaps the most common tale they attended the wedding of their two girl cousins. In the whole event they took off and absconded with the two girls (also stars, in Taurus). This of course infuriated the girls' suitors and a fight ensued. Castor, as a mortal was killed in the *fracas*.

Now Pollux was in a sad condition, because his good friend, his brother and companion, was dead. He mourned the loss of his mortal brother so much that he approached his father, Zeus, and asked for a remedy to the situation. What happened varies slightly between accounts but in effect what was worked out was that Pollux, on alternating days descended into the underworld or death chamber of Castor so that Castor could live in heaven with the gods; then they changed places again. In another variant, they were together one day in heaven and together one day in the underworld and thus were always together again. The idea is precisely this; that the immortal brother sacrificed part of his divine life to be reunited with his fallen mortal brother. This entailed a trip through the grave.

The parallels are quite obvious. In the Bible two "sons of God" are mentioned. Adam is called the "son of God," (Luke 3:38) and Jesus is called the "Son of God" (Matthew 27:54). One son is mortal, the other

son is immortal. As the mortal, Castor loses his life by sinning or getting in trouble "concerning a woman," and so Adam sins and gets in similar trouble and loses his life. But the heavenly brother has a yearning for his earthly brother and longs to rescue him. So he descends into the *lower parts of the earth*, into darkness, to give a life in heaven to his brother, at considerable loss to himself.

The constellation Gemini represents its two figures in a variety of ways (i.e. brothers, Adam and Eve, two goats, etc.). Of interest is the fact that at the crucifixion, Saturn marks the star line of Pollux, the immortal mythological brother, and Mars marks the second and mortal brother, Castor. Mars symbolizes death and mortality; and Saturn, loss and misfortune. This is exactly what happened. Death came to Christ in his humanity, but the evil design of Satan while it bruised the heel of Christ, did not ultimately crush him in His divinity.

Gemini was known in some ancient records as "the place of the wounding." (Cf. Bullinger and Seiss) If this is true, it is entirely appropriate. Gemini is the "brotherly love" constellation, and Venus is the "love" planet. How appropriate!

Though, not pure in all its details, the story this configuration anciently tells certainly accords with part of what happened at the cross of Christ. The first Adam was rescued by the second Adam. One brother there died for the other; and there a god, was positioned between two malefics. And so, it appears such a representation was found, in the center of Gemini, on perhaps the very day when a cross was raised on Calvary.

4

ASTRONOMICAL CONFIGURATIONS AND THE DATE FOR THE DEATH OF CHRIST-Part II

To further complete the picture of the heavens at the very time in which the Lord Jesus Christ was likely crucified, buried, and resurrected, it is of significance to note the movements of the moon also. The moon often gives more specific testimony as to the day or time of the month the heavens are intended to mark.

The moon has often been associated with "negative" aspects. There are even today expressions about "a bad moon arising," though I cannot ascertain from whence such an expression arose. In the vision of the heavenly woman in Revelation 12 the moon is in a position under the feet of the woman. In eastern circles something under the heel or under foot was a position of shame, dishonor, and reproach. To lift your heel against someone was equated with a curse (Thus the woman in Revelation 12 is seen to be pure, and is disdaining impurity). The moon itself may have represented impurity, for the moon even when brightest has spots and smudges, and was therefore considered "unclean." The moon was considered responsible for a woman's cyclical impurity. In ancient times superstitions arose in regard to the moons effect. It was felt that remaining or sleeping directly under the moon's rays produced madness. From this word for the moon, *luna*, we get the noun, "lunatic" or the condition of "lunacy." The Psalmist even refers to the fact that with God's protection the "sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night" (Psalm 121).

It is of interesting consequence that on this specific date in history the moon follows a logical progression through the zodiac and it's mansions. On what we shall later show to probably be the Thursday evening of Passion Week, the moon is positioned in Libra, or the scales. The scale is a judgment or weighing device. During the hours that Jesus is on trial (seven trials in a row) the moon stays within the bounds of Libra. But by Friday evening the moon enters the pincers of the constellation Scorpio; and next to the bright red star, *Antares* that means "the tearing or wounding." It is at this very spot that one of the heels of Ophiuchus, the serpent holder, is pictured as being pierced by the pincers of the Scorpion.

The scorpion is a graphic symbol of abject suffering, pain, and misery. Try if you might to find better symbols to represent Gethsemane and the Cross.[1]

In some zodiacs there is pictured an ALTAR or SACRED MOUND inside the pincers of the scorpion at this very spot! The circle of the pincers is the circle of the sacred mound or altar. Jesus was crucified on a "sacred mound" called "Golgotha's" hill. There the serpent (sometimes the scorpion is made a serpent) bruised the heel of the woman's seed (Gen 3:15).

By the same time Saturday evening the moon is still positioned in Scorpio, at the other foot of Ophiuchus, perhaps. But this is in the portion of the scorpion where we find the deadly tail of the scorpion, whose sting is virtually fatal. The grave still held its victim who had fought and struggled so valiantly; as graphically portrayed in the struggle of Ophiuchus with the writhing and evil serpent. Beneath this part of Scorpio is the already burning funeral pyre, or altar of sacrifice known as "Ara, the Altar."

By Sunday the moon is found entering the constellation, *Sagittarius*, the divine bowman confidently riding forth, claiming victory over his enemies. In the following days the moon moves into Capricorn; the constellation that represents the transition from death to new life both in what is represented but also in the season of the year that it represents. It is in Capricorn that the days cease to grow shorter and that they begin their turn toward longer days following the winter solstice.

This naturally, of course, is the picture of the Resurrection.

The decans, or associated signs of Capricorn continue this same theme. Just next to each other, higher in the sky, and in that part correlate to where the moon passes are the two decans called Aquila (the eagle) and

[1] Libra/Scorpio is also the area of the heavens marked with the decans of "Victima," a victim being slain; and the constellation "Crux," or "the Cross," which is attached to this last part of Libra and the beginning of Scorpio.

Delphinus (the dolphin). In this picture the noble eagle is falling as if dying, but next to him is a dolphin or fish leaping energetically out of the waters in rapturous fashion. The picture seems clear. The theme is that of passing from death into life.

This does not seem to be coincidence. In correct order, and marked with respective appropriate timing, are the themes of the final passion; judgment, suffering and death; then victory and new life.

Eclipse

There is one more significant point that we must make concerning the moon at this time of Friday, April 25, A.D. 31 (Many calendars show Friday as April 27, explanation follows). This is the eclipse that takes place the night I have calculated for the crucifixion---or possibly by some calculations the previous night in Gethsemane. Eclipses have always been considered indicators that something evil, sinister, or significant is taking place. It is considered a bad omen, so to speak. If my reckoning is correct, there was an eclipse, beginning on Friday night just following the burial of Jesus. The eclipse is quite striking (though not complete), and starts about 10:30 P.M. and is central at 12:18 A.M. just after midnight, on Saturday morning.

This is an incredible circumstance; for an eclipse occurs in Scorpio. (It is important to note that my calculations are two days different than many typical calendars. The reader must refer to the following chapter, "Correction to Astronomical Calendar Dates" to review more of the rationale for this calculation).

Broad Moon

Another argument that exists in my mind that the A.D. 31 date is correct is the description of the Passover moon that Jesus saw with his disciples on their way to Gethsemane.

The book *Desire of Ages* indicates that it was dark outside (DA 674), but that the moon, "broad and full" (DA 685) revealed a grapevine regarding which Jesus made his famous illustration. If one takes the 30 date, the sun set and the moon rose much earlier in the evening, and at about the same hour. The moon (sometime well after supper) is here indicated as being more than full, in fact, as "broad and full;" meaning that aspect one sees when the moon appears to be enlarged *immediately* upon its ascendancy from the horizon. This "broad" aspect lasts for only a short time. In A.D. 30 this aspect would likely have been well past and the moon quite high in the heavens by the time supper would have passed and the disciples would have made their way out into the night. But in A.D. 31 the moon rises around 8:00 P.M., and after sunset, and would have been in this very mode that the prophetess perhaps saw in vision, when the disciples and their Lord made their way to Gethsemane.

Gemini

One last footnote we might add to our discussion: One might wonder at first at the appropriateness of the grouping of most of the planets in Gemini. Why Gemini? Wouldn't Aries, the Lamb (Passover), be more appropriate?

We must note a few of things in response to this. First, is the fact that one of the ancient names of Gemini is "the place of Him who cometh" (Bullinger, p.137). Gemini is really quite fitting then, as we have already described in the previous chapter.

Secondly we must remember that the latter part of Aries (the Lamb or Ram) is already occupied by the sun (and Jupiter in Aries/Taurus), the most important pointer of the celestial clock. Usually in astrological reckonings the most significant position is taken by the most significant stellar body, in this case the sun. So the house of Aries is already appropriately utilized and taken.

Third, we must remember that the immediate symbols of the Passion must necessarily represent more than just the death and suffering of Christ. Symbols must be found to represent the comprehensive nature of this event. Not only is the death of the Son of God occurring on this weekend, but also the Resurrection to Life. Also is seen the reconciliation between God and man (as Paul ably presents in the Adam/Christ parallel of Romans 5), the victory over the serpent; *in addition* to wounding of the Savior. Therefore, in this light, to feature Gemini prominently in our "horoscope" is really quite fitting. For all these aspects are found there: the raising from mortality to immortality, the rescue of humanity, and the suffering of the Savior.

It must also be mentioned that every overt symbol in the heavenly zodiac that features the striking of the heel of the featured hero is marked by some celestial phenomenon at this very time. In particular, the sun approaching Taurus (his horns shown piercing the heel of Auriga the Shepherd, the constellation between Taurus and Gemini), the moon marking the wounding of *Ophiuchus* (*Hercules*, also, in the same sign) in the heel, and the planets of Saturn and Mars in Gemini, where one of the twins also has a bruised heel.

Conclusion

Again, we want to give a word of caution. Such data cannot be considered unassailable or proof worthy. But at worst, such a fortuitous configuration in the sky at the assumed time of Christ's death cannot be considered less than incredibly amazing! That so many symbols and circumstances would

so appropriately speak, and so appropriately align themselves is truly remarkable. Whether all of these astronomical readings are correct or not we cannot guarantee. But there is enough argument to arrest our attention and to spur on our study.

Upon this limited investigation, it appears that the clock of the heavens rings out with incredible accuracy and eloquence the story of salvation. At the time of the cross, all the heavenly host gave testimony to the greatest event of human history, the sacrifice of the Son of God, the beneficent Creator of worlds and space.

"<u>But like the stars in the vast circuit of their appointed path, God's purposes know no haste and no delay</u>. Through the symbols of the great darkness and the smoking furnace, God had revealed to Abraham the bondage of Israel in Egypt, and had declared that the time of their sojourning should be four hundred years. "Afterward," He said, "shall they come out with great substance." [Gen. 15:14] Against that word, all the power of Pharaoh's proud empire battled in vain. On the "selfsame day" appointed in the divine promise, "it came to pass that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt." [Ex. 12:41.] So in heaven's council the hour for the coming of Christ had been determined. <u>When the great clock of time pointed to that hour, Jesus was born in Bethlehem</u>." Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 31,32 (emphasis supplied).

5

CORRECTIONS TO ASTRONOMICAL/CALENDAR DATES

While the stars and even the celestial orbs in their circuits keep almost perfect time, the same cannot be said of the calendars used by man. When correlating calendar dates to astronomical time enormous assumptions are embraced which many overlook. It is thus important to make some observations relative to this issue.

Calendars have never been perfect as relates to the scientific length of days, months, years and certain extended calendar periods.

The Hebrew and Babylonian lunar calendars made periodic corrections by inserting intercalary months. However the Egyptian calendar crawled away from the true beginning of the year by ¼ of a day each year. The time it took to completely crawl back to the original beginning was a Sothic cycle, close to 1500 years.

When the Julian calendar reforms came into being during the first glory days of Rome the calendar was brought closer to the approximate 365.25 day per year calendar year. The insertion of a leap year every four years corrected the discrepancies somewhat.

But it was discovered that the Spring Equinox was still slowly drifting away from its true location (about March 21). This was because the year is not 365.25 days per year but more accurately 365.242199 days per year. By the Middle Ages it was in need of correction, and was especially noted because of the impact this had upon the calculation of the date for Easter celebrations. By the 1500's it was determined that a correction must be made and so Pope Gregory authorized astronomers and scientists the task of bringing back to "time" the proper calendrical methods.

In 1582 a correction of 10 days (subtracted from September) was made. This change was not adopted everywhere, but after several centuries nearly every nation did, including the United States, and Russia. Also it was determined that by honoring certain century leap years (*Century* leap years divisible by 400; 1600=yes 1700=no 1800=no 1900=no, 2000=yes; thus

skipping three normal leap years every 400 years) the calendar is brought so close to astronomical time as to vary only about one day in three thousand years.

The Accuracy of Generally Accepted Calendar Dates

A problem appears to exist in the opinion of the writer of these pages, however, when we reckon back in time and correlate calendar dates to astronomical dates. While the astronomical data is quite sound the habits of calendar reckonings it appears are not trustworthy.

Most astronomical programs and astronomical tables seem to assign Julian calendar dates as we go backward from the year 1582. Because of the 1582 correction one assumes that the Julian dates are quite accurate. But are they?

Mathematics reveals a discrepancy. For instance, we know that a year is astronomically speaking 365.242199 days. Thus if we choose the year 0, or the beginning of the year 1 A.D. we can theoretically calculate the amount of actual time that has progressed until the year 1582.

But now if we count backward accounting for each day that has transpired on the Julian calendar back from 1582 we arrive at about 12.35 days askew. It is no surprise that some adjustment is needed, for this was addressed in 1582. However, the correction of 10 days factored back into the remainder (12.35) still leaves us with nearly a two-day error, or two days not accounted for. Why is this?

I believe at this point the reason for this discrepancy is that the ten-day calendar correction in 1582 was made, not to truly recognize the scientific calendar change of actual time, but only to bring the calendar to correlate with the perceived Spring Equinox.

The reasons for change were religious (to restore Easter to it's proper place, etc.) and not scientific. The assumption is made that at the

beginning of the Christian era or Common Era, that the Spring Equinox was accurately matched with the Julian calendar, March 21, or whatever. But it must not have been, or else our calculations would coincide without discrepancy.

Thus when we calculate back for example to A.D. 30 or 31 to the crucifixion of Christ, the 2.35 day error we first supposed is actually very close to exactly 2.0 full days. Thus many astronomical programs and tables are off by 1 or 2 days, not astronomically, but in the particular calendar and weekday given to match the astronomical data. Few are aware of this, though some authors are finally making note that discrepancy perhaps exists[1].

The net result of all of this is significant especially when seeking to ascertain the date, for instance, of Christ's crucifixion. Because we know to look for a Friday Passover year this error can make a difference in ruling out certain years as possible crucifixion years. According to my calculations then, the date for the crucifixion was not Friday, April 27, AD 31, but was Friday, April 25, (the calendar showing this to be a Wednesday!). This better qualifies AD 31 than even before, the full moon coming when it should in relationship to the Passover events of Passion Week. Plus there comes as a result of this revised reckoning a visible lunar eclipse following Gethsemane or the trials of Jesus and his death; a very appropriate astrological marking for the great event in consideration.

But the traditional date of April 7, AD 30 (Really April 5) is virtually eliminated from consideration because the configuration is unsatisfactory. The calculation of the new and full moon in this year pushes the 14th of *Nisan* two days removed from what is thought in all Christian works and many historical writings to be a Friday; however, being probably a Sunday instead.

[1] (Cf. Duncan Steel, Marking Time, New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2000, pp. 165-170) Refer also to Appendix D.

Corrections to Astronomical/Calendar Dates

Similar adjustment must then be made when calculating back further in time, the variation being about .0078 day per year. This we will particularly revisit when looking at the date of the Exodus and other Old Testament dates.

Here again then, the clock of the heavens comes in to service. This marvelous timepiece, is given for times and for seasons, and is calibrated to such minimal variation and such accuracy as to provide us a standard from which all human calendars and the inferior devising systems of man can be tested.

The Insertion of Intercalary Months

Another area of concern largely ignored by date-setters is recognition of the Hebrew and Babylonian practice of inserting a second *Adar*, or twelfth month, about once every three years. While this practice is generally acknowledged, its significance and ramifications are not adequately considered especially by those calculating dates for the crucifixion of Christ. Searchers arrogantly fix such dates as April 7, 30 A.D., or other dates in 32 and 33 A.D. without taking into account the rhythmic cycles of the lunar calendar which, for instance, demanded that in certain years the Passover could come quite late in April.

While we cannot fix with certainty which years were ultimately chosen for inserting the extra necessary month (determined by how ripe the barley was), we can determine which years most likely demanded it in the astronomical cycle. Below is a listing of new moon and full moon dates (AD 27-31) given in the more accurate astronomical terms. Since the new moon was then determined by visual observation we know these probably were not the exact days observed at the time, but they are within a day or so previous to when the Rabbis made their determinations:

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Year	New Moon	Full Moon
27	3/26	4/9
28	3/15	3/29
29	4/2	4/17
30	3/22	4/7
31	3/12	3/27

The list of full moons at the right is based on the first full moon of each year, which immediately followed the spring equinox. In turn, then, the new moons are those, which largely occur within the arbitrary confines of the period known in modern times as the latter part of the month of March.

From the above list it is clear to see that the year (out of these five) which provides the earliest new or full moon in March or these parameters is AD 31; March 12 and 27 respectively. Therefore it is most likely that AD 31 was an intercalary year, the spring of that year demanding the insertion of more time to complement the accruing deficit. This therefore means that in all likelihood, a second *Adar* was inserted then; the added month pushing the commencement of the new year to ca. April 10, making the observed full moon of the 14th of *Nisan* on the 25th or 26th of April. This fits the evidence as it relates to the surrounding years as well. (Another of the above years was probably also another year demanding an intercalary month, but let this suffice.)

With exasperating regularity, this intercalary possibility is ignored by chronologists in their calculations. But when the self-correcting clock of the heavens is observed and honored as it should be, it tells with unerring accuracy the truth regarding the times and the seasons of Scripture and history. It is better to be cautious, thorough, and in the best position of being right than to quickly accept the popular suppositions claimed by writers and expositors who trumpet their opinions on this subject all about us. But when all things are considered, *the sky does not lie*.

6

THE MINISTRY OF THE SAVIOR

If indeed the Gospel is written on the face of the sky (Psalm 19:1) and the starry heavens were given "for signs and for seasons" one might consider, at least, the notion that the entire Christ event itself is marked in the stellar configurations as well. The clearest manifestation of the prerogatives of God has been given to us in the incarnation of his son, Jesus Christ, as a man. The events of Christ's ministry are so important in the history of salvation that argument exists that these events might find specific correlation when measured by "the clock of the heavens."

Objections will, of course, be made to such a possibility by those secular skeptics who make themselves unable to see value in religious history and who are not interested in spiritual things. Others, though sincere adherents of Christianity will object on the basis that such representations are fanciful and occult. Let this be.

I simply ask the reader to ask himself if the following examples of heavenly signs, which seem to parallel the ministry of Christ, could be coincidental in their entirety. It is readily admitted that certain signs may be misread, or that bias toward certain dates of "HIS" "STORY" could force invalid interpretations. This is very possible. The concept presented in this work is at this point a very subjective science, and the following claims are admittedly tentative. Yes, one event could be misinterpreted astronomically. But that successive events in the heavens could parallel historical occurrences in the life of Christ in a logical progression challenges the charge that all such astronomical readings are coincidental.

All I am claiming here is that there seems to be an amazing pattern in the movements of the sun, moon, and planets that when properly understood may relate to the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is suggested that like all other natural sciences, all true astrological science was originally intended to be founded in the revelations of the true Creator God.

THE CLOCK OF THE HEAVENS

Historical Timeline of the Christ Event

Absolute dates for the events surrounding and including the life of Jesus of Nazareth are not available. This problem of fixing historical dates for the events of Jesus' life has led to numerous arguments and has generated various theories.

As one looks at the stellar movements of this general time period, however, it may be possible to ascertain some relative data that is significant in setting up a harmonious timeline for certain events in Christ's ministry. Again, we hasten to report that such readings of their own with our limited knowledge of true astrological calculations and the rules that should be applied to them are not enough in themselves. They might be if we knew more about how to understand them. But we don't. However, by working with the knowledge we do have, and searching the heavens for confirmations of this data, we can perhaps add some certainty and specificity to this time period. At least, this is the premise or theorem we are working from.

What tradition and historical records do seem to offer us is this: That the 15th year of Tiberias Caesar (Luke) is very close to 27 A.D. It is likely that the baptism of Jesus took place in the fall of this year. Based on the premise established in the preceding chapters relative to the birth of Christ (Sept. 11-12, 3 B.C.), Jesus' thirtieth year would need to fall in this general time period. In fact, Luke is more specific than most commentators or even translators indicate. They usually give Jesus age at his baptism as vaguely, "about 30 years of age." But Luke says literally, "beginning to be about 30 years of age." While interpretations of this phrase vary, I take it to mean what it says, that Jesus was entering his 30th year, (numerically or inclusively I do not know). Therefore, Jesus would have been 29 or 30 years old in A.D. 27. This fits all the evidence. If he was born in 5,6, or 7 B.C. as a 4 B.C. date for the death of Herod would require, then Jesus is commensurately and significantly older, i.e. 32 and up.

The Ministry of the Savior

We also know that Jesus died in the procuratorship of Pontius Pilate (26-36 AD). We also know that the best evidence puts the crucifixion in either the year 30 or 31. The other dates used for the crucifixion simply do not fit the "Friday Passover" requirement as well as other data relative to the question. The Rabbinic writings and the *Gospel to the Nazaraeans*[1] point to events that happened in the fortieth year previous to the destruction of Jerusalem (70 A.D.) which sound very much like the events surrounding the crucifixion of Christ. Inclusively reckoned, 31 is an exact fit.

Thus we can be quite sure that the crucifixion happened at the Passover of one of these two years. Most scholars prefer the 30 AD date. Despite the popularity of the April 7, 30 AD date, the best evidence I have always felt is for AD 31, probably April 27 (25). We cannot enter the entire arguments here, or give support for them in this treatise. But to review, my reasons are based in part on the following:

1. The 3 and ½ year traditional duration of Christ's ministry.
2. The 70 week prophecy of Daniel 9 and the "midst of the week" designation in this prophecy.
3. The records of early tradition.
4. The (supposed) four Passovers of the Gospel of John and the relation of the Gospel narratives to the timeline of the feasts.
5. The astronomical data already presented in the previous chapters.

Therefore, we will be looking primarily at the evidence that best correlates to these time periods. The findings are quite interesting. I feel they may quite overwhelmingly point to certain dates as the correct ones. What is most gratifying, is that the very heavens themselves seem to testify to the gospel story, if not indeed indicate that the symbols of the zodiac were written and created for this very purpose. In addition, the story of Christ and His work for man's salvation is affirmed as historical, indeed so wondrous and true as to be written from sky to sky.

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[1] *Yoma* 39b; *Sotah* 6:3; *Shabbath* 15a. See translation of Jacob Neusner, in his book "The Yerushalmi," pp. 156, 157. For the Gospel of the Nazaraeans cf. Hennecke-Schneemelcher, *The New Testament Apocrypha*, vol. I, pp. 150, 153.

The Chronology of Christ's Ministry

Again, we cannot digress to any significant degree on this matter. There is hardly any agreement in the field of synoptic studies regarding the exact order of events in the ministry of Jesus or as to the specific months or days in which those events occurred.

Some commentators even shorten the length of Christ's ministry to one year. Such reckless determinations in light of the evidence are inexcusable and are here dismissed as absurd. Equally impossible are the efforts of some to date the crucifixion by means of a solar eclipse, which cannot occur in the circumstance of a Passover full moon.

The finest conclusions, I believe are reached by those who measure according to the Passovers mentioned in the *Gospel of John*. However, exasperating conclusions are reached in how these have been reckoned also. Especially in error, are those who make unnamed feasts into Passovers. This is unwarranted. The best practice is to preserve for the Gospel writer the virtue of his own consistency and effort to be specific.

I am indebted also to writings of one who, I believe, had prophetic insights given to her. That is the writer, Ellen G. White. Those who weigh well her statements and apply them correctly will not likely be disappointed. She provides light missing from many sincere yet uninformed commentators who do not realize that Jesus did not attend every public gathering, and especially those midway in his ministry. For such information one may consult the book, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 450, etc. Not having this information, chronologists have committed errors in reckoning these times, and thereby shorten significantly Christ's time of public labor.

Of the Feast of Tabernacles mentioned in John 7, Ellen White concludes the following of Jesus and his movements in Palestine during His ministry:

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> "Since the healing at Bethesda He had not attended the national gatherings. To avoid useless conflict with the leaders at Jerusalem, He had restricted His labors to Galilee."
> (DA 450).

And----

> "Although for many months he had been absent from the feasts . . . ." p.451

This requires that Jesus could not have attended at least one *Passover*, that being in the particular year he is mentioned as being at the *Feast of Tabernacles*. The *Feast of Tabernacles* occurred about 6 months after the *Passover*, with only the day-*Feast of Pentecost* (50 days after the Passover) and *Trumpets* and *Day of Atonement* (first and tenth day of the seventh month; respectively fifteen and five days before *Tabernacles*) occurring between.

The healing at Bethesda seems to have happened quite early in the ministry of Christ (John 5). So this even makes it possible that Jesus missed two Passovers. It is obvious that he attended the Passover immediately following his baptism (John 2:13), and, of course, the one that brought his death. Then assuming that the first Passover was the Passover of 28, then he missed attending the one in AD 29. But there was perhaps another Passover that Jesus seems to ignore or does not go directly to at least. This is the Passover immediately following the feeding of the five thousand where he seems to stay in Galilee (John 6:4). Part of the crowd that Jesus fed were on their way to Jerusalem for the feast, therefore it was close to the time of that feast (*DA* p. 364). This was one year after Jesus rejection in Judea, for His "Bread of Life" sermon in John 6, which followed the feeding of the five thousand, is placed in this time period:

> "*And thus in Galilee the current of popular feeling was turned against Him, as, the year before, it had been in Judea*." (p. 393) (i.e. Bethesda, etc.)

Therefore it appears that Jesus attended Passovers in 28 and 31 and not in 29 and 30. Other feasts he attended were "a feast of the Jews" (5:1) which was the Bethesda incident; (assumed by many to be at a *Passover*) but is probably "Purim" because John always mentions a *Passover*, *Tabernacles*, even a *Feast of Dedication*, in other places. He would likely also mention *Pentecost* if it were *Pentecost*. This leaves *Trumpets*, or *Purim* and I think probably *Purim*, as do some other commentators. *Purim* was close in time to the *Passover*, in the month previous. So the year of shifting feeling mentioned above fits the timeline perfectly. *Purim* was most appropriately called a "feast of the Jews," celebrating the deliverance in the time of Esther.

Not long before the raising of Lazarus and after the feast of Tabernacles in the final or next to final year of His ministry Jesus attended a "Feast of Dedication"(John 10:22). At this feast Jesus was nearly stoned to death and entered into fierce conflict with the Jewish leaders. This was probably December of A.D. 30 or the next month, Jan. of A.D. 31.

The rough timeline I propose from the written data would be as follows:

AD 27 Jesus baptized (Fall)
AD 28 Jesus at Passover (March-April)
AD 29 Jesus at Purim (Feb or Mar--Bethesda)
AD 29 Jesus ABSENT FROM PASSOVER (April)
AD 30 Jesus ABSENT FROM PASSOVER (Feeds 5,000, walks on sea, etc.)
AD 30 Jesus at Tabernacles (Sept, Oct.)
AD 30 Jesus at Dedication (Dec or Jan)
AD 31 Jesus at Passover (April, crucified)

The following theoretical timeline provides a skeletal calendar. Astronomical documentation will be provided in the following text to justify the suggestion of certain specific dates, which we must always consider tentative. Nevertheless, a fairly consistent pattern of appropriate astronomical displays accordant to earthly and heavenly events seems to

emerge and testify to the fact that such fortuitous configurations are not mere accident.

SUGGESTED GENERAL OUTLINE OF EVENTS

Sept. 21, 27AD	Jesus 29th or 30th Birthday
Oct. 6	Baptism
Oct. 16-Nov 24	40 days sojourn in wilderness
Jan, 28 AD	Cana
April, 28 AD	First Passover
March, 29 AD	Purim (Bethesda incident)
April, 29 AD	Jesus absent from feast--Passover
April 4, 30 AD	Feeding of the Five Thousand
April, 30 AD	Jesus absent from feast—Passover
Sept., 30 AD	Feast of Tabernacles
Dec., 30 AD	Feast of Dedication
April 25, 31 AD	Crucifixion
April 27	Resurrection
June 5	Ascension
June 15	Pentecost

"He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion. . . . Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The Lord of hosts is his name." **(Jeremiah 10:12; 31:35)**

7

SKY-WRITING THE MINISTRY OF JESUS OF NAZARETH

Historical Context of Jesus' Baptism and Beginning of Ministry:

At the beginning of Christ's ministry astronomical configurations emerge in appropriate fashion as well. In September of A.D. 27 the celestial map of the heavens is indicating the approach of the biblical seventh month. Mercury, the messenger planet, has passed through Leo and Virgo and is approaching the scales of the Libra. The planet Venus follows about 30 degrees behind.

The Gospel writer tells us: "In those days came John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judea saying, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matthew 3:1,2. Matthew provides a sample of the content of John's message. The theme was clearly the imminent coming of the Messiah's kingdom, but he shared with it the themes of repentance, judgment, and moral regeneration.

The Messiah in John's message holds a winnowing fork to separate wheat and chaff. The ax, he says, is already being laid to the trunk of the tree, indicating that a probationary judgment is closing. Sins must be confessed. Judgment is at hand and the victorious Messiah is now riding forth conquering and to conquer.

These descriptions in themselves necessitate a fall of the year motif. The harvest is being a threshed and gathered into the garner. The trees or branches that have now proved useless and fruitless are being pruned off or chopped down.

John's message of repentance is clearly believed by many scholars today to be borrowed from the annual "ten days of repentance" which came between *Rosh Hashanah*, (the first day of the seventh month), and the *Day*

of Atonement, (the tenth day of the month). The *Day of Atonement* was the most significant fast of the year, a solemn assembly, known as the "Day of Judgment." Sin was confessed, the temple (soul) was cleansed, and themes of moral regeneration were emphasized in every aspect.

John the Baptist would not have passed by a chance to exploit such a thematic opportunity in his preaching. The Gospel writers seem to indicate that this season had just passed, or was currently passing when Jesus of Nazareth came to be baptized. We do not have a record of when Jesus was baptized, but most authorities feel it was in the fall of the year. I believe the best historical evidence shows that it was the fall of the year, A.D. 27, when the preaching of the Baptist climaxed with the baptism of Jesus and his presentation to the Judean community.

Luke reports that Jesus was "beginning to be about 30 years of age"(Luke 3:23). This might mean that at his baptism he had just passed his birthday, because he was "beginning to be" 30. According to the calculations made previous to this, Jesus' birthday was on the first day of the seventh month (beginning of Fall), therefore he would have just had a birthday on this day of the seventh lunar month.

There could not be a more appropriate movement of the stellar clock as in this general season of late summer and autumn of A.D. 27. First, in this season, Jupiter resides in *Sagittarius*; in characterizations this is always the good, victorious, messianic figure who has a bow in his hand and goes forth conquering and to conquer. Second, in the seventh month, beginning on about September 20, the sun is found in *Virgo*.

As we have seen, *Virgo* is always thematically related in its star names and symbolism to the introduction of the Messiah to humanity, especially the nativity and the coming of the "root" or "branch." Mercury at this time has now come, as we mentioned at the beginning, to Libra, the scales. Just previous, in August, Mercury was also in *Leo*, the symbol of Judah and Judea and the royal seed. This circumstance is exactly what would be astronomically needed to announce the arrival of a king.

Remember, it was in the wilderness of Judea that John began his preaching. Remember also that Mercury is the "messenger planet" and that John the Baptist was called a "messenger." The burden of his message was the coming of the "king" and his "kingdom of heaven." This correlates well with *Leo*. Then the sun, and Mercury glorified by its conjunctive movement with the sun, moved into *Virgo*, another messianic portent. *Virgo* is especially symbolic of the imminence and beginning of the Messiah's life and reign. Then finally, Mercury moved into *Libra*, "the scales," indicating judgment and weighing. These three constellations perfectly represent in order the message of the Baptist, (1) coming king, (2) messianic announcement and beginnings, and (3) preparation for judgment.

Mercury and Venus, John and Jesus

Venus we have purported elsewhere represents the work of the Messiah in his humanity. Venus has been following behind Mercury. This planetary circumstance is not unusual, but still here it is *very* appropriate. For John, the messenger, went ahead of Jesus, preparing the way for the coming Messiah.

Mercury is fast in its rotation around the sun (about 87 days). Venus is also swift in its movement (in our observations from earth) going around the sun in about 224 days. But because of the relationship of our earth to the other wandering stars or planets, the movement of the planets seems to vary, or even stop and reverse their motion from our perspective. Otherwise it is not always the case that the slower Venus could "catch up" with Mercury.

Of interest is the fact that at this particular time of the year in A.D. 27, Venus, catches up with Mercury and comes in near conjunction on October 5! This conjunction was not very observable, being below the horizon mostly. But it could have been observed just after sunset for perhaps half an hour in the west between 5:30 and 6:00 P.M.

But the nearest conjunctive relationship of these planets is on ca. Sunday (Friday?), October 5. This, accordingly, if compared to the most likely new moon day of the month, September 21, would make October 5 the first ceremonial Sabbath of the feast of Tabernacles, the fifteenth day of *Tishri*, in the seventh month. This day was very significant as a feast day and one of the seven ceremonial *sabbaths*. But why prophetically was this day considered such a prestigious day?

On this particular day the Jewish priests would ceremonially take a pitcher of water from the brook Kidron, (According to L. Hardinge, the pool of Siloam; cf. *With Jesus in His Sanctuary*, pp. 459ff.) and bring it into the temple (in procession) and pour it out as an offering OVER THE SACRIFICE! During this ceremony people in the procession carried tree branches; palm, pine, myrtle, and willow, from riverbank trees or trees often found next to water.

It seems very likely then, that this ceremony typologically pointed to the anointing and baptism of the Messiah, the Water of life. As water represents life, so Jesus was to be purified as the perfect sacrifice to bring life and cleansing to sinners. It would seem that this day then, could have been the very one on which the Savior was anointed for his service and ministry. Jesus himself said he must be baptized to fulfill all righteousness.

Immediately after this, Venus leaves Mercury (the messenger) behind and Mercury hides in the sun. As John said, "he who comes after me, ranks before me," and "he must increase and I must decrease."

Post Baptism

By the time the week of the feast has elapsed, ca. October 12, Venus (Christ) enters Scorpio, while the sun resides in the last part of *Libra*. *Scorpio* and *Libra* are the best symbols possible to represent the 40 days of temptation and suffering in the wilderness. Close upon the heels of his baptism Jesus went into the wilderness (home of the scorpion) and was

tempted by Satan[3]. Again we don't know exactly when the 40 days in the wilderness started, but we know it followed quite quickly. If we finish out the days of the *Feast of Tabernacles*, to October 12, and suppose that Jesus left for the wilderness during the next week; let us then add 40 days. Starting then on about October 16 of this next week and going 40 more days brings us to Monday, November 24, when a close and significant conjunction between Venus and Jupiter occurs in *Sagittarius*.

Venus/Jupiter Conjunction

This noted conjunction is a very clear representation of victory. The divine Father (Jupiter), comes in conjunction with Christ (or Venus, the bright and morning star)--after he has passed through Scorpio, or trial. Thus the episode that begins in judgment, testing, and trial, ends with love and divine favor coming together within the confines of the victor's constellation, Sagittarius. Can these readings be merely coincidental? We have to wonder.

Cana and the first Passover

Thus Jesus began his ministry (John 1, etc.). One of the next things reported following the temptation is the imprisonment of John the Baptist (the next verse—in Matthew 4:12). At this very time, Mercury has moved into the middle of Scorpio and near the star, *Antares* (which means, "the tearing or wounding" as inflicted by a serpent or scorpion).

Next, in December and January both the sun and the planet Venus pass through Aquarius:

[3] In Jewish lore, the Judean desert was thought to be the home of Satan, Satan's territory. Thus Jesus faced Satan on his ground.

THE CLOCK OF THE HEAVENS

Jesus first great sign was with water (John 2). Aquarius means, "water carrier." Water is the ingredient of life and blessing. God is the ultimate water carrier and every year he pours down winter moisture upon the earth to bring life and blessing at this very time of year.

This is what Jesus did at Cana. In the constellation Aquarius a man is pictured carrying a water jar, which is poured out, into a stream of blessing. So, at Cana's wedding Jesus turned the water to wine. Many an urn of water was carried to fill the large water pots. Jesus solved this great emergency with a result of bringing great blessing and salvation to the wedding party. Jesus, the Water of life, is the giver of all the blessings of life, including marriage. And this was exactly the meaning of his great miracle.

This would likely have taken place between December 22 when Venus enters Aquarius and the end of January and into February when the sun is in Aquarius. Most likely this wedding occurred sometime then during the month of January.

Searching for Disciples and Blessing the Seacoast Towns

Venus then moves into *Pisces*, which means "fishes." These fish are found in the water of a lake or sea. Jesus we know at this time was making his initial contacts with those who were later to be his disciples (Matthew 4:18—Jesus ministry in Galilee is well-described by Aquarius and especially Pisces). Seven of the twelve disciples were fishermen. Jesus, after the wedding feast went down into the seacoast town of Capernaum and he "was there not many days" (John 2:12; Matthew 4:13).

Passover Cleansing of the Temple

The next event mentioned is the Passover, purported to be "at hand," which was always in "Aries" or "Nisan," i.e. March/April (John 2:13).

Sky-Writing the Ministry of Jesus of Nazareth

Here follows another example that will perhaps suffice to demonstrate how the heavenly pictures seem to correlate and to elucidate the Gospel story.

On the surface it seems from John's account that Jesus cleansed the temple the first time during the Passover feast.[4] But more careful examination of the account along with the testimony of the stars, teach that this first cleansing of the temple indeed occurred. Both the Bible and the clock of the sky also hint that the cleansing transpired just before *this* Passover proper because the actual day of the Passover, and Jesus teaching upon it, are mentioned as sort of a "postlude" in verse 23 (John 2).

Another specific day near this Passover on which many sacrifices were offered, or at least purchased (that is, a day of economic traffic in the temple), would have been the new moon day (New Years Day of the religious calendar), March 16. Now on this particular day Venus comes up against Saturn in the constellation Taurus. Saturn, the planet of evil, misfortune, and negative resistance, symbolically then comes in contact then with the living Christ. This happens in Taurus, the bull, a veritable symbol of divine wrath! (The moon is in "Aries," the "breaking of bands" constellation, while the sun is, of course, leaving *Pisces* and entering "sacrificial" *Aries*).

Where can we find a more appropriate configuration? Is this a mere coincidence? We think not. For Jesus in this instance exhibited zeal as does a "charging bull." He came in direct conflict with the forces of evil and the resistance in the form of the Jewish leaders and their abuse of the temple's sacredness.

Thus at this time is seemingly confirmed in repeated and orderly stellar fashion that the Lord Jesus was indeed baptized, endured testing and trial in the wilderness, blessed a joyous marriage, mingled with humble

[4] (Critical scholars suppose there was only one cleansing and are troubled by the mention of this cleansing as it relates to another cleansing in the final Passion Week).

fishermen, and cleansed the temple a first time! This is all written, in order, in the book of the heavens!

Loaves and Fishes

The awesome clock of the wonderful heavens, we believe, is certainly not mute; but declares the glory of God and witnesses to the now-exalted Christ! One more example of an event that came later in Jesus' ministry we cannot resist sharing in this chapter.

We know from the Gospel accounts that the feeding of the 5,000 came just preceding one of the Passovers, one Jesus probably did not attend. The Desire of Ages reports in fact that it happened to aid the crowd on their way to the feast. For several other reasons we will not address here, this was likely the feast of A.D. 30. This we would estimate would have then occurred no earlier than about the fifth day and no later than about the eleventh day of the month of Nisan. This would be the week of time just prior to the Passover of that year.

Astronomically, the first day of the lunar month was ca. March 24, or 25. At exactly this time, Jupiter is fixed below the *vertical fish* in the latter part of the Pisces. However, *not until* about the fifth day of the lunar month does the other good planet, Venus, enter *Pisces* and within this same week position itself within the confines of the first *horizontal fish.*[5]

Now we remember that Jesus miracle at this time included five loaves and "two fish." *Pisces* features precisely these two fish! Pisces is Latin for "fishes" and has two fish that principally make up the constellation. Venus and Jupiter, the positive planets representing the deity and the love

[5] (In addition, by the eleventh day of the lunar month, *Mercury* reaches the positive and sweet influences of the Pleiades, in Taurus, thus symbolizing that a sermon message of power is being given).

of Christ essentially mark these two fish. Now this can all be considered mere coincidence, of course. But I don't think so.

For many, many centuries it was understood that the fishes in *Pisces* actually represented "multitudes" (See Seiss, and Bullinger and other such works). Much can be said about this. Not only are righteous multitudes represented by "fish in the sea," but for millennia also, the constellation of Pisces was even by other nations equated with the multitudes of "Israel."

The disciples, the 12 fathers through whom Jesus is forming a "new Israel," were very involved in this miracle and the bread of life sermon[6] that followed it. This bread and fish miracle was a powerful lesson for the disciples, as well as the crowd. The heavens seem to have known about this miracle thousands of years before it happened. The heavens continually seem to sympathize with the plan of God through Jesus.[7]

Coincidence perhaps? It is possible. Is this merely a fortuitous reading of the stars? It might be. But this is more likely yet another example of the perfect timing of God's purposes marked in the sky. The Gospel in the stars, those shining nocturnal points of light, seem to give continual testimony to the life and work of the One who created them.

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[6] At this very time the moon is positioned by the stalks of grain (the element of bread, of course) in Virgo's hand, on or near the 11th day of the lunar month. The timing of this, just days before the Passover (14th and 15th of the lunar month) is incredible. The Bread of Life sermon came on the heels of the feeding of the 5,000. And, of course, bread was the other part of the meal provided along with the two fish that were blessed.

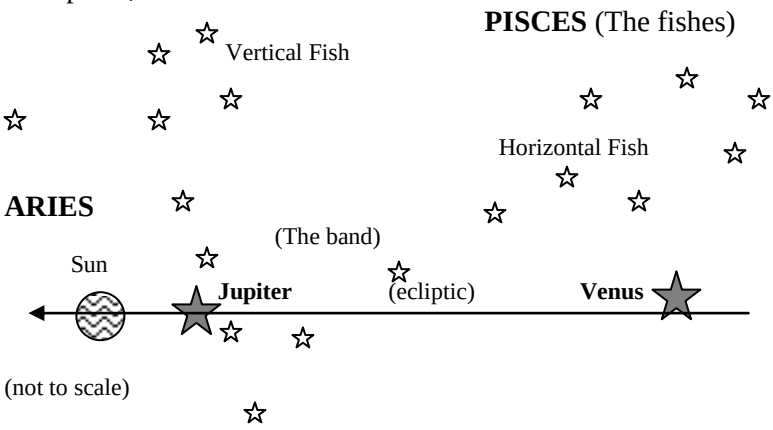
[7] {This trend of the positive planets passing through appropriate constellations at times which correlate with Jesus' activities seems to be fairly consistent throughout the three or so years of his ministry. It continues right up to the time just before the final Passion events where Jesus passes through Ephraim (Taurus is always equated with the tribes of Joseph) at the same time as Venus passes through Taurus. I have not followed or identified every event through the entire time, but the consistency of correlation is striking enough to induce wonder.}

THE CLOCK OF THE HEAVENS

The miracle of feeding the 5,000 was important in God's plan because it became a watershed of decision for the people of Israel, whether they would turn away from Jesus, or stay with him. Most rejected Jesus, even though they momentarily wished to make him a temporal king as a result of it.

Figure 2

ca. April 4, 30 A.D.



The disciples, however, remained with Jesus, even while realizing the actual spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom, and thus received power through the Spirit to do such miracles themselves.

Is it coincidence that we have featured in the stars in this latest example pictures of two fish, multitudes, peoples of Israel, bread, and the blessing of God and His Son toward that multitude? I would like to suggest that it might not be mere happenstance.

Sky-Writing the Ministry of Jesus of Nazareth

The heavens indeed declare the glory of God. For "day unto day," the psalmist says, "they utter speech, and night unto night, they show knowledge."

8

THE TRANSFIGURATION

The Gospel accounts place the event of the Transfiguration some time following the feeding of the five thousand and the four thousand, and just immediately following the great confession of Peter recorded in Matthew 16.

It is obvious that after feeding the five thousand Jesus made a northern tour to places such as Tyre and Sidon and also to Caesarea Philippi where presumably the great confession was made. Coming back southward to Tabor or some mountain in Galilee, the disciples and Jesus experienced the transfiguration. This tour would require several weeks or even months.

While the full meaning of the Transfiguration is not supplied to us in the Gospels we can assume that it was primarily meant to encourage Jesus in his walk toward Jerusalem and the Passion. It was to prepare Jesus for the "decease" (Luke 9:31 [KJV]; departure [NIV]; that is, Gr.= "exodus" or "Passover"), which he was to accomplish at Jerusalem. It was also to reveal to the disciples the glory of Christ's coming temporal kingdom, which Jesus did not typically dwell upon with his disciples for good reasons, as we know.

Star Signs

It seems that the general events of the weeks following the feeding of the five thousand can also be ascertained in the readings of the stars:

First, just on the heels of the time purported in our previous study concerning the celestial events marking the time of the feeding of the five thousand comes the account of the *Bread of Life* sermon given by Jesus. This sermon itself became a defining issue for so many of his followers. Many left him when they realized his kingdom was not coming in the fashion they imagined.

The Transfiguration

It is on the very day following this that Mercury, the swift and seldom visible planet of "good news" (or "the messenger planet") comes unusually close to the Pleiades, or the famous Seven Stars. At the same time as this occurs, ca. April 4 and 5 (only a day or so from the Passover –the full moon-- to which event the crowds listening to Jesus were headed) the moon is seen next to *Spica* in *Virgo*. The virgin is holding in her hand at this very spot, stalks of grain, the element for bread. In other words, her messianic son, the Branch, is shown supplying the bread of life to the world.

The Pleiades, we will notice, consistently represent congregations of the righteous who receive the blessing of heaven through the Holy Spirit. At nearly every particular outpouring of blessing (Pentecost, etc,) this group of stars receives specific celestial attention. Jesus' blessing of the multitude with bread, but more particularly his great message in the bread of life sermon where he identified himself with the heavenly manna, brought great blessing to the multitude and to the world to which he came. This event then is properly marked by both the history of the gospel accounts and by the stars.

Then about four or so weeks later on May 2 there is a conjunction between Venus and Jupiter, but it is still in the constellation, *Pisces*, or the "Fishes." This would have been about the time of the feeding of the four thousand. It is known that these events were similar and not far apart, for Jesus mentions them together in later conversation with his disciples (Matthew 16:9,10) as fairly recent examples of faith and blessing.

Finally about eight weeks later than the events surrounding the feeding of the five thousand comes an interesting configuration in the latter part of May of all the "good" planets, Mercury, Venus, and Jupiter in the general environs of Aries, the Ram.

The Meaning of the Transfiguration

The interesting part of all of this is that Venus, which we have taken to be Christ in his human/messianic role, is positioned *between* Jupiter and Mercury. Several points must be enumerated to define and appreciate this and other things relative to this configuration:

1. First, the sun, always the chief hand on the celestial clock, is in Taurus, and particularly in that part of Taurus corresponding visually with Orion, *the bright, coming, glorious prince*. No constellation better represents the coming of Christ in his glory and power, as does Orion. It is the most significant constellation in the entire heavens. It is reasonably clear that the disciples were to see in the transfiguration just this representation. At the Transfiguration they witnessed a "mini" second coming. Jesus promised in just the previous verses that some of the disciples would not taste death until they saw Christ coming in His kingdom. Six days later came this experience (Matthew 17:1 ff.).

2. On or around May 20, of AD 30, the three planets mentioned above find their most symmetrical relationship in their spacing from each other. Venus sits *central* to Jupiter and Mercury. This is further explicated below:

3. Jupiter and Mercury as represented in heathen mythology are traditionally equated with Greek or Roman pantheon gods. Paul and Barnabas were mistakenly thought to be manifestations of these two gods when they visited the cities of Asia Minor on their first missionary tour (Acts 14:11ff.). Paul was thought to be Mercury, because he was the talking "messenger," or "chief speaker," and Barnabas was apparently thought to be the austere and quiet Jupiter, the supreme god. In any event we know, that even in Palestine on similar mountaintops, and perhaps even the one on which Jesus and his disciples found themselves, were

temples to these very gods. This is perhaps, in part, why Peter made the seemingly absurd suggestion he did about building tabernacles or temples for Moses and Elijah.

The Gospel account tells us that Jesus was transfigured *between* Moses and Elijah. However, let us remember from before that John the Baptist was a prophetic messenger compared by Jesus *with* Elijah. Before this we have seen the reasonable equation between John the Baptist and the planet Mercury. Mercury then is also a fit representation of Elijah. Consequently, Jupiter might be seen as a fit representation of Moses, the austere lawgiver. As Jesus stood between these two "good" figures on the mount, so Venus stands between Mercury and Jupiter.

4. Fourthly, it is important to observe that this positioning takes place within the confines of *Aries*. But what is pre-figured or shall we say "transfigured" in the constellation, Aries?

   In Hellenistic mythology we find a typical perversion of thought. However, some of the original intention may be recovered. Aries the Ram, sometimes an energetic male lamb, was given as a gift by a mother god named "Nephele" to her two children. The children were doomed to be killed (by the supreme deity), but by desperately hanging on to the fleece on Aries' back as he departed they made their escape from death.

   Sometimes pictured in the constellation, Aries, is a "cloud" (Cf. J. Seiss). Apparently in some zodiacs the whole constellation was compared to a cloud. In some pictures this cloud is seen above the back of Aries or is in fact the fluffy figure of the lamb itself. In May of A.D. 30 Venus is in the center of the "cloud" constellation flanked at an appropriate distance by the other two planets (or perhaps children), who are in juxtaposition to this "cloud." Finally, as any Greek student knows, the word for "cloud" in that language is "nephele."

Is this astral positioning, or even this lore, coincidental?

Here is pictured in figure ---Jesus--- central to the constellation known as the Lamb of God. Anyone familiar with the story of the transfiguration will note that it all took place INSIDE OF A CLOUD (Matthew 17:5). "Behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Featured are two children of men, Moses and Elijah. These men particularly are types and examples of those who are rescued from death BY THE LAMB. They represent the two ways in which God will rescue faithful men and women from death. First, in type Moses, those who have died and are resurrected; second, in Elijah, those who in the face of death will be translated without seeing death.

Just as these children clinging to the fleece of Lamb were saved from final death, so all men in Christ will be saved by faith by clinging to the fleece/covering offered by the sacrificial Lamb of God! Is this not a picture of our salvation, clinging in fear and need to the living Christ!

5. Another consideration of great interest is the timing of when this astronomical display is visible. Because of the heavenly movements certain constellations cannot be seen in certain seasons of the year or during particular parts of the day or night. This row of three[1] planets in Aries was only visible in the dark waning

[1] Also associated with the constellation Aries is a triadic symbol, or triangle. The modern constellation, *Triangulum*, survives today above Aries' back or head. In ancient art this triangle is so positioned in pictures above the Lamb or Ram.

It deserves mention that the Transfiguration narrative also contains several triadic symbols. The triangle above Aries has invited certain minds to regard a Trinitarian concept inherent therein. The idea does present itself at the Transfiguration in the THREE following ways:

hours of the morning, about 3-4 a.m. on the eastern horizon before the sun rose. However, this was close to the specific time when Jesus was transfigured, and when the disciples would have been descending to the plain (see Matthew 17:8,9)(probably facing east toward Tiberius). A mountaintop would be the best place in which to observe this horizon phenomenon as well.

6. Finally we find one other incredible circumstance on the early morning of May 21. That same morning came a solar eclipse central at about 5:00 A.M. This was close to a total eclipse or so to my reckoning it appears. The dimming effect was likely noticed, coming during daylight or at sunrise. Not only might this appropriately represent the foreshadowing of the cross then the subject under consideration (Matthew 16:21), but this would also connect well with the embarrassing fiasco that took place that very morning by the disciples who were left down on the plain. This was certainly a low point in the training of the twelve, when by a lack of faith they were unable to perform the needed miracle in the absence of Jesus.

Again, we are left to wonder how such appropriate markings could be mere accident or happenstance. While many markings of the heaven could by manipulation be construed or made to fit according to our convenience it seems unlikely that this is the case here. Too many things fit where they should; and they are in proper relationship with other confirmable events.

The evidence almost demands that we should see the very heavens themselves acting in sympathy with their Creator and Sustainer. There is some grand plan, or scheme for-ordained by God, and fulfilled in exactitude in the life of Christ. The heavens preach the glory of God. What a story shouts to us from the heavens! Even the stars in their courses

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1. The Trinity presents itself as (a) the Father's voice; (b) Jesus, the son there present; and (c) the Holy Spirit manifest in the shrouded and mysterious glory of the cloud.
2. The three figures: (a) Christ; (b) Moses; and (c) Elijah
3. The three disciples: (a) Peter; (b) James; and (c) John

say to all, that through Jesus' glory on that Galilean mountain and through his death on Golgotha's hill, we are saved to eternal life.

"Praise ye the Lord: Praise ye the Lord from the heavens: praise him in the heights.... Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light. Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens. Let them praise the Lord'...."

Psalm 148:1,3-5a (KJV)

9

THE RESURRECTION OF LAZARUS

It would seem that such an important event as the resurrection of Lazarus should be considered notable enough to be considered in our stellar timeline. In fact, it was the crowning sign of Jesus' whole ministry. To bring someone back to life after being dead four days was considered impossible and eclipsed out the charge that Jesus' other resurrection miracles (i.e. Jairus daughter, the widow's son at Nain) were mere impostures. Some no doubt claimed that in Jesus' former miracles, the subjects were not completely dead, and so it only appeared Jesus had raised them. But in the case of Lazarus, he was proclaimed dead, wrapped in burial clothes and laid in a sealed tomb for several days.

We know from the Gospel accounts that the resurrection of Lazarus came between Jesus' visit to Jerusalem at the Feast of Dedication and his own death at the Passover. The Feast of Dedication came during the time we now know as late December. Because of the lunar calendar, the month in which this one-day feast[1] occurred could sometimes end ten days or so into our modern January. Therefore we can safely assume the miracle for Lazarus occurred sometime between January and March of A.D. 31. The premise that this miracle happened a few months or so before Jesus' death fits the general feeling we get as we read the Gospel accounts. By the time of Simon's feast just before the Passover, the story of Lazarus was well established in the public mind and was doing its work of bringing attention to the work of Christ. Lazarus himself was in personal danger from the religious leaders as a result of this miracle. The news had gotten out.

What better timing could we have astronomically for this event than in the general confines of the month of January AD 31?

The sun at this time enters Aquarius, the actual new lunar month beginning on about the 12th or 13th day of our calendar month of January. The time

[1] The Feast of Dedication (Chislev 25) came in the ninth lunar month. It was followed by the 8-day Festival of Lights.

period of Aquarius comes immediately after the winter solstice, when the sun was thought to begin its annual resurrection, when the days become longer as the first sign of returning life. Aquarius means "water" and water represents life. Jesus was the Water of Life. Water and light bring new life. The area of the heavens between Capricorn; the goat falling in death, and Aquarius; the pouring out of refreshing moisture, is full of many symbolic manifestations denoting the passing from death to life.

Further, the planet Venus, which we often have noticed seems to parallel the human ministry of Christ has also come into this same constellation and is the bright star of the early morning hours, rising just before the sun.

Farther over in the skies we find the planet Jupiter, leaving *Pisces* and entering *Aries*. Jupiter represents God, or Christ, in their goodness and particularly here their divinity. Next to Jupiter at this time we find the planet Mars, the planet of death and aggression.

For a period of about four days, between January 15-18, these two planets, Jupiter and Mars come in reasonably close conjunction with each other. On about the 16th day of the calendar month, or during the first week of probably the tenth lunar month they come closest to each other. By the 18th or 19th Mars begins to separate itself from Jupiter.

What appears in figure is the clash of two opposites, or conflicting forces. In Jupiter, divinity and goodness, in Mars, death and evil. This happens *near* the head and throat of Aries, the Ram, the lamb that was slain yet lives again.

In addition, the conjunction occurs very near the *vertical* fish in *Pisces*. The horizontal fish in *Pisces* has often been equated with the nominal church of Israel, content with the lowlands, the earthly depths. The vertical fish, high up in the sky and pointed toward heaven seems to denote the church seeking heaven, that is, the righteous. It is a "resurrected" fish, leaping toward the highest heaven. It is this fish, representing the living righteous in Israel, that seems to be marked for the Lazarus event at which time Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life!"

The Resurrection of Lazarus

At this time the moon passes through these same confines from Capricorn (death) to Aquarius, Pisces, and Aries (life out of death). On the 17th the moon is right next to Jupiter and Mars.

At this time Saturn resides in Gemini by the divinely immortal twin Pollex, another "resurrection" figure in the sky. How is it that every relatable symbol to the resurrection idea we find in the skies happens to be marked at this particular time?! Therefore, it seems, that sometime during this week in January, maybe on the 17th day, or even immediately thereafter this great event took place.

Death was eclipsed by the promise of life, and divinity flashed through mortal humanity. New life was promised in Christ, the Resurrection and the Life. Hope and blessing were promised through the soon to be sacrificed Lamb of God, the one taking away the sin of the world.

10

PENTECOST AND THE TESTIMONY OF THE STARS

Pentecost and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon Christ's disciples is one of the least understood events of the Great Controversy between good and evil. Those with an earthly perspective largely understate the significance of this event. In the heavenly realms it was a very significant milepost in the eternal Plan of Salvation. We are now disposed to expect that the heavens will give testimony to this also.

Our focus generally turns to things happening on earth at this time. But the events happening on earth were simply coming as a result of greater events transpiring in the heavenly courts.

Says the book, The Acts of the Apostles: *"Christ's ascension to heaven was the signal that His followers were to receive the promised blessing. For this they were to wait . . . . When Christ passed within the heavenly gates, He was enthroned amidst the adoration of angels. As soon as the ceremony was completed, the Holy Spirit descended . . . and Christ was glorified . . . .The Pentecostal outpouring was Heaven's communication that the Redeemer's inauguration was accomplished. . . . . He had sent the Holy Spirit . . . as a token that he had, as priest and king, received all authority. . . ,"* pp. 38,39 (emphasis supplied).

Let us first consider the movements of the heavens in the days immediately following the crucifixion of Christ:

Venus

As we have heretofore purported, the planet Venus seems to be emblematic of the specific and personal identity of Christ in his humanity and in his love to mankind. We have noted the correlation between the fairly active movements of this planet through the various signs of the

zodiac with the activities of Christ's ministry. During the forty days following the crucifixion --this planet which was first centered in Gemini, moves through the realms of Cancer, or the Crab.

In the zodiacal representations related to Judeo-Christian traditions this constellation known as the Crab has little to do with a "crab" or with "cancer." There is a more genuine meaning for this constellation that should be taken in preference to the modern perversion.

The stars and traditions evident throughout this constellation are preponderantly concerned rather with flocks, sheepfolds, and gatherings of the faithful. The "encircling" idea equated with the pincers of a crab remains perhaps. But all of the stars and sub-constellations feature assemblies of the faithful. The focus then is with the sheep or flock that are in the fold and not the general and universal gatherings of men. Venus at this time is passing through and "attending" these righteous folds.

What representation could be more appropriate to the work of Christ immediately following his resurrection? Jesus ministry was no longer directed to the masses, nor was he seen by any but groups of his disciples. Since Jesus was to ascend to His Father, he no longer ministered publicly but rather directed his efforts to training and encouraging his disciples who would be carrying on His work.

Jesus work was directed toward the sheep within the folds and he made at least seven major appearances to these "folds" following His resurrection, at one time appearing to as many as five hundred on a mountain in Galilee. It is during this general time also that Jesus met with His disciples by the sea and Peter encountered Jesus and was instructed to "FEED MY SHEEP." Also during this time Mercury, the divine messenger planet, which represents in this case the disciples, comes in conjunction with Venus. Thus in effect they are figured together in counsel in the very constellation which best represents the rounding up and gathering of the saints.

THE CLOCK OF THE HEAVENS

But there is more. In the center of the Cancer constellation is a tightly knit grouping of little stars similar to the Pleiades known in modern times as "the Beehive," but anciently as the *Praesepe*, which means "a multitude," or "assembled multitude." This unified group of stars is clearly emblematic of the redeemed multitude of the faithful. Christ, is then pictured as giving a message to the faithful gathering of the blest at the very time we know he meets with 500 on a mountain in Galilee, or with his disciples in upper rooms, or in groups by the sea. This is perfectly appropriate! I again indulge the reader one more favor and ask, is this circumstance merely chance?

Immediately Before Pentecost

Jesus walked among his disciples on earth for 40 days. He instructed his disciples to tarry in Jerusalem and wait for the promised blessing. Then he ascended.

Pentecost came fifty days from the waving of the first fruits, or in our particular case fifty days from the Resurrection. Therefore, it is traditionally understood that the disciples waited and prayed for about ten days before the day of Pentecost came. However, remember, the outpouring at Pentecost was symbolic of ceremonies that had ALREADY taken place.

What had taken place in the heavens by the time of Pentecost?:

1. Jesus had traveled back to heaven and had been welcomed into the heavenly courts amidst the adoring angels.
2. Jesus was presented to His Father
3. Jesus presented the wave sheaf of redeemed raised at His resurrection
4. He was CORONETED as PRIEST-KING

Pentecost and the Testimony of the Stars

These events then had to have occurred in the ten days *between* the *Ascension* and the *Day of Pentecost*. What do the heavens mark at this time?

First of all, the planet representing Christ (Venus) is found passing through the area of the heavens attached to the decan of *Argo*, the Ship. This mysterious and celebrated ship is characterized by a victorious rescue of lost pilgrims being taken home. It is essentially an ancient "space-ship" that passes through the heavens. It's name means "company of travelers." Star names mean "the abundant multitude;" "the possession of him who cometh;" "the released who travel," etc. (cf. Bullinger, p. 160). Must we point out that when Jesus ascended on high he led a "parousia;" a train of captives, made free from death by the blood of the Lamb?(!)

Then, according to my reckoning (which adjusts by two days the typical astronomical table), just 3 days previous (June 12) to Pentecost morning (June 15); Venus, which the Bible equates with the person of Christ comes in exact conjunction with Regulus, the "king" star. Regulus comes from the same word as does "regal." Regulus is the star between the feet of Leo, the Lion, one of the most important stars along the entire plane of the ecliptic.

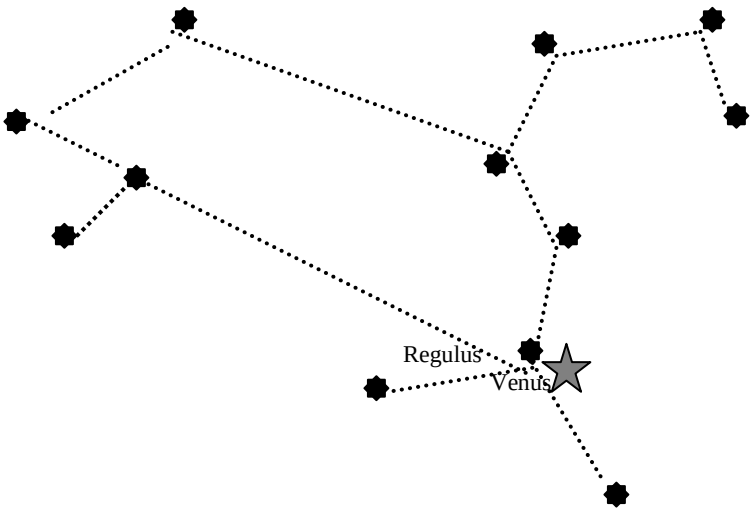
In the constellation, Leo, is found the prophecy of the coming Messiah: *"The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver[*] from between his feet, until Shiloh come and unto Him shall the gathering of the peoples be"* (Numbers 24:17). The events of the days preceding and including Pentecost absolutely have to be the literal fulfillment of this prophecy---the gatherings of the faithful in both heaven and on earth, the inauguration of Christ's reign at His Father's right hand---seen in the king constellation representing Judah, the tribe of kings.

[*] (A king, a giver of commandments; but the term "lawgiver" providentially has a priestly meaning as well; i.e., a teacher of commandments. Jesus fulfills both roles; a priest-king)

THE CLOCK OF THE HEAVENS

The very scene in heaven at this time is given us in the fifth chapter of Revelation where the "Lion of the Tribe of Judah," is given judgment authority and is worshipped as worthy to receive honor.

Figure 3



Constellation *Leo*
"Between the Feet of the Lion"
ca. June 12, 31 A.D.

What is truly amazing is the accuracy in time in which the planet Venus comes into near conjunction with the star Regulus. If as we have determined that the ascension comes exactly 40 days after the resurrection

on April 25, then the date of the ascension is on June 5. Seven days later at 4:29 AM on June 12 Venus comes in close conjunction with Regulus. Three days later comes Pentecost, where as we know the great blessing was given as a result of what had ALREADY happened in heaven.

The timing is perfect. Is it coincidence that this conjunction, which accompanies the coronation of Christ as king, happens at the very time it does?

We read elsewhere that typically when there is a heavenly entourage from heaven to earth or from earth to heaven it can last up to seven days. We know that when the saints are taken from earth to heaven at the great resurrection at the second coming it will take the equivalent of seven earthly days. Says Ellen White in vision, "*we were seven days ascending to the sea of glass."* (Early Writings, p.17ff.) When Jesus comes again we are told that the heavenly entourage will come over the period of several days. "*And I saw a flaming cloud come where Jesus stood. Then Jesus. . . took His place on the cloud which carried Him to the East, where it first appeared to the saints on earth---a small black cloud which was the sign of the Son of man. While the cloud was passing from the Holiest to the East, which took a number of days, the synagogue of Satan worshipped at the saints feet."* (E.G.W., Maranatha, p. 287) (emphasis supplied)

There is every indication that when Jesus ascended to heaven in the days between His Resurrection and the *Day of Pentecost* that there was also such an entourage. He took with Him those raised at His Resurrection as *first fruits* of the Resurrection that is yet to come. This resurrection and victorious *parousia* were *types* of what is to come. The Scriptures indicate that when Jesus ascended on high he led a train of captives, trophies of his victory, witnesses to his inauguration and kingship. Therefore it is interesting that exactly seven days after the supposed ascension; in fact, the very morning of the 12th of June on our adjusted calendar and thus immediately upon his scheduled arrival the day or night before (to us, of course), Jesus was most likely coroneted and welcomed into heaven at the celestial moment Venus in our view from earth crossed the "king" star Regulus. Thus he was inaugurated just in time to receive authority to give

the blessings of Pentecost, be installed in his kingdom, celebrate the Sabbath, and pour out the Spirit at the Pentecostal gathering.

Jupiter

One might wonder why Jupiter is not found in Leo at this time in that this would seem to be an appropriate setting for which the Father and the Son to be in positive conjunction with each other. But let us remember that the focus is not now on God the Father. The focus is on the Son. He is now receiving kingship. All judgment is being given to the Son in heaven and earth. Not that the Father is abdicating. No. But His kingship is not the subject.

But what is the Heavenly Father doing? He is giving *gifts* to men. He is reigning with great power and zeal, the very meaning of Taurus (the bull), another regal constellation. He is near the Pleiades, the seven stars which the Bible in the book of Job calls "the sweet influences!" Would there be a better description of the "seven-fold" Holy Spirit being given in great power? In addition, Jupiter is near another great star, Alderbran, which means "the leader, the governor." The Father then, is not abdicating, but is also reigning in great power.

The Sun

In addition, the sun is naturally passing through Gemini at Pentecost. Gemini symbolizes brotherhood like no other constellation. The two figures in the constellation, whether viewed as brothers, sons of God, or the blending of two natures, or even as a husband and wife bound in love, speak of unity. The Hebrew designation for this constellation means "united."

We readily remember that the Pentecostal theme was complete confession of all wrongs between brethren. "They were all of one accord." The

infighting and jealousy were gone and replaced with holy zeal for their Master and King.

Mercury and Mars

Mercury is passing from the "sheepfolds" into Leo. The message of the ascension and glorification of Christ became the message in the Pentecostal preaching of Peter and the others from the day of Pentecost forward. Mars, the symbol of aggression, passion, ardor, and power in this very context; that is, the sheepfolds (or Cancer), might indicate that power is being assigned to the "sheep" and that they are energetically embarking upon a quest of missionary zeal. This fits in every way.

Conclusion

We therefore offer that the heavens indeed gave consistent testimony to the great event of *Pentecost* and the Inauguration of Christ as Heavenly Shepherd, King, and High Priest. Jesus tended his flock before ascending to his sanctuary and his royal throne. The sweet influences were given with power and the message of unity, glorification, and reigning power, issued forth to the universe.

"Have ye not known? Have ye not heard? Hath it not been told you from the beginning? Have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in.

Thus saith God the Lord, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein.

Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every green

tree therein: for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel.

I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded.

For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord; and there is none else.

Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? Have not I the Lord? . . . . Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth . . . .”

(Isaiah 40:21,22; 42:5; 44:23; 45:12,18,21 first part, 22 first part) (KJV)

11

SKY MARKERS AND THE DATE OF THE EXODUS

No discussion of astronomy and its relation to salvation history would be complete without a treatment of the date and significance of the Israelite Exodus from Egypt. While all such conclusions about such controversial and time/distant occurrences must be conservative and cautious, we must demand of our hypothesis a test as regards probably the most significant event in Old Testament history.

Proof is missing in regard to the date of the Exodus. The subject has generated heated debate for centuries. Some have come to doubt that the event happened at all. Estimates generally range from a 13th century to a 15th century B.C. date. Most recently, respected conservative scholars place the Exodus at approximately 1450 B.C. For many reasons I believe this general time period to be biblically more responsible than the later dates. The crux is largely on how trustworthy the chronologist finds the biblical account or how he understands the biblical text.

Typical Historical Reckonings

What I have discovered more recently, however, is that even some of the most conservative Bible scholars choose to let the general scholarly opinions about secular history (Assyrian *limmu* lists*, accepted Egyptian history, etc.) and other ancient chronological information (archaeological *opinion*) to take priority over the Bible account. In many cases the biblical data is shortened or extended to fit accepted historical or archaeological information available, rather than the other way around.

* These are valuable documents archaeologically recovered that provide king lists and reigns from the Assyrian Empire.

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Integral to biblically determining the date of the Exodus historically is to establish the history of the time of the Kings of Israel that occurred after the time of the Exodus and the Judges.

I Kings 6:1 tells us that the fourth year of King Solomon was the 480th year after Israel came out of Egypt. I believe this is to be taken as a reliable and accurate statement, and is not as some propose a symbolic or artificial number.

For years I have assumed that the classic work of E.R.Thiele, The *Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, was valid and unassailable. But presently I believe there are several reasons to question some of the conclusions of this monumental work.[1]

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[1] Borrowing the observations of a Mr. Dan Gregg: "The prevailing chronological theory in Christian circles is that of Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965). It has taken over just about every scholarly work in the field. Unlike this chronology (*Gregg's*), Thiele's cannot explain every statement in Scripture in a non-contradictory fashion. For example, Thiele's chronology puts Hoshea on the throne of Israel in the 3rd year of Ahaz, instead the biblically correct 12th year. Also, only by positing a co regency of 14 years for Hezekiah can Thiele explain the beginning of Hezekiah's reign in the 3rd year of Hoshea.

If this is not fatal, then his co regency of Pekah during the reigns of Menahem and Pekahiah is. For Pekah was not the son of Menahem or Pekahiah! How, then can he be a coregent!? Furthermore, Pekah killed Pekahiah, and the text says he was a "captain of his" (II Kings 15:25). And, why would a mere captain have a co-regency spanning the reigns of his two predecessors?

Then we have the matter of Thiele's 23-year co regency between Amaziah and Uzziah. The mere suggestion of such a long co-regency is immoral. The longest provable coregency in the Bible is just 4 years! Or how about the 11 year co-regency of Jehoash and Jereboam II? Every time legitimate co-regency occurs in the Scripture, the writer puts in sufficient information to document it using the standard assumptions. For example, unless proven otherwise, the years of reign are as sole rex. By ignoring this norm, Thiele manages to reduce Biblical chronology to relative guesswork. That's not the

I suspect there *may* be serious problems not only with Thiele's chronology but with certain other accepted chronologies as well. Thiele's work is nonetheless important and monumental and has helped shape the idea that the Bible can be harmonized with history. Yet Thiele still bent the Bible to fit secular sources. Because of the evolutionary, anti-biblical basis on which many of these secular chronologies are built, Christians should not take them as totally reliable. For many reasons we cannot elaborate upon at the present moment we must question the validity of many typical, popular, and accepted Assyrian and Egyptian timelines even though these are assumed to be reliable by most historians and students of ancient history. Necessarily, we must carefully examine the use that many conservative scholars even make of this chronological data.

Many of the so-called pillars, which support the long-accepted chronologies of Egypt and the time of the Israelite kingdoms, may not be pillars at all, including the other assumptions made relative to them. Examples include: automatically taking as identical names such as *Shishak* and *Sheshonq*; building entire dynasties on mistaken understandings of Sothic Cycle data; manufacturing wholesale co-regency reckonings; and direct, callous, meddling with the biblical timelines.

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thing God intended when he put all those numbers in Scripture. Any careful chronologer will be careful not to let an exception to a rule ruin his presentation of chronology. And God is a careful chronologer (cont.).

And why all this tampering? Thiele needs to reduce the Biblical chronology by 51 years to match his interpretation of Assyrian Chronology for the Battle of Qarqar (853) [shd. Be 903/903 b.c.e.], and to slide Hezekiah's reign toward 715 to match Sennacherib's later invasion of 701, rather than his campaign for Ashdod in 712-711 as ruling crown prince of the Assyrian Empire. Why does Assyrian history not account for the missing 51 years in the limmu lists? . . . .

The current limmu list is fixed by a single total eclipse of the sun on 15 June, 763 b.c.e., visible at Nineveh, but the missing 51 years is before this event, so the eclipse confirms nothing other than the accuracy of the *limmu* list after that point." (Dan Gregg, *parsimony.org*, discontinued internet source)

My bias is that the biblical dates are generally reliable and must be respected. Co-regencies must be openly acknowledged in the biblical account before we can so readily exploit them. There are enormous problems, it is true, in harmonizing the biblical data, especially with the Hebrew kings; but this is not necessarily permission to tamper with them too much.

While it is tempting to digress on this issue here we are now mainly focused on the testimony of the heavens and their possible influence upon the biblical timeline. Assumptions are made here that are better defended in my work in writing, *The Times and the Seasons of the Biblical Record.*

The Stars and the Time of the Kings

So what do the stars say about the history of the Exodus and the Israelite nation?

The earliest reliable date available for Old Testament history is the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians. Through history and astronomy this date has been pretty well established as ca. 586 B.C.[*] Dates beyond this depend on data, which has found little absolute confirmation.

[*] The astral configurations for this date are confirming and most interesting also. Using the date of ca. July, 586 B.C., (585, astronomical numbering) we find Saturn haunting Leo, the symbol of the kingdom of Judah. It sits around *Regulus* for several weeks, just as the troubling Babylonians sat around the besieged royal city, Jerusalem. For the previous two years Saturn has been in Cancer where the encircling idea is prominent, and with a negative planet this could make an appropriate sign for a siege. In June and July Mars inhabits the lowly, horizontal fish in Pisces; the acknowledged symbol of war and aggression in the acknowledged symbol of the earthly multitude of Israel. Jupiter passes through Taurus, the symbols then present speaking of divine wrath toward the errant, yet protection offered toward the innocent (Auriga). That Saturn or Mars should inhabit Leo was exactly what was expected before even consulting the star maps. Venus provides some interesting positioning in the same area as well.

But the date of 586 B.C. is important to our consideration of the date of the Exodus.

The Bible states in 1 Kings 6:1 that the Exodus took place 480 years previous to the fourth year of King Solomon. Thiele's chronology places this about the year 967 BC. Thus the Exodus is estimated through various factors to be about 1447 BC, or sometimes as a result of further adjustments, ca. 1450 BC.

However, in this chapter we will simply try to establish a tentative date for the Exodus from three factors: First, the biblical list of the Judean Kings as given in the Bible; second, the testimony of a particular time-based landmark prophecy in Ezekiel 4; and finally from the witness of the stars.

1. The Judean King List

Below is a simple and *approximate* table of the history for the kings of Judah as found in the Scriptural record. This does not pretend to be specifically accurate. It is only approximate to the details provided us in the sacred text. It assumes no co-regencies and addresses no specific contradictory problems with the list of northern kingdom kings. However, because of the chronological method used by the southern kingdom in reckoning regencies, the general product of this list is rather interesting:

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Chronological Table

Biblical Reference/ Kings	Biblical Reference/ Chronicles	Judean King	Length of Reign/years	B.C. Date
1 Kings 11:42	2 Chron 9:30	Death of Solomon		978*
1 Kings 14:21	2 Chron 12:13	Rehoboam	17	962
1 Kings 15:2	2 Chron 13:2	Abijam	3	959
1 Kings 15:10	2 Chron 16:13	Asa	41	918
1 Kings 22:42	2 Chron 20:31	Jehoshaphat	25	893
2 Kings 8:17	2 Chr 21:5,20	Jehoram	8	885
2 Kings 8:26	2 Chron 22:2	Ahaziah	1	884
2 Kings 11:1-3	2 Chr 22:10-12	Athaliah	6	878
2 Kings 12:1	2 Chron 24:1	Jehoash	40	838
2 Kings 14:2	2 Chron 25:1	Amaziah	29	809
2 Kings 15:2	2 Chron 26:3	Uzziah	52	757
2 Kings 15:33	2 Chr 27:1,8	Jotham	16	741
2 Kings 16:2	2 Chron 28:1	Ahaz	16	725
2 Kings 18:2	2 Chron 29:1	Hezekiah	29	696
2 Kings 21:1	2 Chron 33:1	Manasseh	55	641
2 Kings 21:19	2 Chron 33:21	Amon	2	639
2 Kings 22:1	2 Chron 34:1	Josiah	31	608
2 Kings 23:31	2 Chron 36:2	Jehoahaz	3 mo.	608
2 Kings 23:36	2 Chron 36:5	Jehoiakim	11	597
2 Kings 24:8	2 Chron 36:9	Jehoiachin	3 mo.	597
2 Kings 24:18	2 Chron 36:11	Zedekiah	11(10.4 approx)	586
2 Kings 25:2-10	Jer. 52:5-14	Jerusalem Destroyed		586

(*One year should probably be subtracted at the beginning because somewhere in the list it must be considered that the regnal years of say the first or last king cannot include a reckoning of the full year to which it only reaches on the chronological scale.)

Therefore if one takes the first year of the reigns of Jeroboam/Rehoboam as ca. 977 and subtracts the last year of the last king of Judah, Zedekiah, 586 BC, the result is approximately 391 years for the time of the kings from the divided kingdom onward.

2. The Vision of Ezekiel 4

Ezekiel chapter 4 features a prophecy in which the "day for a year principle" is utilized. However, instead of pointing to the future, it is antedated. This prophecy is not understood by scholars and in nearly all commentaries is wanting for an explanation. My premise is that that it is easily understandable and provides an informative check upon biblical chronology.

A fuller treatment of this prophecy is available in an article I have written entitled, "The Typological Prophecy of Ezekiel 4." (For the sake of expediency it is necessary to provide only the conclusion without the further support given here[8]). The conclusion I have determined is that the 390 years described in Ezekiel 4 is a specific sum of years between the siege of Jerusalem (587BC) and the first year of the divided kingdom (ca. 977 B.C.).

The prophecy also accounts for 40 years of punishment awarded to the kingdom of Judah. Why? Because the other ten tribes were punished @ 40 years per tribe also. This would make 400 years (10 X 40), but the amount is shortened to 390 because Ezekiel is telling us that this is an exact time period, exactly the number of years between Jeroboam, the first king of the Northern Alliance, and the final fall of the vestige of Israel as a whole in the Southern Kingdom of Judah and Jerusalem in 586 BC. This number of 390 years fits quite perfectly with the above list of Judean kings for the years 978/977 and forward.

978-586=392 years. Subtract the necessary year and a half absorbed by the siege (587/586) of Jerusalem enacted by Ezekiel and the result is almost exactly 390 years.

[8] This is found in my book, *Articles of Faith*. The article explicates the prophecy and demonstrates how the time from Jeroboam I to the destruction of Jerusalem equals 390 years. It also adds the two forty year reigns of David and Solomon, and the 20 year reign of Saul to equal 490 years, descriptive of the probationary period given the kings of Israel.

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In Ezekiel's vision the inference is that when Jerusalem is to come under siege, 390 years will have elapsed since the kingdom of Israel, through the secession of the northern kingdom from the southern kingdom, began their probationary period of apostasy.

It is difficult for me to consider this coincidence, in that it essentially agrees exactly with the Judean king list above.

3. The Stellar Configurations

Next, in our considerations is the testimony of the heavens. What configurations would we expect in the sky at the time, for instance, when the kingdom of Israel and Judah are dividing (assuming now ca. 978)? This was a significant biblical event and we might consider that the heaven's testimony would not be mute regarding this. We would expect a couple of possibilities, at least:

First, the division of the kingdom of Israel was a negative occurrence to the nation of Israel and God's plan for His people as a whole. The northern kingdom, was prophesied by God through his prophets, but it is doubtful that it was the ideal will of God to thus separate Israel. Not only did this result in national division, but in addition separated the northern tribes from the religious center of Israel in Jerusalem and the orthodoxy of the cult. History provides the result that there essentially never was a righteous and godly king throughout the history of the northern kingdom and the tribes soon fell away in apostasy.

Though the rebellion of the northern alliance was traumatic, it was not particularly characterized by war and bloodshed. Yet, the transpiration of this great schism was negative in many ways.

Since the planet Saturn is often equated with negative trends, often associated with the work of Satan, we would expect Saturn as the "negative" planet to be involved. Since division is coming to Israel we would expect that Saturn might be in Pisces, the acknowledged symbol of the multitudes of Israel (cf. Seiss, *Gospel in the Stars*, etc.).

In addition, ascendancy is being applied to the northern kingdom, dominated by Ephraim, the central tribe of the Northern Kingdom. This tribe is always equated with the Bull in *Taurus*, with its two horns likened to the tribe of Joseph through his two sons Ephraim and Manasseh. Since Jupiter is the "favorable planet" we would expect that Jupiter might reside at this time, or might approach, the constellation known as Taurus.

Finally, with war or aggression declared against Judah, we might expect Mars, the war planet, would be found near this time in Leo, the Lion, the house of the tribe and kingdom of Judah, thus "the lion of the tribe of Judah."

There are other indicators as well, but this is far enough for now. For already this combination of circumstances is relatively rare. Around the month of (ca.) January, 978 B.C., this very configuration appears in the heavens. This is the very time that our prophecy puts it and where our king list also puts it.

Synthesis

Therefore, if we take the 390 years of Ezekiel (reckoned from the actual siege featured in the prophecy which comes about a year and a half to two years before 586 B.C.), or we take the simple Judean king list provided in the Bible, or if we take the above astronomical demonstration we can with a degree of confidence establish the first year of the northern kingdom at ca. 978/77 BC. A threefold cord is not easily broken.

Add thus the 36 years backward to the fourth year of Solomon (1013 BC), and then the 480 years of 1 Kings 6:1 to this, and we reckon a date of 1493 B.C. for the Exodus.

A way I remember this suggested date is:

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Columbus sailed the Ocean blue in fourteen hundred ninety-two
Moses crossed the great Red Sea, in fourteen hundred ninety-three.

A 1493 Exodus ?

Although this date, and more generally this particular era, has virtually no proponents today, I would still like to propose certain reasons for its validity.

First, it fits the biblical data as prescribed to this point.

Second, it is reasonably close to the other dates promoted by 15th century advocates. Many of the same reasons used to support the possibility of an exodus during this period (1450 B.C.) apply also to this general time.

Third, for several additional reasons, the astronomical data offers further argument for its validity:

At the *Passover* of this year, the sun would naturally be in Aries (the Lamb), as in any other year. Significantly during this time of history, on the fourteenth day of the month the moon was characteristically in the area of *Libra* (liberation, exoneration, judgment), or the tipped scales of judgment. But what may distinguish this year from other years in this general time period was the unique position of the planets.

Saturn

First is the position of Saturn between Libra and Scorpio. More significant was its position relative to the decan of Libra known as the "Victim," or *Victima*. In modern times this constellation is made to look like a wolf, which is being run through by a spear (from the neighboring Centaur in Centaurus). But the victim is not a wolf.

In ancient zodiacs it is usually a lamb, or even a child, a boy-child. Sometimes this child is pictured as having his finger to his lips. This

portrays obvious innocence. In Egyptian zodiacs and in cultic thought at the time, this victim was equated with Horus, the firstborn son of Osiris. This picture quickly reminds us of the circumstances of the tenth plague upon Egypt.

For Saturn, the slow planet (30 year rotation), to reach this very spot at this time may not be coincidental. The moon, a symbol of judgment resides also in Libra (the Scales) on the 14th of Nisan. This could indicate a weighing, a redemption through purchase.

This is the very circumstance of the Passover theme. In addition, in this very part of the zodiac (Libra and Scorpio) are the constellations of abject suffering and persecution. We must remember that Egypt is passing through the plagues at this time. Therefore it would be essential to find the planet of evil and misfortune in the heavenly houses equated with evil and suffering.

Mars

Mars, the planet of war and death is passing through Leo and is by the star, Regulus, at this time. In fact, it probably conjuncts about five days after this (the author's) supposed departure from Egypt. Being also a negative planet of war and death, yet coming in contact with the royal constellation of Leo would indicate a royal war death, or at least a deathblow to the royal power of some country. That this should come immediately after the suffering of plagues as indicated in the heavens is quite interesting. It was within about 3-5 days after the departure from Egypt that the Red Sea experience likely occurred (cf. *Book of Jasher*, fifth day; Exodus account=three camping places mentioned before the Red Sea crossing; Egypt mourned three days before pursuing Israel, etc.).

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Jupiter

Jupiter, the good planet, associated with the work of *the supreme God,* especially in his sweeping and general movements in history, is leaving *Sagittarius*, the victorious archer in war. The necessary appropriateness of Jupiter's placement in this part of the heavens cannot be overstated. Through the plagues, and finally through the sea drowning, God was exalted in victory over his Egyptian foes. Especially in the passage of Israel through the Red Sea, God bared His arm and came forth a victorious man of war, perfectly represented in the symbols of Sagittarius. God in the Bible is not always pictured as a war-lord, but often too as a gentle and loving Savior. Yet in the pictures of the Exodus, God is consistently presented as a war god, (cf. Exodus 15, "God is a man of war"). The Bible descriptions of God's victory at the Red Sea speak of God as a warrior, the grand archer,[2] who is effective with his bow and with his

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[2] **Yahweh God--Victor at the Red Sea:**
Scriptural imagery depicts God's use of archer's weapons at the Red Sea: Exactly as found in the constellation, Sagittarius; i.e. a rider/centaur shooting arrows from a bow, so God is pictured as he defeats Israel's enemies at the Red Sea. Jahweh is a "man of war" (Ex 15:3), who bends his bow to destroy the enemies of his people. Note in the following passages how God's arrows are "lightning bolts" and how even the heavens and the clouds are likened to the archer's bow. The heavens "bow down," or become a bow in God's hands.

Traditions indicate the parting of the Red Sea into channels (7 or 12) was accompanied by storm; particularly winds, but also clouds, thunder, lightning, etc. For Jupiter, the sign of the sovereign God in his exhibition of power to reside in the righteous victor's constellation is entirely fitting. Jupiter in mythology is always shown with a bolt of lightning:

Psalm 18
Ps. 18:7 Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken, because he was wroth.
Ps. 18:8 There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it.

"arrows of judgment." Jupiter in mythology is the storm god holding a

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Ps. 18:9 He bowed the heavens also, and came down: and darkness was under his feet.
Ps. 18:10 And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind.
Ps. 18:11 He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies.
Ps. 18:12 At the brightness that was before him his thick clouds passed, hail stones and coals of fire.
Ps. 18:13 The LORD also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; hail stones and coals of fire.
Ps. 18:14 Yea, he sent out his arrows, and scattered them; and he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them.
Ps. 18:15 Then the channels of waters were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered at thy rebuke, O LORD, at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils.
Ps. 18:16 He sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of many waters.
Ps. 18:17 He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me: for they were too strong for me.
Ps. 18:18 They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the LORD was my stay.
Ps. 18:19 He brought me forth also into a large place; he delivered me, because he delighted in me.

Psalm 77
Ps. 77:17 The clouds poured out water: the skies sent out a sound: thine arrows also went abroad.
Ps. 77:18 The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook.
Ps. 77:19 Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known.

Psalm 144
Ps. 144:5 Bow thy heavens, O LORD, and come down: touch the mountains, and they shall smoke.
Ps. 144:6 Cast forth lightning, and scatter them: shoot out thine arrows, and destroy them.
Ps. 144:7 Send thine hand from above; rid me, and deliver me out of great waters, from the hand of strange children.

lightning bolt. Old Testament imagery consistently places the crossing in the setting of a storm.

Venus and Mercury

Finally, Venus, the planet of love and nurture, is found like the presence of the living Christ--in the pillar of cloud and fire-- passing through the midst of the sea (Pisces, fishes), comforting the multitudes of Israel.[3] The bright and shining light of the Lord Jesus led Israel through the waters and by them delivered them from bondage. Mercury, the messenger planet, is in Aries, the Lamb (along with the sun), heralding a "message" of the redemption of a Lamb in the Passover setting.

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[3] For the sake of completeness there is one further aspect that should be noticed on the matter of the Exodus configuration of 1493 BC. Venus is found in the midst of Pisces.

One reason why this is so appropriate is that Pisces like no other constellation represents deliverance from bondage. Aries, the adjacent Passover Ram, is touching the fishes' tether with his foot. The fish are in *bondage*, held by a band, being pulled down by Cetus, the sea monster. Andromeda, the woman (church) in chains is bound above. The mythological story of Andromeda is the one where the beautiful Andromeda, chained to a rock, is rescued from her mortal captivity by the heroic Perseus.

Completion to the "star" story comes with the foot of the Lamb (Aries/adjacent) that comes into the picture. It appears that the Lamb is attempting to loosen the band attached to Cetus with His foot. Highlighting this aspect at the time of Exodus is essential. For the slain lamb is the very symbol we need, one who frees the church (the fish of Pisces=multitudes of Israel) from bondage. Andromeda's chains are broken by the Lamb's work. Thus the bright shining of his Shekinah (Venus, the bright one, the loving and incarnate Lamb), the pillar of light, leading the ancient church (horizontal fish) through the sea, seems to be just exactly what we should have here.

A Convincing Combination of Circumstances

Mars, as previously mentioned (planet of war and death), comes near the star, Regulus, at this time; essentially in conjunction five days after what we now suppose might have been the day of the Exodus. Leo, and Regulus, are the "king" constellation and "king" star. Mars represents death and violence. The sign is clearly one of death and violence to a king and kingdom.

A Wednesday Exodus

According to Jewish tradition, the selecting of a Passover lamb was to take place on the tenth of Nisan (Aries). According to surviving traditions about the original Passover, this tenth of the month occurred on a Sabbath, known as a "great" Sabbath. (Cf. Alfred Edersheim, *The Temple*, p. 217). Traditions are unreliable at best. However, there seems to be no reason why the Jews would have twisted the historical records to demand that this first 10th day would have been a Sabbath. The lamb ritually could be selected on any week day. In fact, it might be more appropriate in Jewish legalism to have thought that this ritual would have been relegated to a common day rather than a Sabbath.

Assuming then, that the tenth of Nisan was a Sabbath, then the 14th of Nisan would have been on a Wednesday, or four days later.

According to my best calculations, the year 1493 (astronomical 1492) is perhaps the best possible year in this actual time period which allows for a Saturday 10th of Nisan and a Wednesday (14th) Passover.*

* The calculations are complicated by the inaccuracies of the Julian calendar correlated to the astronomical calendar to which we are often limited. (Refer to *Appendix D* and the previous chapter, *Corrections to Calendar Dates*). However, mathematically an adjustment must be considered: (.0078 per year from 1582 A.D.=24 days---minus 10 day 1582 calendar change=14 days, which would not change the weekly cycle of the calendar).

Thus we suggest that on Wednesday, April 4 (assumed as Thursday on the typical Julian/astronomical calendar---or in some tables, at least), 1493, the Passover lamb was slain, and that evening the first-born sons and victims were slain. The next day Israel left Egypt---Thursday. A few days later, after a Sabbath rest and requested sacrifice in the wilderness their travels brought them to the camp beside the sea; they crossed the Sea of Reeds (perhaps Sunday/ Monday) and set their course into the great and terrible wilderness.

Conclusion

Thus we conclude that the date of the Exodus could have been ca. April 4, 1493 B.C. However, such a conclusion is highly tentative and cannot be guaranteed. At such a distance in time we cannot be sure. We are dependant upon the data, none of which is absolutely verified.

But again, the clock of the heavens comes into service to corroborate other calculations taken from other sources, especially that of the true word of the Living God. The star story adds significant theological meaning to the event in question. When all the data taken from reliable sources not construed by humanistic philosophy comes into agreement we can be reasonably sure that we are on the right track. The two great revelations, the declaration of the heavens, and the testimony of the word of God uniformly declare the glorious work of God (Psalm 19).

However, a one-day error may exist because of the sun "standing still" in the time of Joshua. We assume that only the earth stopped and not the entire universe. The passage of time did not cease. Therefore assuming that since the calendar did not keep pace with the movements of the heavens we must move the calendar approximately one day forward to Thursday (Julian) to establish the position of the heavens on the actual Wednesday, the 14th of Nisan, 1493 B.C.

"Seek him that maketh the seven stars and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night: that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth: The LORD is his name." Amos 5:8

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THE SEARCH FOR THE NOACHIAN FLOOD

As it was admitted at the outset of this study, no absolute determinations of historical dates can be claimed by the method of star reckoning we are considering. So much depends on the accuracy of astronomical tables and calculations, the assumption that there is consistent uniformity in astral movements; not to mention the nebulous possibilities and limited interpretive understanding of astrological and mythological signs.

Therefore it is most certainly a "reach" to offer the reader of these pages a date for the great Genesis flood. Being separated in time even farther from our present era increases greatly the possibility of error and miscalculation.

But according to our thesis, the God who created "these things," "who brings out their host by number" by his power and might, has in all probability marked all the great events of the history of salvation by signals in the sky. These signs were intended, I believe, to increase our faith in the biblical testimony as well as to signal to the people of those times under consideration that God was at work through the unfolding providences of history. Therefore it may be entirely possible that the Genesis flood is written in the sky. We may indeed make a mistake on the interpretation of what is displayed in the heavens at the time of the flood. But, I believe that there was an appropriate positioning of the planets at the time of the flood, whenever it might have occurred.

Setting the Historical Biblical Parameters

The only reliable source of information about this time period comes from the biblical timelines. Again, these are only reliable insofar as we correctly interpret them. But assuming certain facts established in the chronology proposed in this study so far we can establish a *circa* calculation for the era in which the flood probably occurred. Once this is done we can more specifically estimate the likely year and look for astral

phenomena, which fit the appropriate expressions of the marvelous "clock of the heavens."

We have formerly estimated the date of the Exodus as being ca. 1493 B.C. From this base we are given the fact that the *Exodus* was 430 years (to the day) from the "call of Abraham." Therefore we first might simply assume then that the call of Abraham occurred in about 1923 B.C.

1493
+
430
=1923 BC

From the time of Abraham we have genealogical records back to the Flood (Gen 11). Accordingly we are told that Abraham was about 75 years old when he received the call (Gen 12:4). However there are three problems that must be resolved before settling on a possible date.

They are:

1. The age of Abraham at his call and the synchronism of the 400-year and 430-year periods that relate to the time between Abraham and the Exodus.
2. The age of Abraham's father, Terah, at Abraham's birth. (not clearly supplied in the Scripture).
3. The "Cainan" omission in the genealogical record

The 400- year Periods of Abraham's Descendants

First, let us comment on the ongoing discussion about the two periods given in the Bible regarding the separation of time between events in the life of Abraham and the later Exodus:

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We are told in Exodus 12:40,41 that the Exodus was 430 years after the call of Abraham.[9] Yet the Lord, in speaking to Abraham at one of his encounters, said that Abraham's seed would "sojourn" in the land of Canaan and Egypt 400 years (Gen 15:13). This prediction is thought to have been related to Abraham at the time just preceding the birth of Isaac (Abraham is 99), Abraham's true and original seed.

The problem is that Abraham supposedly received his call at age 75, and then received his son Isaac 25 years later when he was 100 years old. Thus it would seem that Abraham was called 425 years before the Exodus and not 430. There appears to be a five-year discrepancy. Several solutions have been offered concerning this.

The resolution is really quite simple when the ancient Book of Jasher, referred to in the Bible is considered. Modern copies of the Book of Jasher are considered to be hoaxes by modern interpreters. But I do not share this opinion with modern scholarship. While several absurdities and inaccuracies appear in the Book of Jasher, there are also some statements and historical information that are no doubt valid, and in some cases could hardly have been thought up by an imposter. Someone attempting to write a spurious book simply would not attempt to say some things found there if they were not based on some fact or some tradition known only at the time it was written.

While it is not appropriate here to enter into discussion regarding *Jasher*, let it suffice to say that the book provides one ancient source that in part resolves this difficulty. There are other sources giving evidence as well. However, what the Book of Jasher simply says is that the call of Abraham DID NOT come when Abraham was 75 years old. Instead he was 70 years old. Five years afterward, the book claims, was when he finally did depart from Haran for Canaan. And this is really all the Bible claims

[9] (Assuming this event begins the "sojourning" talked of there—there is considerable discussion how this is to be understood, since Abraham was not yet "in Egypt" etc. For many reasons I believe the interpretation is Egypt *and Canaan (cf. LXX)*; and it is not meant that Israel as a nation was in Egypt for 400 plus years).

anyway. It is in the general context of his call and his leaving for the land of promise that Abraham is said to be 75. But all it is really saying on closer examination is that Abraham was 75 when he left Haran for Canaan.

With this adjustment, the Biblical information makes perfect sense. Abraham is called when he is 70. 30 years later Isaac is born. So five years after the call he leaves Haran-- permanently. 400 years later from when Isaac is born comes the Exodus. Thus the 400 and 430-year periods fit the timeline exactly. Therefore we can calculate that the birth of Abraham was 500 (430 + 70) years before the Exodus, ca. 1993 BC.

Age of Terah

In this case several commentators and chronologists make an absurd and common error. While the Bible makes an ambiguous statement about Terah; that he was 70 years at the birth of Nahor, Haran, and Abraham; expositors leap to some rather strange conclusions. Some even propose that Abraham and his brothers were triplets. More commonly, and more to the point, though, is an unwarranted calculation.

This calculation springs from the statement of Stephen in the book of *Acts*, given more than two thousand years later, who makes the general comment in his narrative sermon that Abraham left Canaan after his father Terah had died (Acts 7:4). Since the Genesis account presents us with the fact that Terah died when he was 205 years old (Gen 11:32), and Abraham receives his call when he is 75, it is then assumed that Terah had to be at least 130 years old when Abraham, his third son, is born!

The problem is that this age of Terah at Abraham's birth (130) is wildly out of proportion to the age of other fathers listed in this time period at the birth of their sons. It also makes the birth of Isaac when Abraham was 100 a relatively minor miracle. It also seems to separate the ages of Terah's first son and his last (prob. Abraham) by some sixty years.

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Again the Book of Jasher helps us immensely here in that it reports the exact age of Terah at the birth of each of Abraham's two older brothers (late thirties; plus) and then clearly states the age of Terah at Abraham's birth as 70. This is entirely reasonable and does not violate the Bible account. It separates the birth of Abraham and his brothers only over a 20+-year interval, and agrees more sensibly with the Biblical account, which really intends to say that Abraham was born (after his brothers) when Terah was 70. It is easy to see why later readers of Genesis, such as Stephen, would assume like most that Terah died just before Abraham's call. The way the account is written could easily be interpreted this way. But the fact probably is that Abraham left Haran when he was 75 years old, and his father lived on for some time, and died at the ripe old age of 205---still in Haran.

Before we address the "Cainan" connection to all of this let us do a temporary calculation as to an updated biblical timeline for the Deluge:

The birth of Abraham= 1993 BC
Plus the age of Terah at Abraham's birth--70= 2063 BC
Plus the total elapsed years of the ten or so patriarchs before Abraham /221 years= 2284 B.C. (Gen 11, Masoretic Text; Arphaxad born two years after flood, etc.).

Therefore our calculations now bring us down to ca. 2284 BC.

Cainan

One final anomaly in the historical record now requires our attention. This is that the Masoretic text of the Old Testament gives a genealogy which omits Cainan, but the Lukan genealogy in the New Testament (3:36), and the marginal reading of 1 Chron 1:24 and the LXX (Septuagint, Greek Old Testament) all give us a "Cainan" between Arphaxad and Shelah.

Which is correct? Why is there an extra "Cainan" in some accounts and not in others?

It is difficult to really know why. Is Cainan "fictitious" or real? I tend to believe we must calculate an inclusion for Canaan because of two reasons:

1. It seems like the later New Testament writers are attempting to offer correction on the basis of available information they had researched and had reason to include for correction.
2. The book of *Jubilees* seems to give us a reason for his previous omission. Cainan was an idolater and a prognosticator or "astrologer." As a dubious character, he would thus be left out of the holy line of patriarchs for sacred reasons, but should not be left out for historical reasons.

The great problem is, for chronological reasons, we have no reliable age given for Cainan at the age of his son. This is perhaps a final hurdle in the general biblical timeline for we have the genealogy given accurately in the Masoretic text of Genesis from the flood back to creation.

The *Septuagint* gives the age of 130 for Cainan but there is quite convincing evidence that all the LXX figures are doctored in that they add 100 years to all the Masoretic dates. Other than this they do not seem to be based on any reliable research or resource. We cannot in any way trust them. We might simply subtract the 100 years and take the 30 years as accurate. But we can't be sure of that. 30 (given as 130) appears to be an educated guess on the part of the chronologers of the LXX in that it would be a good average when compared to the other ages given in the context.

The only other possibility we have is the book of *Jubilees*. This figure requires calculation from how the ages are given us in the jubilee cycles in the book of *Jubilees*, but it calculates out to be that Cainan was about 57 years old when his son is born.

Therefore the best we can do is estimate that Canaan was between 30 and 57 years old when his son was born. This would then place the estimated date of the Flood between the years of ca. 2314—2340 BC.

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Planetary Positions

According to our thesis that God marks the heavens at the time of a great event we can scan the skies during this 26-year or so period between 2284 and 2340 BC. While the conclusion I am offering here is at best tentative, let us consider the basis on which we might interpret the data and narrow the search for the time of the Noachian flood.

Naturally, the time of the flood was a great and cataclysmic time. It was a time of incredible destruction of life and property. Great wickedness and guilt were being punished. However, while some view the flood as a totally destructive event they do not recognize as they should that the flood was in actuality a time of salvation and redemption for the faithful, as well as a time of rescue of this planet. In the context of this terrible event is seen the rainbow of covenant love, the safety and refuge of an ark, and the cleansing for future generations the *terra firma* of this world.

Therefore we would anticipate to find such general elements featured in our "star clock." We should look for the following themes:

1. The pouring out of water, cleansing
2. A ship or boat, if possible
3. God's wrath
4. A faithful *few*, God's people
5. Death and destruction awarded to the wicked
6. God's love through *watch care and protection* of the faithful

Immediately there come to mind symbols in the principle zodiac that correlate with these themes:

To begin with, one of the most significant constellations on the ecliptic in this regard is *Aquarius*. Aquarius, of course, means, "water carrier" and contains the word *Aqua* that we all know is a common word for water. Therefore we might assume that the constellation Aquarius will be marked somewhat significantly on our clock.

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Next we know that one of the thirty-six decans, the third in the constellation of Cancer, is *Argo*, the Ship. We might expect that the latter part of the constellation of Cancer might be marked.

God's wrath is best equated with the charging bull of Taurus, or perhaps with the fierce lion of Leo. Taurus almost demands to be used in our calculations for Taurus is known in ancient lore to be associated with the Deluge. Different writers comment on this though it is difficult to find verification for why they make this reference. But it is fitting for several reasons.

First, the flood narrative itself tells us that the deluge came in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month. The first month for millennia was in the constellation, Aries, and went by many different names. The second sign that follows Aries is Taurus. So it is not inappropriate to surmise that the flood broke out when the sun was in the vicinity of Taurus.

In Taurus, as well, we have the "seven stars" of the Pleiades, a tightly knit grouping of stars most are familiar with. These are particularly associated with the Noachian flood and with Noah and his family. The Pleiades, and the words used to describe them are thought to have the ancient meaning of "the congregation (or family) of the judge or ruler" or the associated meaning of the faithful few of God bound together in close proximity. No one really sees "seven" stars with the naked eye in Pleiades. One usually sees six, or eight, or several more.

Yet, no grouping of stars in the heaven would have better association with the eight that entered the ark than would this group. They ride safely above the shoulder of fierce, charging bull. They literally ride out the storm of wrath.

In addition to this, just beyond the central confines of the bull of Taurus and near to entrance to the constellation Gemini is the area of the heavens known as "Auriga, the Shepherd." In modern times Auriga is a charioteer. Anciently, this bright constellation containing the brilliant and well-known

star "Capella" is the picture of a shepherd holding a mother goat (or lamb). The goat is clinging in fear and desperation to the shoulder and neck of the shepherd while looking back at the onrushing bull. The good shepherd with great care and love protects this goat.

But the mother goat is not alone. She has two small baby goats that she is nursing and protecting while in the protective custody of the shepherd! Here is a simple but clear "star story" of tender, divine protection from threatening and present evil directed toward the "family flock" of the shepherd.

Thus we find the environs of Taurus replete with many of the themes mentioned above and would expect that the chief hand of our clock, would most likely point to this sign.

Another sign that we might at first expect to see featured is Scorpio, or its neighbor Libra, the signs of suffering and judgment. However, we must note that while the flood brought the most cataclysmic events probably ever known, it came suddenly upon an unsuspecting world immersed in revelry, prosperity, and amusement. It was not a time of continuous and ongoing suffering and pain. It was sudden, and over quite quickly as far as life on earth was concerned. The earth itself was in travail, but not humankind.

The death and demise aspect remains, however. There still must be clear, pre-figured association with death and destruction of the wicked. Along with this should be seen the renovative and renewal aspect, thus death of the old and the giving of new life and beginning to the world. The place in the zodiacal circle where death and new life is most clearly defined we have found is in Capricorn, the goat falling in death, yet reviving like the vigorous tail of a fish active in the water of "life." Therefore it might be reasonable to expect something to occur in this sign also.

Having calculated our way down to ca. 2284 B.C. we might begin by looking within our parameters formerly stated for configurations of this nature. We are looking particularly in the years around 2284 B.C., or

some 30 years earlier at about 2314 B.C. (if Cainan is considered in the equation as being about 30 years of age at the birth of his son), or even 55 - 57 years earlier if the book of *Jubilees* is giving a correct age for Cainan (ca. 2340).

The Search

While looking at configurations for these parameters we find some appropriate signs present in all of them. The task is difficult. However, not all of these times give complete consistency to all of the aspects listed above. The most convincing astronomical display comes in my tentative opinion at this writing to early May of 2339 B.C. In the following paragraphs let us analyze a little more thoroughly why we might conclude thus:

The Sun

The Sun is the most significant hand on the celestial clock and we would expect that it be in Taurus where we have not only the corroboration of Scripture that tells us the flood came in this month, but we also have the Pleiades, the congregation of the righteous few as the main feature. Taurus is perhaps the best symbol in the zodiac to represent the outpouring of God's wrath. So Taurus is a good candidate in every respect. But this does not specify the time historically, but only what time in the year when the flood took place.

Saturn

A primary key to the whole argument I feel is the position of the planet Saturn, and where it must have been when the world was about to be deluged by a flood. Saturn, the slowest moving planet that we consider in

our celestial clock is often indicative of the power of evil and misfortune. In addition, its rotation is quite lengthy; it takes about 29 years to make the circle. Saturn then, cannot so much be a marker of exact moments in history but rather "eras" or "trends" in history. Neither was the flood an event transpiring over one day or week. The crisis of the deluge lasted about a year, yet its effects went on for some time, even reaching to today.

Saturn is in the latter part of *Capricorn* and entering *Aquarius* in 2339 B.C. There is interesting reason to believe this is appropriate.

Should it be the "good planet" Jupiter, for instance, that takes this position we might at first think that quite fitting. For God (his person and work as sovereign god often equated with the bright Jupiter), is the great "water-pourer" at this time. But usually when God is pictured as the great water-pourer, the waters he pours out are the waters of *blessing* and of *life*, for this is what God is to be given credit for when the winter moisture of Aquarius comes. But in the case of the flood there was not a outpouring of blessing, but rather, for the wicked, an outpouring for the purpose of destruction. Saturn represents God in his work of punishment and misfortune, especially when he allows the direct work of Satan. The entrance of Saturn into Aquarius then would signal the beginning of an outpouring, but not an outpouring of "blessing." There are stars in this constellation, which even mean "the record of the outpouring." This is probably no accident and means more than only a yearly "record of outpouring."

A curious circumstance comes to our notice also. It is typically on the 17th day of a month (during this era!) that the moon enters the area of Aquarius. In addition, it is not a full moon that one finds on the 15th to 17th day of the month, but a waning and dying moon that is observed on the 17th. The moon as we have noticed is equated at times with the negative. And so its presence in Aquarius may denote a "bad happening" with water associated. The Bible tells us that on the *seventeenth* day of *second* month the fountains of the deep were broken up and the flood and rains came. We can be quite certain, at least, that the moon (and probably Saturn) was

in the area of Aquarius and that the sun was in Taurus on the day the flood came.

Jupiter

Jupiter is in the latter part of Cancer and next to Leo in 2,339 BC. Discussion as to the meaning of the "biblical" sign of Cancer in other places always has to do with the congregating and the care of the "sheep" belonging to the God of the heavens. The decans or associated signs all have to do with sheepfolds, and the idea of church of the living God encircled in love and safety. (The encircling idea later developed into the Crab, because of his pincer arms encircling his prey—replacing unfortunately the idea of good-- with evil).

In this third and final area of this sign, is the decan of *Argo,* the Ship. There are elaborate tales about this ship, its mission to fetch a golden fleece, with its argonaut passengers. Elaborating on the meaning of some of these mythological tales may be of significance in this case. Suffice it to say that *Argo* in the sign is clearly a ship, and it is a good ship, with a good purpose. It is not a coincidence, we believe at this point, that this ship is marked by the good planet, Jupiter, the sign of the all powerful God found in his "good" intentions, providing shelter and encircling providence to his faithful ones featured in direct association with the use of a ship. This happens just immediately before Jupiter is to enter Leo, the lion of unmitigated fierceness and wrath, that pounces upon the doomed sea serpent "Hydra" (Water).

Mars and Venus

A couple more refinements to the settings of the clock at the time in question must be commented on:

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First the planet Mars is found in Capricorn at this time. This is appropriate, for Capricorn, the dying goat constellation, is the constellation of death, and especially death where evil and blame are considered. A goat is a blame animal and sometimes a rebellious and ornery one as well. So this sign might be best interpreted as death and violence directed toward the blameworthy wicked. Mars is the god of Death and violence. He could not be located in a better location at this time.

In direct contrast, Venus, the mythical god or goddess particularly associated with love and protective feeling is next to *Auriga*, the shepherd, the picture given above, that featured the mother goat and her twins snatched from danger and protected in motherly fashion by the gracious good shepherd. This is a most fortuitous circumstance when relating this to the work of Christ in saving Noah and his family. God's tender regard for his human family and the creatures of this world was manifest in thus enclosing them into an ark of safety. The star sign of Auriga sometimes is that of a charioteer, shown quickly rescuing the innocent family of sheep or goats from danger.

Considerations

Therefore, it seems that the signs of late April, early May of 2339 BC, seemingly best illustrate the purposes of God in the worldwide flood. Yet, I want to emphasize with great, great emphasis, that this determination is not certain and I readily admit how limited such interpretations are.

But I want to challenge the researcher to at least two things:

First, to test these conclusions. Then second, to try to appreciate beyond common skepticism the powerful message that can be brought to bear on a particular event through the message of the stars. That such a possibility exists is no end of fascination to this writer. How is it that such a powerful theological understanding can come from the stars alone, and that they

come appropriate to the salvation event to which they are tied? This is truly a wonderful mystery!

In a way, it appears that the clock of the heavens has a face and hands that mark the story of salvation. Planets such as Saturn appear to mark more extensive time periods, Jupiter marks year or multi-year segments, faster rotating planets such as Mars, Venus, and Mercury mark years, weeks, or special or specific time periods. The Sun marks the month, and the moon often marks the day. Conjunctions, eclipses, and other phenomena can mark even hours of events. Of course, it is not all this simple. It is actually very complicated. Yet in its grand entirety it is so amazingly accurate and informative as to comprehensively provide information for various times in history. If only more reference was given to this clock in the past we might have better grasp of the exact history of our planet!

Conclusion:

I think it very possible that the flood began (ca.) April 30/May 1, of 2339 B.C. (2338 astronomical time, Julian calendar). This interpretation of stellar events comes precisely 55 years after our other calculated date from the Masoretic genealogy that did not include Cainan (2284 + 55 = 2339). Cainan, according to the Book of Jubilees was ca. 56-57 years old when his son was born. (There may be a year or so of over-lap because we may need to reckon inclusively, at times, when attaching to the previous dates).

We trust, at least, from the other biblical and astronomical information we have gathered at this point, that we are close to the time of the biblical Flood if we place it in the time frame of 2285 to 2340 B.C. Traditional chronology places the flood at 2348 B.C., just 10 years earlier than our suggested date. We are probably close to the correct time, in any case. We can believe that whenever the flood came, it was carefully marked by the "clock of the heavens," as the "Aquarian" God thoroughly washed the world of its defilement.

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WHEN IT ALL BEGAN

Prevarications

Again it is necessary to remind the reader the limits that are to be observed in our study. Let it be repeated that the author is not at this point insisting or claiming that these suggestions aimed at the chronology of our planet are absolutely correct or infallible. To make the claim that from our reading of astral phenomena that we can pinpoint exact days of history without mistake is not the claim of this study. Too much information is lacking about these eras so far removed from us to be sure of anything. It is easy to make a mistake even in reading the astral signs correctly. Finally, we can only assume at best, that when we find appropriate configurations; that these represent the result of uniformity in elapsed time and consistent axial rotation from that time to ours. None of these premises can be ultimately decided or proven.

When looking at dates as far removed from us as the biblical creation this is especially true. Please do not say in any manner that we are "fixing a date for creation," or any other event we have referred to in this study for that matter. Do not think we can determine an absolutely reliable date for creation and the fall of man, or for the Second Coming of Christ. We cannot do this.

What we can do is investigate astral phenomena via computer star charts and see if they in any way correlate and provide tentative confirmation for the biblical timeline and other relative data. By this we can contribute evidence; and this being only partial evidence, to the faith structure given us in the infallible Word of God.

Setting the Clock of the Heavens

It would be wonderful to know where the planetary heavenly bodies stood when God created them. But we are not blessed with that information. Did they "line up" as one or were they scattered randomly when God spoke them into existence? We do not know.

But according to our premise throughout this study that there is historical meaning written in the arrangement of the heavens, we can make the assumption that this also was the case from the beginning. Working from and testing that theorem, we can try to determine how the clock could have been initially set to correlate appropriately with the primordial events of this earth and how those events are related to the Plan of Salvation.

Constellations and Planets Relating to the Genesis Story

To begin with we must make some comments about what hypothetical elements we might expect to observe in our celestial clock at the time when the world would have been created and particularly when man and woman fell from Grace:

1. First, we know from the Genesis story that not long after the creation man fell, which brought about the placing into effect the solutions offered by God's plan to save the earth and man whom he had placed upon it. Because of the entrance of sin we should perhaps watch with interest the positioning of the "evil" planets Saturn and Mars.
2. In addition we read of several "figures" given in the great chapters of the Bible in Genesis 2 and 3, and Revelation 12, etc. that relate directly to the fall of man and his promised redemption. Especially in Genesis 3:15, the *protoevangelium,* we find symbols that are also found in the heavens.

    These are:

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a. The woman and her promised seed
b. The promised redeemer sent to alleviate the "enmity" of Satan.
c. The serpent that will bruise the heel of the redeemer, and the curse and suffering he will bring to mankind, with the ultimate curse of death.

We immediately are required to notice that just such a direct representation is seen in the heavens in the constellation Virgo, with the woman and her promised seed, the Branch. Just below the woman is seen an evil serpent, Hydra, ever threatening.

At this place in the heavens is also found (between Leo and Virgo) the beginning (and end) of the zodiacal circle. This has been known for centuries, for even the Sphinx in Egypt seems to represent this place, and in many zodiacs the Sphinx is placed in the zodiac between the woman and the lion (The Sphinx has the face of a woman and the body of a lion). The woman (Virgo) can also represents birth and beginnings. We would therefore expect some significant marking of this celestial region.

The era of suffering and death brought about by sin, which began at the fall, might best be equated with regions like Scorpio, however. The most appropriate place for Saturn, perhaps, would be there. The slow moving planet of evil and misfortune which signals eras rather than specific dates should be in Scorpio perhaps where man begins his struggle with the serpent (so pictured in the sub-constellation Ophiuchus).

There are two prominent serpents in the heavens, however. Yet, of the two, the enormous twisting serpent or dragon of the biblical story is best equated with Draco, the decan associated with the constellation Sagittarius. This grand and coiling serpent twists and turns its way over a third of the northern heavens. It took the great redemptive power of the supreme God to cast down and to hold in check this gigantic old serpent. It may not be inappropriate to see the planet Jupiter in this region to mark this battle between good and evil.

The Star Story of the Fall of Man

Gauging from our previous calculations regarding the time of the Noachian Flood at ca. 2339 B.C. we would naturally add the years calculated in the biblical genealogies to ascertain an approximate time for creation and the fall. Simple calculation of the Masoretic figures totals at about 1656 years having elapsed from the creation of Adam to the flood. This yields us a target date for creation at ca. 3,995 B.C.

Some commentators believe that the antediluvian genealogy cannot be entirely accurate because only the general age of the patriarchal father at the birth of his son is given. It is not likely, they say, that these births occurred always on the same day, or upon their father's birthday. They occurred more likely on various months, with the father's exact age in months at the time of birth not considered. This overlap could throw the total calculation askew by as much as 10 years or more.

However, it may not be so readily permissible to question the methods of the ancient chronographers. Some scholars (cf. Richard Davidson) have noticed that the formula used by the author of the ancient Genesis chronology may have been intentional in presenting the chronology as it is. The supposed overlap is, according to this reckoning, taken into consideration; and the successor, for instance, might take credit for the full year in which he was born. This was one of the methods used in the regnal succession of kings in ancient times and it guaranteed that the total number of years would not crawl away from actual elapsed time. This is the assumption that we might make here.

3995 B.C.

Now, in 3995 B.C., our target date, there are certainly planet configurations that are appropriate:

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First, the planet Saturn appears in the first part of Scorpio and near one of the four principle stars in the zodiac, *Antares*, which meaning "the tearing, or the wounding." Saturn is only in this or any other constellation for two to three years out of thirty. In this year Saturn is at the very spot where the pincers of the scorpion is striking the heel of the "serpent holder." Since Saturn seems to often mark the beginning of eras of time, it is most appropriate that in its role as an "evil" planet, it is found in the constellation of suffering, plague, and approaching death which might signify the beginning of an era of earthly suffering and travail.

This is exactly what happened when sin entered the world at the beginning; and when considering other signs in the zodiac it is noticed that no constellation and planet fits the situation better than to have Saturn in Scorpio!

The first two corresponding decans of Scorpio are Ophiuchus, the god/man struggling with the angry serpent (Serpens); AND Serpens who is reaching for the crown, held back by the heroic Ophiuchus.

In addition, there is another decan associated with Scorpio, called Hercules. Hercules is also a strong god-like man who also is victorious over a serpent-foe, which we will consider momentarily. The story strongly demands the use of the constellation Scorpio and its associated divisions.

The Position of Jupiter

Next, we find Jupiter at this time in the latter part of Sagittarius. It is particularly the third decan of Sagittarius that is equated with *Draco*, which means: "the trodden upon serpent." Jupiter, then, the planet of divine goodness and power is seen holding in check and victoriously treading upon the ancient serpent, which incidentally is also being put down by the foot of the strong, neighboring Hercules mentioned in our previous note.

Hercules in the star pictures is wresting away, or controlling in his hand what looks like a tree of apples that has a terrible three-headed serpent/dragon in it. One writer tells us that "Mythology says the Dragon is the power that guarded the golden apples in the Garden of the Hesperides, hindering men from getting them" (E. Raymond Capt, *The Glory of the Stars*, p.66). Whatever, the picture, it is quite fascinating when "demythologized" a bit. It seems that what is really represented in this part of the heavens is that the heroic Hercules, who is dressed in a lion's skin (it looks to this writer like a lamb's skin) is destroying (with his club) Draco, the ancient serpent, and wresting away the power of the dragon found in an Edenic tree of good and evil. This then, is all well marked in the sky at this time!

Further Signs

Finally, we must retract our steps in the sky back to the neighboring Virgo. In this constellation we find both Venus and Mars, as well as the Sun and Mercury in about the month of September, 3995 B.C. Would we not expect this constellation to enter into our stellar equation as well?

On about the fifth of September, Venus and Mars come in close conjunction. These planets represent love and goodness, versus violence and death. This happens in the constellation known as associated with the primordial woman (Gen 3:15; Rev 12:1-3) who is in conflict from the beginning of time with the serpent (Hydra, Draco, etc.), and to whom enmity is promised between her seed and the seed of the enemy. Eve was given a choice between good and evil, love and hate, and she chose what was wrong, the way of death.

The conjunction takes place juxtaposition to the star known as *Vindermiatrix*, which means "the son, or branch who comes." (Capt, p.34) Here the woman is holding a branch, known by us to be the root or seed of David-- or the righteous. Thus is declared a war between the seed of the woman, and the seed of the enemy. This is also related in position with *Comah*, the future woman and her child. What is pictured, though, in all

of this, is the ultimate victory of the seed of the woman (Gen 3:15) over the seed of the serpent.

While all the constellations and planet placements can appropriately tell the story of the triumph of good over evil, why is it that at the exact time needed for our timeline that the star configurations are so *directly* appropriate? Essentially all the SERPENT—WOMAN---SEED themes are specifically marked! Happenstance would find these planets just as easily in Gemini, Cancer, Aquarius, Aries, Taurus, or any of the rest. But those particular star regions focus on *other* themes of salvation, and we do not find them prominent at this particular time.

Creation

When then would we estimate creation? For we know the fall came some time afterwards, and our focus has been turned toward the story of the provision of salvation for fallen man; for this also is the story of the stars.

We do not know how much time elapsed between the completion of creation week and the temptation of Eve in the garden. Some think it might have been several years, some think it was within days (or even *the* day) of the completed creation. We just don't know. Tradition and the Bible account seem to make this time very brief.

While you can be sure search is being made for this particular time, it may be best to leave such things to innocent speculation only. To suggest an actual date for creation may play into the hands of enthusiasts or critics, or both. The times and the seasons are safest in God's hands, and to prejudice our minds toward determinative data such as this could be actually counter-productive as well as dangerous. Our purpose in offering such information as we have even to this point is ultimately not to fix dates, but to augment our faith in the perfect plan of God and to legitimize as far as possible the Biblical story and what it means for us.

When It All Began

My feeling at this point is that creation might have been a few weeks; or maybe a month or two previous; to the markings we have just reviewed relative to the fall of man. At this time the sun would be entering that part of heavens believed for centuries to be the *start* of the zodiacal circle and that part of the constellation of Virgo, that is in itself indicative of "beginnings." At this time, Venus, the brightest "star," would have been in this relative region as well.

General Possibilities

What can this all mean for us today?

If any of these early times are close to accurate, we can make some approximate estimations about the age of our planet. Thus it is possible that beginning around the year 2005, A.D. that this earth would have concluded its six-thousandth year (unlikely, and at the very soonest). It also may be a decade or two later by longer reckonings that it will pass its six thousand year. It seems unlikely to this writer, though, that six thousand historical years OF SIN can be said to have already elapsed (according to the biblical timeline and the testimony of the stars discussed in this work) before 2005. At any rate the stars may tell us that there isn't much time left for this planet earth.

Whether we are close here to the correct time of "when it all began" we cannot be absolutely certain. But again, we can with interest and with fascination bring forth the evidence of harmony between all of God's revelations, and do our best at understanding them. We can trust that God has the whole universe at his command, and that he will always do what he says he will do. The heavens declare his glory and his purposes, and we can seek to understand their voice. We can worship the God of the heavens and prepare to meet him when he comes. These messages are found clearly in the stars.

We can declare along with the heavens:

THE CLOCK OF THE HEAVENS

"*Great and marvelous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty, Just and True are Thy ways, Thou King of Saints. Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name. . . for Thy judgments are made manifest."* Rev. 15:3,4. KJV

14

THE HOUR OF JUDGMENT COME

Introduction

A good way to test our hypothesis regarding the settings of the great clock of the heavens is to examine the celestial positions for dates, that we know, are accurately determined already. If indeed God has by design marked distinctive events in salvation history with astrological phenomena we would expect to find some notable proof of this.

Especially for those events that are the most significant in the biblical timeline we should find specific celestial markings.

Prophetically one of the greater events (in my opinion, of course) in the later history of this world is the beginning of the "pre-advent judgment"(Daniel 7:9-28; 8:13,14). The great fulfillment of the prophecy of Daniel chapter eight, verse fourteen, happened on October 22, 1844. This date marked the beginning of this particular period of final probation.

Markings

For interest let us mark the position of the various heavenly bodies at eleven P.M. on October 22, 1844:

First of all we find the sun between the constellations, Libra, the Scales, and Virgo, the Virgin. Because of the timing of this configuration, the sun already resides in the area of the heavens known for centuries as being associated with the Day of Atonement and the biblical seventh month.

There are several mansions and decans in the constellations of Libra and Virgo. However, the sun on this particular date is positioned at the foot of the woman. What is interesting is that the sun is at that very place

indicated in the lunar mansions as "Caphir, the atonement, the propitiation by sacrifice" (see, Seiss, p. 142). The word "Caphir" is similar to the word "*kapporeth*" which was the name of the mercy seat or "cover" on the Ark of the Covenant. It was on the Day of Atonement that the blood of the sacrifice was sprinkled on this very cover to atone for the sins of Israel. This seems like no mere accident that the heavens for millennia have testified to the yearly judgment, or a weighing that takes place on the scale of the sanctuary. It must be that the sun would have to be in this particular part of the Virgo/Libra constellations on the final, anti-typical Day of Atonement.

The Moon and Jupiter in Pisces

Now moon on this night (Oct. 22) is positioned in the first mansion of the constellation Pisces. The name of this lunar "mansion" is "the progeny of ancient times." It should be noted that the moon is positioned in this particular lunar mansion and not in the next one that is similar but carries the name, which means "the progeny of the latter times."

The moon's presence is often associated we have found with judgment, or negative aspects. Next, we remember, the constellation Pisces is and ever has been significant for Israel and the denominated church of God.

The sign, Pisces, means "fishes." They are symbolic of "multitudes" of the people of God. In the sign is a horizontal fish, and farther over a vertical fish. The horizontal fish is the one that represents the church of old, the offspring of the ancient church. The fish aimed toward heaven is equated in astronomical works with the church of the future, or the eschatological people of God. The moon is at the horizontal fish, judging the church of the past, on Oct. 22, 1844.

Therefore the reading for this astronomical sign could be that the church of God is receiving scrutiny as in judgment, and that the focus is on particularly those who have lived in the ancient past.

The Hour of Judgment Come

The lunar mansion just preceding and next to the "progeny of ancient times" carries the meaning: "hastily coming as to judgment." This is also part of the picture. Such an interesting phrase can hardly have just merely accidental significance.

Just above this horizontal fish in Pisces, is what is known in astronomical circles as "the great square of Pegasus." Pegasus in mythology is a swift horse. He is so swift that this horse is drawn as having wings. Biblically a horse is symbolic of power and swiftness. The prophet writes, "if you have run with men and faltered and how can you contend with horses?"

In addition horses are often seen when judgment is about to happen or when it is reported as coming in haste. Zechariah, sees four horses sent out to patrol (judge) the earth. In Revelation, when the book of judgment is opened by the Lamb, horses are sent forth to execute judgment to the four quarters of the earth (Rev. 5,6). This is the very thrust of the star names and mansions in this portion of the heavens. Particularly noted is that God is *hasting* to judgment. The coming of Christ to judge and make war at his coming is pictured in Revelation 19 where the glorious heavenly figure is seated on a white horse. The theme of Pegasus is then that Christ's coming or judgment is APPROACHING and that when He comes it will be with SWIFTNESS and the rider will be dressed as a PRIEST and KING.

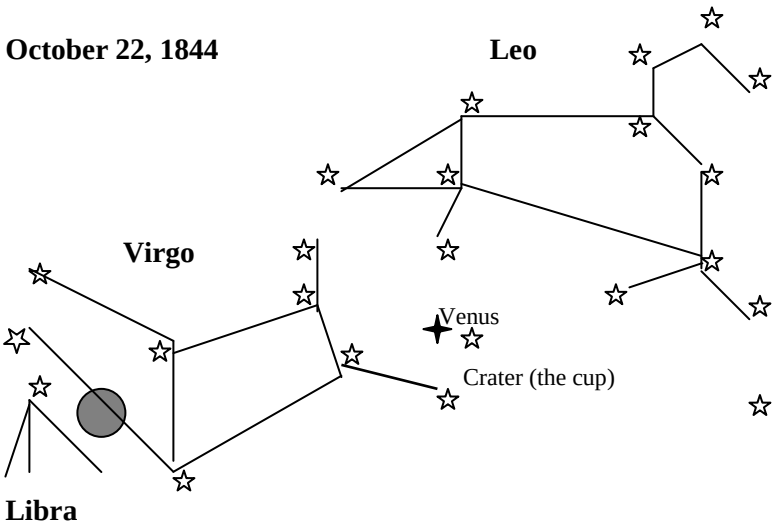
Pegasus is also commonly associated with **gladsome song**. The presence of the moon (sometimes negative connotations, mourning) next to the Jupiter (positive purposes of God) and near Pegasus is significant. It is a mixed message. And this was indeed the experience of those who expected the swift approach of Jesus in the years preceding 1844. A new song rang out, "the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him." The eternal good news was that Jesus was coming. The advent believers had a gospel (evangel) to give. "Give glory to him," they said, "for the hour of his judgment is come!" (Rev. 14:6,7). Yet the honey-sweet experience was to soon turn bitter. Their hopes were at that time shattered, joy was

usurped by judgment. Eventually, their disappointment was replaced by a newer and better understanding. The stars seem to paint a similar picture.

Jupiter Again

Also positioned next to the moon nearly in conjunction is the planet Jupiter. Jupiter we find is often associated with the work of God the Father and the powers of good. God then is apparently shown to be concerned with his righteous offspring on earth; but particularly those who are from "ancient times." At the same time He is "hasting toward judgment."

Figure 4



Venus

Next, the planet Venus is positioned by the back feet of the constellation, Leo. Venus we remember is associated with the work of Christ and his love or as the suffering/Messiah in triumph. Especially is the constellation Leo known for its representation of the Messiah ruling in judgment. Stars in this area are named *Denebola*, " the Lord who comes with haste," *Deneb al Eced*, "the judge coming," etc.

Besides this, is the sign immediately beneath the back feet of the Lion. Here is the great serpent "Hydra" the mythological sea dragon associated many believe with "Leviathan," the twisting serpent; and the great dragon, Satan (Rev 12). But at this particular position there is a great cup known as "Crater." This cup is depicted as crushing the back of the serpent/dragon.

Anyone familiar with biblical themes knows the significance of a cup, or particularly a full cup. Here is a clear symbol of judgment. Babylon in the book of Revelation is brought to judgment because of a cup that is full of iniquity (Rev 14:8 ff, Rev 17:1-5). Jesus pled in Gethsemane to be spared the cup of judgment and suffering.

The presence of Venus or Christ is found in his own sign, that of the "Lion of the tribe of Judah" putting his enemy, the serpent, under his feet. This is done in an act of judgment that increases the pressure of the cup of judgment upon Satan, and marks him for final retribution.

Mars

The planet Mars is in Virgo and placed near the heart of the woman. This would seem to indicate that the true messianic church is enduring violence, persecution, or misfortune aimed toward her heart. The church in the midst of impassioned zeal receives an emotional arrow to her heart.

THE CLOCK OF THE HEAVENS

Saturn in Capricorn

Last, the planet a Saturn is in the constellation Capricorn. Capricorn, of course, is the figure of a goat; the sacrificial animal of the *Day of Atonement*. Joseph Seiss reports that the names of the most prominent stars in this constellation mean "the cut off, the hewn down, the sacrifice slain." Thus particularly, we might point out there is indicated the import of the *slaying of a sacrifice*, and "the record of the cutting off" (p. 64).

But there is one additional aspect that is quite arresting when one takes note of the particular position of Saturn in Capricorn:

Saturn is on the head of the goat

Tradition relates that on the *Day of Atonement* the *Urim* and the *Thummim*, two stones, were used as lots to select the Lord's goat, and the scapegoat[1]. Both lots, it is believed, were taken by the priest from an urn, one stone in each hand. The hand with the Urim selected the Lord's goat. The hand with the Thummim selected the scapegoat.

Here it appears that the head of the goat is marked with Saturn (the Thummim perhaps[2]), the evil planet, equated with Azazel, or Satan, who is to be banished to the wilderness or the abyss.

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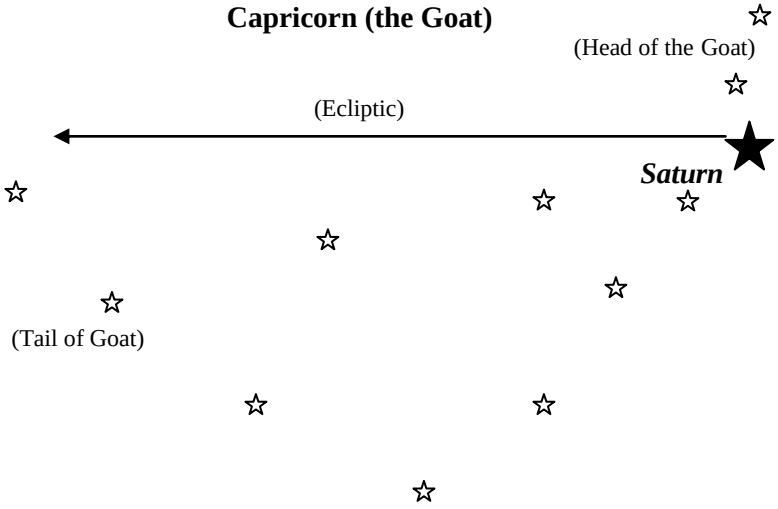
[1] The priest ostensibly placed the hands with the Urim or Thummim over the heads of the goats to select them. It was considered a good omen if the Urim was found in the right hand which selected the Lord's goat. (See, Leslie Hardinge, With Jesus in His Sanctuary). The hand with the Urim selected the Lord's goat (Cf. my book on Revelation, The Days of the Seventh Angel, where I comment at length on how the Urim and the planet Venus have common associations). The hand with the Thummim selected the scapegoat.

[2] Satan is probably equated with the Thummim in Ezekiel, chapter 28. He (i.e. , the king of Tyre) is called the "signet of perfection," (KJV) that is, Hebrew, *tammim*. The seal of God I believe is associated with the Urim. Cf. The Days of Seventh Angel.

This is not to say that Satan is here represented as being *banished*. Rather he is being "selected" for final retribution, a distinct and separate process. This is a very appropriate marking for the anti-typical Day of Atonement. For if you read in the Day of Atonement chapter of the Bible, Leviticus 16, you will notice that the first thing the priest was instructed to do after the sacrifice was offered "for himself and for his people," (that is; what Jesus did on the cross) was to <u>select</u> the scapegoat.

Figure 5

October 22, 1844
Al Gedi



It was not <u>then</u> that the blame was laid on the animal. The actual ceremony of confessing guilt over the scapegoat came after the Lord's

goat was sacrificed and the offering was taken into the most holy place. Then the blame was placed upon the scapegoat. But at the beginning of the *Day of Atonement*, an initial rite was to "select" the goats and "mark" their roles. Then with the reappearance of the high priest, leaving the sanctuary, the goat had blame placed upon his head and he was led away into the wilderness.

The Total Picture

Thus we see some significant indicators. What is most striking is the combined effect of these stellar configurations and what they could possibly mean.

Following is a possible description of the meanings of these configurations taken entirely from the stars:

During a judgment time for the church, God the father is concerned for the offspring or people (church) of the past. The Son/Messiah/God is acting in judgment; a judgment that " is come". Yet, the church, though singing a gladsome song (concerning the swiftly-approaching king) becomes victim of a negative and passionate attack at her heart. The forces of evil and misfortune are marked as witnesses to the recording of this atonement/judgment: the yearly Day of Atonement sacrifice is being offered. In this context the promised the Messiah/judge is viewed as approaching and coming in haste.

Now, of course, it will always be said by some that this interpretation is forced or coincidental. This may be. I admit to possible mistakes in reading this phenomenon, for there are given us no rules in their pure form and we are working backwards to find them. But it seems entirely fair to at least admit that such a fortuitous configuration[3] of "meaning" spoken

[3] Again, the point should be simply made that some validity must be accorded to this fascinating reading of the stars. It could hardly be accident that planets mark appropriate judgment symbols, when there are many other themes that we would

entirely to us from the heavens themselves is in itself amazingly correct. Can it be simple coincidence that in this stellar sign we have a reasonably complete picture of what the Bible teaches happened in 1844, and we have the right elements of it? The picture provides us with the themes of judgment; the atonement, the goat (Capricorn pictures a goat in the process of falling and dying—Satan or Azazel?), the *parousia* (coming) and its imminence, and the church in travail or disappointment!

For this is what happened at the beginning of the period of "investigative judgment" in 1844. Says the message of the first angel, "*Fear God, and give glory [sing a gladsome song!] to him for the hour of his judgment is come"* (Rev 14:6). This passage seems to be a simple paraphrase of the meaning of the mansion aforementioned; "hastily coming *as to judgment*." In addition this judgment is naturally associated with the *Day of Atonement* itself, and the times and sacrifices that went with it.

In particular focus are the faithful of "ancient" times. Immediately upon the commencement of the investigative judgment it is these very ones who were to be judged first; i.e., the righteous dead. "*Judgment begins with the household of God*"(1 Peter 4:17). However, the church even in the midst of its joyous message of the return of the woman's seed, experienced disappointment and sorrow in her heart.

The hour of judgment continues, but in a short time will be over. The Day is yet fast approaching, and the righteous judge who is to come, WILL come, and will not tarry. This the heaven boldly declares.

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expect to find marked if the stellar array was simply random and with no design. But this is not the case. The sun is in the scales of judgment; the moon and Jupiter mark the people of judgment and the coming judge of judgment, Venus marks the cup of judgment, and Saturn marks the goat of judgment. The imminent timing of judgment is inferred also.

15

GOSPEL ERAS

There is yet one more great hand on the celestial clock that deserves mention. The broad sweep of this slow-moving hand is not readily noticed. Yet this movement of the heavens is not without significance and goes beyond the normally recognized movements of the sun, moon, and stars.

Because of the phenomenon known as the "precession of the equinoxes" the cyclical movements of the heavenly bodies can not truly be said to repeat themselves in exactly the same circumstances. Astral scientists inform us that even though the earth is tilted at 23.5 degrees at the poles there exists a "wobble" in the earth's motion that causes gradual and almost imperceptive changes over time in how we view the celestial system against the backdrop of the heavens.

Granted the effect of this "wobble" is very slight. In fact it takes nearly 27,000 years for the earth to make just one wobble. But the end result is this: the time of the Spring Equinox, for instance, is known to gradually slide back in regard to the stellar backdrop over time and there is a gradual shift in the heavenly calendar.

Therefore, to express it in broad and simple terms we will say that about 6,000 years ago the Spring Equinox came when the sun was in the constellation Taurus. But about 2,000 years later, in about 2,000 B.C., the sun was found in Aries at the spring equinox. Since the time of Christ, the position of the sun at the time of the Spring Equinox has slipped back about 30 degrees more and has been in Pisces. It is now about time to move into Aquarius. The mystical sciences tell us that we are now about to enter the Age of Aquarius.

Because of this wobble, or because of this "precession" it is believed that Polaris, which today is the "north star," and is the visible star closest to true north today, was not the north star thousands of years ago. It is believed by many that the star "Thuban" in the constellation Draco was the

North Star when the Egyptian pyramids were built. However, this assumes that the precession has occurred at the same rate as presently calculated and that the heavens have had no significant variance during this world's history. This would seem to be consistent with the reliable movements we now notice in the heavens. But I believe it is also possible that changes may have occurred in the past that we are unaware of today or that at the time of the great deluge the earth's axis may have shifted to some degree. We can't be absolutely sure how long and in what way this precessional movement has been transpiring.

The phenomenon of interest, though, is that as a result of these broad and sweeping heavenly movements we can detect markers of larger time spans much beyond simple months, days, and years. With the slower and more deliberate movements coming as a result of the precession there comes the possibility of marking "eras" or longer time blocks. These ages are in some cases very appropriate in relation to the grand scheme of God's design in history.

The Era of the Lamb

The first era I will aim to point out is what we might call the *Paschal era*. *Paschal* is a Hebrew term for the Israelite *Passover*, the celebration of the great historical Exodus of the Israelite nation from Egypt. Israel as a nation was considered God's chosen people in the later Old Testament era.

It so happens, that the Jewish Passover, commemorating the deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage, came on the first full moon after the Spring Equinox, or the fourteenth day of the first month. In the time of Moses this event was intended to be celebrated annually. The season prescribed even in the writings of Josephus for that time anciently, was when the sun was just entering *Xanthicus*, or *Aries*, the Lamb.[1] The lamb, Aries, was

[1] Before this, the sun would have been in Taurus at the equinox, which as we have already intimated, is anciently associated with the era of the great deluge and the time of the patriarchal system.

equated in thought with the Passover lamb, and was a ready symbol throughout biblical history for the Lamb of God, slain at the Passover century after century.

Of note is the fact that for the 1500 years or more that the Jewish Passover pointed to the coming Christ, the sun remained in Aries at the time of the Passover. However, by the time of Christ the sun was approaching and moving into Pisces and leaving Aries at Passover time. The death of Christ marked the end of the sacrificial system and the Passover forever was abrogated and replaced by the Christian Lord's Supper.

Therefore the precession appropriately indicates the passing of a "gospel era." The *Passover Era*, when the lamb was sacrificed century after century seems to pass on to a new phase about the time Jesus lives his life on earth and is slain on the Passover holiday. At the time of Jesus' death the sun, found in the latter part of the constellation "Aries," was directly overhead of the hill of Calvary.

Of further interest is the constellation known as Crux. Ancients speak of this "star cross" as being visible in the northern latitudes during the previous centuries. But at about the time of the first advent of Christ, this constellation could be seen by people in the northern hemisphere for the last times as it slipped below the horizon and could not be seen except in the Southern hemisphere for the centuries thereafter. Other signs signaled the passing of the Israelite era as well.

The Christian Era

Following the Age of Aries the sun at the time of the Spring Equinox began to reside in Pisces and has up to the present time.

Pisces means "fishes," and the sign in the constellation is that of two fish joined by a band.

Gospel Eras

Fish became the acknowledged symbol of early Christianity. We have noticed previously that they probably represent multitudes of God's faithful, the church. There can be little doubt that Jesus' miracle of dividing the loaves and fish to the crowd symbolized the multiplying and dividing (for the purpose of growth) that would be realized in the future gospel movement and the establishment of the church on earth.

The first letters of the word *ichthus*, or fish, were known to form an acronym representing the kernel of Christian thought, "Jesus Christ, God's Son, Savior." Christians refer to the current age as the "Christian Dispensation." And since the constellation of Pisces then represents the Christian church in the world there could hardly be a more appropriate symbol in the entire zodiac to represent the current era.

The Judgment Era

Another interesting era might be recognized in the Day of Atonement ritual in ancient Judaism. The Day of Atonement was commonly known as the Day of Judgment.

In later Bible times the Day of Atonement came on the tenth day of the seventh month, now usually sometime in the month of Sept/October. Now anciently, this yearly solemn fast came when the sun was in Scorpio. But by the time of Christ the sun had moved toward Libra, the scales of judgment. In fact most of the time the Day of Atonement has been observed it happened when the sun was in the vicinity of "the Scales." At the present time the sun resides in the last remnant of Libra and is receding into Virgo, a biblical representation of the redeemed church of the faithful.

Therefore it seems to indicate movements from Scorpio, the constellation of the ongoing struggle with Satan, to the ongoing judgment of the world, to the judgment of the church. There is general appropriateness to this order though there is much more we should seek to understand in regards to these great sweeping eras of salvation history.

THE CLOCK OF THE HEAVENS

The Precession is a Providential Variation

I am thankful that there is a slow and continual slippage of stellar events against the background of the heavens. While at first this seems to be an indication of imperfection in the heavenly clock I believe that God has placed it in the heavenly clock with design. For one thing, it is one more variable that provides further measurement of time.

Supposedly the great Strassburg clock has a gear designed in its mechanism that would turn only the distance of one tooth in many hundreds or even thousands of years. The clock of the heavens must also have such a mechanism to measure greater amounts of time. It seems the precession offers us just such a mechanism.

The precession is also a circumstance which invalidates much in modern astrology for the claims of astrology are shown to be unreliable since they have for centuries not acknowledged this variable in their popular system. Presently, a person supposed to be a Pisces is not a Pisces in reality.

While some modern astrologers are now trying to take this into account in making their determinations, all this does in the end is make admission that the readings of the past have not been correct and thus exposes its fallacy and constitutes a blow to the credibility of popular astrology as a valid science. The wonderful clock of the heavens again points to the Creator and preserves for the universe the knowledge of His glory.

16

CAUTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

Finally there are some matters or questions we must consider before we for the present end this particular discussion:

Not Every Date Recorded in the Heavens

It is the opinion of this writer that it is stretching it to say that every historical event or personal experience is recorded in the celestial clock. This is the claim largely of modern astrology, a false science. It would be my opinion that only those events that have cosmic significance in the eternal plan of salvation are registered prophetically in the movements of the stars. These were placed there by God at the beginning and the clock was so created as to work out accurately at the times that would come; times that were known only by the mysterious workings of the counsel of his own will.

It is impossible that individual readings, or readings for common events should find accuracy concurrent with the varied experiences of multitudinous persons, nations, and historical events. Think about it.

Predicting the Future

It will naturally be a temptation for the inordinately curious to consider if maybe the future can be unveiled by a study of the heavens. For instance, should we search for confirmation of the time of Christ's return?

I strongly recommend that no such theories be suggested or promoted. This also has been the claim of the false science of astrology---to predict the future. God has never given us permission to rely on such methods. It is his prerogative, and his alone to reveal the future, and it is a claim unique to him that he is the only one who knows the end from the

beginning. This sets him aside—alone and above everything else (Isaiah 44:6,7).

Like other forms of prophecy, the meaning only becomes clear at the time they are fulfilled. Attempts to foretell the future will only result in mistaken predictions. The science of "biblical astro-chronology" we have attempted here relies much on the historical and biblical data that is available. Otherwise it is nearly impossible to decide which configuration is most appropriate. Such interpretations of the future have no such corroborative data and would be ambiguous and tenuous at best. At this point I would attempt no such predictions.

In the close of this earth's history it is very possible that the very heavens themselves will be shaken and "moved out of their places." We cannot rely on anything but the Word of God when considering the times and the seasons. It is entirely possible, however, that God in his wisdom will close up his last great work as he has every other work in salvation history with an appropriate and grand heavenly display. It is likely that some of this will occur in Orion, a significant and bi-polar constellation that can be seen at times from both hemispheres. A companion book in this series, *The Signs of the Heavens*, addresses in part the signs expected in the heavens when Jesus comes.

Astronomy and Astrology Are Not the Same Thing

The charge will no doubt be made by those ignorant of the history of the stars and their names that we have in this study been using astrology and not astronomy. I hope the reader has seen this is not the case.

Astrology makes several claims that are very incorrect. I wish to have no unnecessary association with modern and ancient astrology.

For every true science, the enemy of souls introduces a false science. Sometimes the false science becomes so popular that the true is eclipsed and forgotten. If the science of astrology is false, and I believe it is

biblically and experientially, where then is the true science? Is it only the cold, scientific study of quasars, black holes, light years, and comets? I think not. I propose that there is a true study of astrology or better, astronomy, "the Law (Torah) of the Stars," which finds its basis in the Word of God.

Modern Astrology has several errors inherent in its very claims:

1. First, it is quite impossible that the position of stars on the horizon at the time of your birth has anything to do with your destiny. Thousands of people are born at around the same moment; and grow up with totally different destinies. Do twins even become the very same? It is all sheer absurdity and has never been proven.
2. The predictions made by professional astrologers are so ambiguous and ridiculous that they prove nothing. More often than not, what they predict will happen is so common to everyone anyway that it will seem like an accurate prediction has been made when it really has not. (You will have strong relationships with people; etc., etc.)
3. Satan can actively fulfill his own prophecies. Demonic powers are used in convincing people that they are seeing genuine guidance, and at times predictions are remarkably fulfilled. The end is always the way of death, however. Satan is using the horoscope craze of modern times to destroy millions.
4. Finally, because of the astronomical phenomenon known as the "precession of the equinoxes" the astrological readings are way out of sync with what is actually happening in the heavens. For instance, since the world began, the heavenly bodies have slipped back from their original positions in the zodiac sixty degrees or more. Therefore, when someone is said to be a "Taurus," he is actually not a Taurus at all but perhaps actually a Pisces in real relation to the heavens. At least he is not the same as a Taurus was thousands of years ago that was born at the same time of our calendar year under the same signs. People who read their horoscope are not aware of this problem at the foundation of their whole system. The fact is, that astrology is "bunk," and there is

little else to it. A biblical Christian should not so much as indulge a thought of inordinate curiosity toward such a false science.

The Purpose of the Heavens is to Give God Glory

The real purpose in the stars and heavenly wonders we see is to impress us of the grandeur and awesome nature of God. It is not merely to tell time, to mark historical events, or to study comets, supernova's, and eclipses. The ultimate purpose of the heavens supersedes all of this. The heavenly forms were not only given to light our planet or to provide us with interest or delight. Their supreme purpose has always been to inspire faith in the living God. This is the true, surpassing, purpose of the marvelous heavens.

It is the wish of this author that each reader will study the awesome heavens for themselves, and discover the message of God's glory found for them there. The claims advocated in this book may be of little importance to many. Of themselves they probably matter little.

What really matters is for one to know and appreciate the *Creator of the Heavens*. This is why the stars are in the sky. And this is the underlying purpose behind this modest document. I humbly hope that through this effort at least some have sensed anew the greatness, design, and love of our magnificent God. For herein is my sacred desire: to point the reader toward the heavens; that he may look up and see God; that he may know Him, and love Him, and serve Him.

"O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! Who hast set thy glory in the heavens. . . . When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon, and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? . . . .O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth." Psalm 8:1,3,4,9 (KJV)

APPENDICES

Appendix A

A Key to Basic Astronomical Signs and Their Typical Meanings

A note of caution: The reader is encouraged to please not take the following as a definitive document, especially since many attempts at understanding these ancient symbols comes through literature that is blurred and perverted by pagan compromise and impurity. Even the best sources lack proof and clarity on these subjects. These are guesses at best and represent but a feeble attempt at understanding their original significance. These are placed here to help the reader to find clarity and to challenge a search for further clarification and refinement. However, these do generally represent a great amount of research. They come reasonably close to defining what seems to me to be the most consistent and apparent meaning to be found so far. They have been tested on many patterns, heavenly configurations, and dates of sacred history.

The Sun

The sun usually marks the most appropriate sign for the season or general time period of the event in question. The sun is often equated with the positive work and purposes of God.

The Moon

The moon often marks the secondary or more specific sign as relates to the time or day. For instance, on the day suggested for the crucifixion of Christ the sun is in "Aries," the slain Passover lamb, but the moon is near the decan of *Crux* or the "cross" in Libra/Scorpio. Sometimes, at important dates, it seems to mark "negative" aspects.

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Jupiter

The word "Jupiter" has an interesting etymological association.

It apparently comes from two words:

"Jah," and "pater. "

"Ja" are the first letters of the word "Jahweh," or "Jehovah," or "Jove;" syllables which are always associated with the *supreme* and *sovereign* god.

Pater, is the Greek word for "father." Literally translated then, this expression simply says "Father God" or "God the Father."

In Greek mythology, Jupiter, is always the supreme god presiding over the entire pantheon of gods. In Roman mythology Jupiter was the same as "Zeus."

Jupiter seems to stand for *goodness* and *right*, particularly in the context of kingship, rulership, government, and law. Jupiter is the god of storms, and exhibitions of despotic and absolute power.

The ancient Hebrew word for Jupiter is "Zedek." This is the common word for *righteousness* or *justice* and is part of the name "Melchezidek" whose name meant "king of righteousness." The Hebrew word for righteousness in the Old Testament is likewise "zadiq."

Biblically speaking, therefore, we are justified to equate Jupiter with God or Christ in their sovereignty and goodness. This seems to prove true also with regard to the stellar manifestations as well.

Appendices

Venus

Venus in early pagan mythology became equated with the goddess of love and beauty. However, I believe that such an association is a variant perversion of the original significance for this planet. Venus is the brightest of all the planets and is the most brilliant celestial object with the exception of the sun and the moon.

The Scriptures clearly equate this star/ planet to the person of Jesus. Jesus says, "I am the bright and morning star (Rev 22:16). Venus was known by the Greeks as *phosphorus*, which means "shining brightly." Venus is known as the *morning star* and also as the *evening star*. Astronomically Venus appears as the morning star in the hours of dawn for about six months and then alternates to becoming the evening star for approximately six months.

The promise of the coming redeemer was couched in the symbolism of a brilliant star; Numbers 14:34. The "day spring from on high," " the morning star" of hope and promise are reasonably associated with nativity and incarnation of the Lord Jesus (not as some purport, that Venus=Satan). Therefore we do best to associate the positive qualities of Christian love and beneficence with the planet Venus especially as it was manifest through Christ in his human revelation and not in the exclusively feminine and erotic connotation given us by ancient lore.

Mars

Mars to this day is called the "red planet" because of its red appearance. The planet Mars varies in its glow and luminosity but as a planet was very significant to the ancient world. Red as a color indicated anger and extreme emotion. In a negative sense this anger could precipitate war or aggression and so Mars or Aries was known as the god of war. Mars can also represent strong emotion in a more positive sense such as "zeal" or

"passion." Ancient language sometimes combined the negative with the positive aspects of emotion in the same word. Mars is associated also with death, destruction, aggression and violence. It often seems to fit in association with the *earthly agents of evil or Satan* in causing harm or destruction.

Saturn

Without too much difficulty one can see favorable similarity between the name "Saturn" and the name "Satan."

Saturn like all of the ancient pagan gods has a confusing history. Sources vary greatly as to how we should understand this planet. But the general trend one finds when Saturn is considered is that Saturn represents negative trends. Saturn was the god of loss and misfortune. This relatively "dim" planet may have once been much brighter.

Saturn sometimes is called *Chronos*, or *Kronos,* and is described in ancient lore as the son of the supreme god, Uranus, i.e. "Ouranos." "Ouranos" is the Greek word for the sky or heavens. I think the most significant aspect that comes to light when looking at Saturn's mythological history is that Saturn or Kronos was known as the son of the supreme god of the heavens who led a revolt against his father so that he could become the supreme ruler instead. In the descriptions, Saturn enters into a plot against the Most High. Then Saturn seeks to eat or devour some of his own children, but fortunately one child escapes his wrath and later becomes the chief god, Zeus, or Jupiter (cf. Rev. 12). Saturn's ambition was to be "the god of this world, " and is so designated in mythology. All of this certainly finds correlation in the great controversy story between good and evil.

However, Saturn is not always pictured as all evil. He was considered the god of the agriculture and extended time. But the tendency that seems most consistent is to view Saturn with extended trends of evil and misfortune.

There seems to be a designed association for the principle planets. Jupiter and Venus seem to be positive, standing for "goodness" and "love" respectively. It so happens that the outcome of this study finds Saturn and Mars the direct opposites, "evil" and "hate" respectively.

Mercury

Mercury was believed to be the "messenger of the gods." Mercury as a planet is swift and volatile, and from this we get the word "mercurial" which means "changing quickly." This is exactly how the planet Mercury behaves, seldom seen, "twinkling," and revolving around the sun in the shortest time of all the planets. Mercury's significance is not great but it seems to represent God's messengers and his prophets as well as his purposes that he accomplishes with swiftness and urgency.

Other Planets

The remaining planets; Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto are fairly recent discoveries and were unknown in ancient times. It does not seem that they should have much significance in this study; however, current astrology assigns great significance to them. Pluto probably isn't really a planet after all. These planets cannot be seen with the naked eye, and though of general interest they offer little value when considering the ancient clock of the heavens. Today, however, their lengthy transits can be measured as part of the clock of the heavens. Their transits mark large segments of time, up to several hundred years.

How the Clock Works:

It seems that basically the rule is that the sun has marked from year to year the appropriate month or season. It is much like the hour hand of a typical analog clock. The moon often divides this time more specifically, sometimes even marking the day appropriate for a particular event. It is

much like the second hand. Eclipses or moon phases can often be added signatures of specificity (much like the minute hand). The planets in their varied rotations and courses seem to give us a unique story relative to the era and event. An additional rule is that often at important times the planets are found in constellations different from the sun and moon so that they can be observed and further complete the accuracy of each heavenly statement.

Conjunctions between planets can be significant, but are generally not as significant as the specific placement in the general zodiac. Oppositions, or such ideas as 30 degree, 60 degree, or 90-degree aspects, etc., are the complicated inventions of false astrology and can be viewed as further refinements to an otherwise invalid system. I believe the heavenly clock was created to reveal heaven's grand purposes of salvation and has little to do with selfishly motivated individual daily readings and horoscopes. In addition, God's purposes were meant to be read in open simplicity, not hidden amidst such complicated machinery that only the mystically inducted can have a chance at understanding them.

Some of the generally understood themes of the zodiacal signs are listed below for those interested in searching the heavens for themselves:

The Twelve Signs and Their Related Themes

Virgo---nativity, beginnings, the promised seed
Libra-judgment, commerce, suffering and death
Scorpio—prolonged suffering and pain, sacrifice, struggle
Sagittarius—war, victory and celebration
Capricorn-death and new life, punishment of evil
Aquarius-waters of refreshing, outpouring of life
Pisces—church held in bonds, but maintained by blessing
Aries—victorious through suffering
Taurus—wrath and power
Gemini- unity and brotherhood
Cancer- surrounding care, groups of the faithful
Leo— triumph, kingship, judgment

Appendix B

The Sermon on the Mount

One of the landmark events in the life of Jesus, the "Sermon on the Mount of Blessing" needs to be identified in time as well. This sermon is difficult to find through the message of the stars. Astro-chronology has its limits and we face them often. It is important to report that not all results gathered from the study of the stars show this science to be always sure and simple. To be strictly honest we must be ready to admit failure when it does not seem to work. Not every single event may be marked anyway. The theory we are working on is all admittedly experimental. But in this footnote we will make at least a minimal effort to justify our original premise and refine our system of discovery. The journey is fascinating, to some of us anyway!

Like so many events in the life of Christ, we are not sure where to place this great sermon in the ministry of Jesus. When was it?

Matthew seems to place the sermon early in Christ's mission. This may be because of Matthew's theme. He seems to see Christ's ministry as a typological unfolding of Israel's history. The Genesis story (Matthew 1—genealogy), then "coming out of Egypt," (Magi, etc., chapter 2), then "passing through the sea" (baptism, chapter 3), the wilderness experience (chapter 4, temptations), and finally the "giving of the law," (chapters 5-7; Sermon on the Mount).

But Luke places Jesus' teachings taken from this great sermon as being given well into Jesus ministry. No doubt Jesus repeated his lessons often. And maybe as some claim there was no particular "Sermon on the Mount."

The writer Ellen White confidently places the sermon, a distinct event, also well into Christ's ministry, perhaps toward its midpoint. Like so many others, she indicates it was a specific event, and says it came after the ordination of the twelve apostles.

To balance these views, we can probably rule out certain years as years in which the sermon would have been given. We can be sure that AD 27 was too early and that AD 31 was too late to be appropriate times for the sermon's purpose and message. This leaves the years 28-30 as possible years.

AD 30 is not likely either, in that several additional events are crowded into this time period and there are other competing events identified largely in this year also (transfiguration, feeding 5,000, miracle on the lake, Tabernacles, etc.). It seems way too late for Christ to be giving the constitution of his kingdom, preached at times as being urgently "at hand." Therefore AD 30 is unlikely and this leaves a more likely choice between AD 28-29.

Strangely, the configurations during the summer months for both of these dates have possibilities. Herein lies the greatest difficulty. But, because of our other timeline of events it seems most appropriate to choose AD 29.

Time of year

A significant clue for the time of year this sermon was given comes in the references Jesus makes in his sermon as well as in the theme of the sermon. That the sermon was given about the time of June or early summer makes sense for many reasons:

1. It is obvious that Jesus is giving in the sermon a constitution for his new kingdom, the kingdom of heaven. He is giving the "law" of his kingdom. Several references to the law given on Sinai and Jesus' interpretation of it constitutes the sermon. When was the law originally given? Tradition is consistent in telling us that the law was given on the *Day of Pentecost*, the sixth of *Sivan*. This was fifty days after the offering of the first fruits at Passover in the first month. To be time appropriate, the giving of the new Law of the Kingdom would be given on or near an anniversary of this date which came in late May or early June.

2. The original law was "spoken" from Mt. Sinai. This is why Jesus chose to give his law also on a "mountain." His purpose is deliberate and obvious. Being outdoors this narrows the season somewhat.
3. Jesus used flowers for illustrative purposes, particularly the "lilies of the field." He no doubt held one in his hand when he taught this lesson (Matthew, chapter 6). These are believed by most sources to be the "poppy" or "anemone." These are late spring, early summer flowers that appear most abundantly in April, May, and June.

Now, how do the stars speak to all of this?

First, in early June let us say of A.D. 29, the sun is naturally in Gemini. Gemini is the "brotherly love" constellation. Two brothers are sitting peacefully, laying down their weapons for harps. In the sermon given on the mount the theme is clear. Love between brethren is the law of kingdom. They are to be perfect in this love as God is. They are to make things right with their brother before going to the altar. It is in these passages that we find the "golden rule." We would not expect then that the sun would be in any other constellation than this one when Jesus gives his powerful lessons on love and unity between brethren.

Gemini was also associated with the giving of the law, its dual nature (love to God and love to man), and its annual timing with Pentecost.

Beyond this, it seems that the figures in Gemini are particularly depicted as "sitting in repose." This is exactly what the Scriptures make effort to report in regard to Jesus. An entire phrase is given to the idea that Jesus in this case "sat down" to teach (Matthew 5:1ff.). Can we dare think that the stars are even giving us the position Jesus took to do his teaching on this occasion?!

Secondly comes the position of Jupiter near Aquarius, the horizontal fish in Pisces, and particularly just below Pegasus. Jupiter represents God in

his goodness as a righteous king and lawgiver. During the year or so that Jupiter resides in this particular area of the heavens Jesus does most of his teaching and giving to the public his words of life. This was probably the most productive time of Christ's ministry when it came to teaching and public labor (29-30). It was the zenith of his effectiveness in terms of imparting the words of life.

In the story of Pegasus is found one, if not the only reference, to a *mountain* in all of the heavenly dramas. Pegasus, the white Messianic horse is known for a particular act of blessing. With his foot he kicks a hole in Mt. Helicon from which a stream of water springs forth in blessing and flows down the mountain to the needy people and lands below. (Much like the rock Moses struck in the wilderness that represented Christ). Aquarius, the sign of which Pegasus is part, pictures a fish (i.e. multitude) drinking up this stream of blessing!

Now remember that water represents life, particularly in this case the words of life. Jesus said that the words he spoke, "they are spirit and they are life." To the woman at the well he said that those who believed (drank) his words; that these same teachings would become in them "a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Out of their inner soul would flow rivers of living water (cf. the Gospel of John, ch. 4).

Remember also that in Scripture a white horse is a symbol of the approach, the swift and sudden approach (winged horse), of God's kingdom (Rev. 19). It announces as did Jesus at the beginning of his ministry that the "kingdom of heaven was at hand."

The idea then is this; that Jesus (Pegasus), through the announcement of his kingdom and its approach, opens a spring of water on a mountain, that floods a multitude (fish below in the constellation) with blessing (water-words). This sermon is a perfect description of Jesus' divine and "righteous" purposes (Jupiter). This is *exactly* what Jesus is doing at this particular time of His ministry. Incredible!

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Finally, will the heavens even tell us what particular group is receiving this message? Since this is a positive event in the ministry of Christ we primarily focus on the "good" planets. So what about Venus?

Venus is leaving Gemini and entering the first decan of Cancer. This first decan is connected with the "little dipper." The little dipper is really a "smaller" sheepfold, as opposed to the larger sheepfold, the "big dipper." What this simply says is that Jesus would be ministering to a crowd, but a smaller crowd as opposed to a great mixed multitude; that it is particularly an "inner circle crowd;" an "in the fold" kind of crowd; i.e. those loyal and sympathetic to him.

Now this is a very interesting aspect, for Matthew 5:1 ff. gives us this same information. In fact, Matthew claims that a crowd is about him, but that the sermon is really given for the disciples' benefit primarily. Ellen White elucidates this further saying that though it was addressed to the disciples, the rest, sincere followers, were allowed to listen in. But these generally weren't people who were Jesus open enemies because we do not find evidence of dispute or questioning in this scenario of the sermon on the mountainside. It is one of Jesus more peaceful "in house" teaching opportunities.

Finally, about this very time, Mercury, the "divine message" planet reverses rotation very near the Pleiades ("The Holy Spirit Blessing Upon the Faithful" star cluster). This is probably no accident either.

Therefore, it seems likely that this great sermon occurred around or very near Pentecost, June 6, 29 AD. I would not at all be surprised to find if someday this could be proven, to find that this event occurred at either this time or at least about the same season in the previous year, AD 28.

Appendix C

The Signs of the Zodiac or the *Mazzaroth*

Description of the Twelve Major Signs:

Virgo, the Virgin: the figure of a young woman, lying prostrate, with an ear of corn (wheat) in one hand and a branch in the other.

Libra, the Scales: the figure of a pair of balances, with one end of the beam up and the other down, as in the act of weighing.

Scorpio, the Scorpion: the figure of a gigantic insect, noxious and deadly, with its tail and stinger uplifted in anger, as if striking.

Sagittarius, the Bowman: the figure of a horse with the arms and head of a man—a centaur---with a drawn bow and arrow pointed at the Scorpion.

Capricornus, the Goat: the figure of a goat sinking down as in death, with the hind part of its body terminating in the vigorous tail of a fish.

Aquarius, the Waterman: the figure of a man with a large urn, the contents of which he is in the act of pouring out in a great stream from the sky.

Pisces, the Fishes: the figures of two large fishes in the act of swimming, one to the northward, the other with the ecliptic.

Aries, the Ram (by some nations called the Lamb): the figure of a strong sheep, with powerful curved horns, lying down in easy composure, and looking out in conscious strength over the field around it.

Taurus, the Bull: the figure of the shoulders, neck, head, horns, and front feet of a powerful bull, in the attitude of rushing and pushing forward with great energy.

Gemini, the Twins (or a man and woman sometimes called Adam and Eve): usually, two human figures closely united, sitting together in

endeared affection. In some older representations the figures of the constellation consist of two goats, or kids.

Cancer, the Crab: the figure of a crab, in the act of taking and holding on with its strong pincer claws. In Egyptian astronomy, the scarabaeus beetle takes the place of the crab. It is represented as grasping and holding on to the ball in which its eggs are deposited.

Leo, the Lion: the figure of a great rampant lion, leaping forth to rend. His feet are over the writhing body of Hydra, the Serpent, which is in the act of fleeing.
----taken from E. Raymond Capt, The Glory of the Stars.

List of Associated Decans

I. Virgo
    1. Coma, the infant
    2. Centaurus, the centaur
    3. Bootes, the harvester

II. Libra
    1. Crux, the cross
    2. Lupus, the victim
    3. Corona, the crown

III. Scorpio
    1. Serpens, the serpent
    2. Ophiuchus, the serpent holder
    3. Hercules, the mighty man

IV. Sagittarius
1. Lyra, the eagle or harp
2. Ara, the altar
3. Draco, the dragon

V. Capricornus
1. Sagitta, the arrow
2. Aquila, the eagle
3. Delphinus, the dolphin

VI. Aquarius
1. Picus Australis, the southern fish
2. Pegasus, the winged horse
3. Cygnus, the swan

VII. Pisces
1. The Band, (holding the fishes)
2. Andromeda, the woman in chains
3. Cepheus, the crowned king

VIII. Aries
1. Cassiopeia, the woman enthroned
2. Cetus, the sea-monster
3. Perseus, the armed and mighty man

IX. Taurus
1. Orion, the glorious prince
2. Eridanus, the river of the judge
3. Auriga, the wagoner (rather the shepherd)

X. Gemini
1. Lepus, the hare
2. Canis Major, the great dog
3. Canis Minor, the second dog

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XI. Cancer

1. Ursa Minor, the lesser sheepfold
2. Ursa Major, the greater sheepfold
3. Argo, the ship

XII. Leo

1. Hydra, the fleeing serpent
2. Crater, the cup
3. Corvus, the raven

Appendix D

Calendar Corrections

This note is offered to partially explain the apparent disparity between actual elapsed time and some, at least, of the popular calendar reckonings for antiquity. A general calculation might appear something like this:

The calendar used from Roman times until 1582 utilized an arbitrary leap year (adding one day) every four years. Thus a calendar year equaled 365.25 days.

For the sake of simplicity we will calculate theoretically from the beginning moment of the year "0" A.D. to the end of the year 1582 A.D. Thus:

365.25 X 1582 = 577,825.50 days

However, for the same period in question we know that true astronomical elapsed time is based on the more accurate formula: (365.242199 X 1582)

Thus to compare:

365.25 **X** 1582 = 577, 825.50 (calendar days)
365.242199 **X** 1582 = 577, 813.15 (actual elapsed days)
(subtract difference) 12.35
-10.00 (1582 calendar change)
2.35 day (discrepancy)

The number of calendar days at this distance from year zero is close to 2 days in excess to what really transpired in time (until 1582). Therefore when reckoning events for the time of Christ, for instance, we must slide back two days on the calendar to compensate for the calendar's crawling ahead. The astronomical information is attached correctly to each given day, but the day of the week and the number of the day must be adjusted back.

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Could the motions of the heavens vary enough to have drifted away from the calendar? Not likely. The cycle of the heavens is quite reliable. Should years slip or advance in length by even one second, only about 26.36 minutes would have been lost over 1,582 years. We know that there has been much less variance than this that has been noted. The believed variance is closer to thousandths of seconds over extended periods of time. It would require an error of about 54.628 seconds; almost a minute per year, to lose a whole day in 1,582 years. Plus, this is all figured for slippage in one direction without considering averages.

I have wondered from a few recent observations if we may still might possibly be about one day errant in our calendar calculations. But for the time being we must be satisfied with these adjustments until discovery refines the system further. If large variances are suspected I don't believe the fault would be found in the marvelous system in the heavens. Rather it would lie in man's inferior understanding of the great celestial system.

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Also available are book four: *The Creator of the Heavens*, and book five: *The Planisphere of the Heavens*.

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