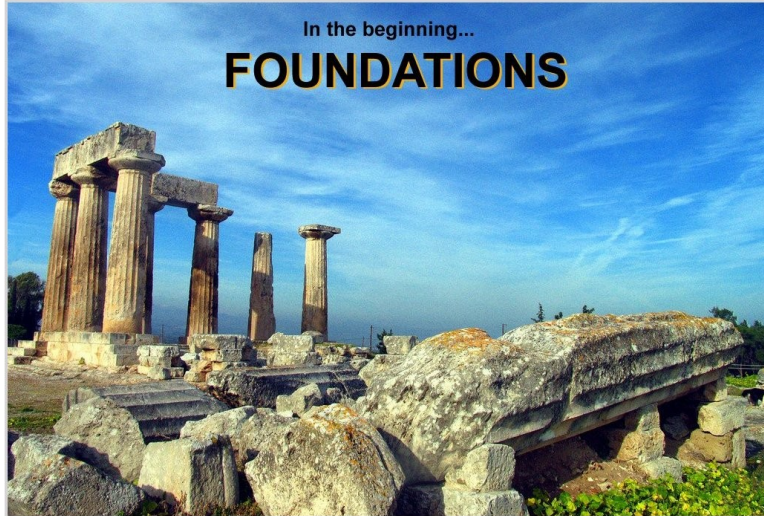




Psalms 78:2-4

I will open my mouth in a parable, I will utter dark sayings of old... We will not conceal them.

Parables Bookshelf - Series 1.16.12



Psalms 11:3

If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?

Laying a firm foundation for understanding
the beginnings of creation.

Joseph Herrin

In this edition of Parables Bookshelf we continue the book *Foundations*. In chapter 15 each of the 12 constellations of the zodiac are described and their heavenly message of the gospel of Christ is revealed in them.

Scripture Memory

Luke 21:10-11

Then He continued by saying to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be great earthquakes, and in various places plagues and famines; and there will be terrors and great signs from heaven..."

Parables Newsletter

- Series 1.16.12
- *Foundations*
- Chapter 15

Foundations

The Zodiac Explained



There are numerous explanations for the origin of the word “zodiac.” Perhaps the most common attributes the etymology of this word to an ancient reference to a circle of animals in the sky. English readers may recognize a similarity between the word “zoo,” and related words such as “zoology,” to the word “zodiac.” The *Online Etymology Dictionary* provides the following entry.

zodiac (n.)

late 14c., from Old French *zodiaque*, from Latin *zodiacus* “zodiac,” from Greek *zodiakos* (*kyklos*) “zodiac (circle),” literally “circle of little animals,” from *zodiaion*, diminutive of *zoion* “animal” (see *zoo*).

This appears to be a reasonable explanation, and is satisfactory to many who study the zodiac. Frances Rolleston in her seminal book *Mazzaroth* suggests another origin for the word.

Those who derive zodiac from Zao, to live, as composed of living creatures, instead of from the primitive root Zoad, way, going on by steps, not only overlook the balance in Libra, but the vase for Aquarius, and the bow for Sagittarius, of the Eastern nations.

Joseph Seiss agrees with Frances Rolleston. In his book *The Gospel in the Stars* he states:

Whilst the sun is thus making its annual course from west to east through the centre of this belt or zone, the moon makes twelve complete revolutions around the earth, suggesting the division of this belt into twelve parts, or sections, of thirty degrees each; for twelve times thirty degrees complete the circle. We thus note twelve equal steps or stages in the Sun’s path as it makes its annual circuit through the heavens. And this belt or zone, with these twelve moons or months for its steps or stages, is called the Zodiac, from the primitive word zoad, a walk, way, or going by steps...

William Banks in his book *The Heavens Declare* shares a similar view.

*The familiar word “Zodiac” does not come as we have long been told from the Greek word *zoe* meaning life, and does not refer to either animals or a “zoo.” Simple logic utilizing internal evidence within the Zodiac itself bears this out, since it contains inanimate objects such as an arrow, balancing scales, a lyre, a cup, a ship, a cross, an altar, and a crown. One sixth of the constellations are inanimate, and therefore, a word denoting animals or life could not adequately describe the constellations.*

*Instead the word “Zodiac” comes to us from the Hebrew root word *zodi* or *sodi*, for A Way. This latter word actually appears on some of the old star charts. “Zodiac” itself comes directly from the Greek word “*zodiakos*,” derived from this Hebrew word and therefore denotes The Way or The Path (lit. a way of steps) which the sun appears to follow through the heavens.*

In the previous chapter I cited George Smith’s translation of the ancient *Chaldean Account of Genesis*. In the 5th tablet of that writing it is recorded “*Stars, their appearance [in figures] of animals he arranged.*” This would seem to lend support to the common understanding that defines zodiac as a circle of animals. The entry for the word zodiac at the *Online Etymology Dictionary* provides this further information.

Libra is not an animal, but it was not a zodiac constellation to the Greeks, who reckoned 11 but counted Scorpio and its claws (including what is now Libra) as a “double constellation.” Libra was figured back in by the Romans.

Parables Bookshelf

This information is certainly pertinent to any discussion of the origin of our English word zodiac. Note that the entry states that “*Libra was figured back in by the Romans.*” Libra did exist as a constellation in cultures older than that of Greece. It appears in the Dendera and Esne Zodiacs of the Egyptians. The question is largely one of where our English word originated. If it came from the Greeks, then a very good argument can be made that it originally meant “a circle of animals.” If it came through the Hebrew “zodi” or “sodi” for “A Way,” then a different meaning is understood. It would not be unusual for the Greeks to have adopted a Hebrew word, and over time to ascribe an entirely different meaning to it. Language tends to be very dynamic and fluid.

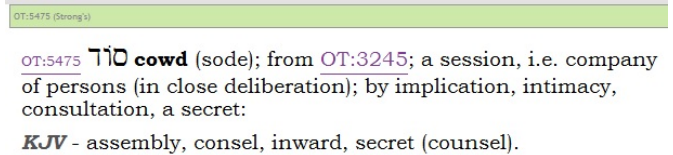
Perhaps it is not all that important to clearly identify the origin of the word zodiac. The reason I suggest this is that there have been many different words and phrases used to describe the circle of constellations throughout history. The word zodiac (or the root from which it derives) is not necessarily the original, or the most authentic. In the Old Testament, when Yahweh speaks to man of the constellations, the Hebrew word “mazzaroth,” or “mazaloth” is used. Mazzaroth is generally understood to mean “constellations,” and is considered to be an ancient Hebrew equivalent to the word zodiac, but its actual meaning is uncertain. Perhaps mazzaroth is the more authentic word, or closer to the original that Yahweh conveyed to Adam and his descendants. Not knowing what language man spoke before the division of language at Babel, we can do little more than offer conjecture.

Some other ways in which people have historically referred to the constellations of the zodiac are as follows.

1. In Old English the zodiac was *twelf tacna* “the twelve signs.”
2. In Middle English it was *Our Ladye's Waye* and the *Girdle of the Sky*.
3. The Greeks also referred to it as *kuklos*, meaning “circle.”
4. As mentioned previously, in Latin it was *Orbis Signiferus*, or *Circulus Signifer*, meaning “the sign bearing circle.”
5. The ancient Egyptians referred to the zodiac as “the watchers of Horus.” An interesting argument is made that this phrase was synonymous with “the watchers of the Hours.” The argument is that our

English word “hours” is derived from “Horus.” The Online Etymology Dictionary traces our English word back through Latin and Greek, and in these languages the word was “hora,” which does bear a distinct resemblance to “Horus.” In Roman times the “h” was pronounced, and not silent as it is in our modern “hour.” The suggestion is that the Greeks received the word “hora” from the Egyptian “the watchers of Horus/Hours.”

I would mention that there is another Hebrew word that is similar to the roots suggested by Rolleston and William Banks. This is the Hebrew word pronounced as “sode.” The following is a screen shot from *Strong's Concordance*.



(Note - “consel” in the last line of the image above should read “counsel.”)

This Hebrew word denotes close and intimate communication between parties. It is rendered into English as “secret” and “counsel.” Following are four occurrences of this word in Scripture.

Job 15:8

Hast thou heard the **secret** (sode) of God? and dost thou restrain wisdom to thyself?

Psalms 25:14

The **secret** (sode) of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant.

Psalms 64:2

Hide me from the **secret counsel** (sode) of the wicked...

Amos 3:7

Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his **secret** (sode) unto his servants the prophets.

Foundations

Since the constellations pour forth the secrets of the heavens, and display the counsel of God, it seems possible that this word could be the underlying root for zodiac. The constellations were appointed by Yahweh to disclose hidden things to mankind. Through means of the stars Yahweh is showing forth His privy counsel to His servants, to those who fear Him.

I have set forth numerous possibilities for the origins of the word zodiac. The uncertainty is largely due to the great antiquity of this subject and the gaps that exist in the historical record of the civilizations of man.

Although authors of books on the gospel message in the zodiac are nearly unanimous in listing twelve main constellations and three additional minor constellations (decans) in association with each of them for a total of forty-eight, in doing so they are following Roman and Greek practice. The more ancient zodiacs number the constellations as thirty-six. I previously noted that in *The Chaldean Account of Genesis*, the Assyrians attributed to the God of creation the arrangement of thirty-six constellations. The Egyptians also recognized thirty-six constellations.

Men have added numerous constellations throughout the ages. The IAU recognizes 88 constellations, though many of them are of relatively recent origin and are rejected by astronomical purists. It is difficult to declare with certainty the correct number of divinely inspired constellations. I think the more ancient zodiacs would be more likely to represent the original number of recognized constellations, yet even here there is a lack of uniformity depending upon which ancient tablets or zodiac is used as a reference. Since the Bible provides no catalogue of star names or constellations, mentioning them always in incomplete references, it is not possible to speak with certainty about their precise number.

In the following discussion of the zodiacal figures, I will list and describe only the twelve major constellations. My purpose in speaking of the constellations in this set of writings is not to provide a complete study of the subject of the divine origin of the zodiac. Rather, it is to establish the profound role the starry heavens have played from the very earliest days of man, and to establish their divine role as stellar prophecy. These truths can readily be conveyed

by an examination of the twelve central constellations of the zodiac. The student with an interest in this subject will profit much by examining the additional thirty-six decans associated with them.

In the following summary of the constellations, the images used are taken from *Urania's Mirror*, a set of cards first published in 1824.



Virgo

It seems fitting to begin with the constellation that is a figure of a woman bearing seed, for the first recorded prophecy of the Bible speaks of “the seed of the woman” who will crush the serpent’s head (Genesis 3:15). In this first prophecy an unusual phrase is used as Yahweh speaks of *the woman’s* seed. The more common Biblical reference to offspring is always to the man’s seed. In prophesying of the woman’s seed Yahweh was indicating that something very unusual would happen. The Savior of mankind would be born of woman, but He would not be of the seed of Adamic man. He was to be born of divine seed.

Isaiah 7:14

“Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.”

Luke 1:31-35

“And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him Yahshua. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord

Parables Bookshelf

God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end.” And Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” And the angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy offspring shall be called the Son of God.”

Ken Fleming, in his book *God’s Voice in the Stars*, writes:

The prophetic revelation in the heavens begins with the sign of Virgo. The picture of Virgo is that of a woman with an ear of wheat in her left hand and a branch in her right hand... The name of the sign is from the Latin and has a double connotation. Virgo means “A Virgin” and Virga means “A Branch.” The Latin Vulgate uses both words as referring to Christ, as the Branch in Isaiah 11:1 and as virgin-born in Matthew 1:23.

In the more ancient languages the same meanings are evident. The Hebrew name for it is “Bethulah,” which is the common word used for a virgin in the Old Testament. The Arabs called it “Adarah” (Virgin), and the Greeks called it “Parthenos,” which is the word for virgin in the New Testament: “Behold, a virgin [parthenos] shall be with child and shall bring forth a son...” (Matthew 1:23). In the traditions of these and other ancient peoples, she was not only a virgin but a “virgin mother.” In Egypt she was named “Aspolio,” which means “The Seed,” thereby confirming the connection between the virgin and her son.

The Greek Aratus, in his astronomical poem published in 270 B.C. wrote the following regarding this constellation.

*Beneath Bootes feet the Virgin seek,
Who carries in her hand a glittering spike.
Over her shoulder revolves a star
In the right wing, superlatively bright;
It rolls beneath the tail, and may compare
With the bright stars that deck the Greater Bear.
Upon her right shoulder one bright star is borne,
One clasps the circling girdle of her loins,*

*One at her bending knee; and in her hand
Glitters that bright and golden Ear of Corn.*

One of the bright stars in this constellation appears in the ear of corn which the virgin holds in her left hand. It is called Al Zimach, meaning “The Branch.” One Biblical corollary to this heavenly testimony is found in the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Isaiah 11:1-5

Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, and **a Branch** from his roots will bear fruit. And the Spirit of Yahweh will rest on Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of Yahweh. And He will delight in the fear of Yahweh, and He will not judge by what His eyes see, nor make a decision by what His ears hear; but with righteousness He will judge the poor, and decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth; and He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked. Also righteousness will be the belt about His loins, and faithfulness the belt about His waist.

The prophet Jeremiah also prophesied of **The Branch**.

Jeremiah 23:5-6

“Behold, the days are coming,” declares Yahweh, “When I shall raise up for David **a righteous Branch**; And He will reign as king and act wisely and do justice and righteousness in the land. In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely; and this is His name by which He will be called, ‘Yahweh our righteousness.’”

The Hebrew word for Branch in these verses is nearly identical to the Arabic name Al Zimach. The Hebrew word is Tsemach. In the Old Testament of the Bible there are twenty Hebrew words translated as “branch,” but only the word Tsemach is used as a reference to the Son of God who would be called “The Branch.” It is remarkable that this is the word the Arabs have preserved in the star catalogues.

Foundations

A star in the arm that carries the branch is called Al Mureddin which means “who shall come down,” or “who shall have dominion.” Another name given for this star is Vindemiatrix. This is a Chaldean word that means “the Son,” or “Branch, who comes.” The Arabs called this constellation Adarah, meaning “the pure virgin,” as well as Sunbul, meaning “an ear of corn.” This latter name puts the emphasis upon the seed the virgin is bearing, rather than upon the virgin herself. This seems befitting of the prophetic word that Yahweh spoke to our first forebears in the Garden of Eden, for it is the Seed of the woman, and not the woman herself, who would crush the head of the serpent.

According to A.H. Layard, a British archaeologist, and the first man to perform excavations at the ancient site of Nineveh, the name of this constellation in Assyrian was Mylitt, or Mylitta, meaning “She who brings forth.” The Babylonians also referred to Virgo as “The Great Mother.”

The second brightest star in the constellation is Zavijaveh, meaning “gloriously beautiful.”

Isaiah 4:2

In that day *the Branch* of Yahweh will be *beautiful and glorious*...

I am no scholar of Arabic languages, but it seems striking that the name *Zavijaveh* bears a resemblance to the Hebrew name Yahweh. In numerous languages the letter j makes the sound of the letter y, and some today write the sacred name of God as Yahveh.

In the Denderah Planisphere, Virgo is depicted as holding a palm branch. This once more provides a striking symbol of the virgin who gives birth to “The Branch.” It was similar palm branches that were laid before the feet of the donkey as Yahshua rode into Jerusalem while the people shouted, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!”

Tim Warner, in his book *Mystery of the Mazzaroth* writes the following of the constellation Virgo.

The earliest (Sumerian) name, found in the MUL.APIN tablet was “AB.SIN,” meaning “seed furrow.”

It is remarkable that as far back as one traces this constellation it communicates the same message of a “Seed” who comes forth from a virgin.

The three decans associated with Virgo are Coma (The Desired), Centaurus (The Centaur), and Bootes (The Coming One). Although I will not give a full explanation of the decans, I believe it is worthy to point out the remarkable testimony found in Coma. Coma is depicted as a woman seated with a child standing on her lap. The Hebrew word for this constellation is identical to the word translated as “The Desired” in the following prophetic Scripture.

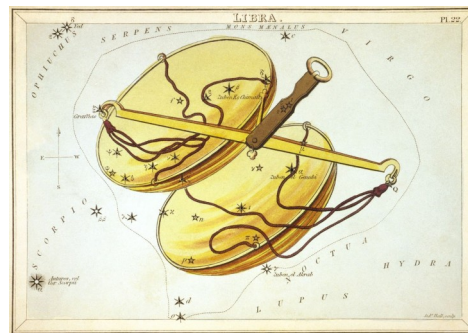
Haggai 2:7

And I will shake all nations, and they shall come to *the Desire* of All Nations...

(NKJV)

Albumazar, a Persian astrologer, astronomer, and philosopher who lived from 787 A.D. - 876 A.D., whose star lore was very helpful to Frances Rolleston and others who have studied this subject, wrote the following regarding the constellation Coma. Keep in mind, Albumazar was not a Christian.

There arises in the first Decan, as the Persians, Chaldeans, and Egyptians, and the two Hermes and Ascalius, teach, a young woman, whose Persian name denotes a pure virgin, sitting on a throne, nourishing an infant boy having a Hebrew name, by some nations called Ihesu, with the signification of Ieza, which in Greek is called Christ.



Libra

Parables Bookshelf

Raymond Capt, in the book *The Glory of the Stars*, provides the following information on this, the second of the constellations.

In Greek mythology, Libra represented the balances of Astraea, the Goddess of Justice, in which the fate of all mortal men must be weighed. The Egyptians identified Libra with the scale beam by means of which they measured the Nile flood. Sometimes they also associated it with the scales in which the human heart is to be weighed after death, the scales of justice. In India, Libra was also known as a balance, shown in their zodiac as a kneeling man holding up a pair of scales.

The scales convey the idea of purchase, and the names of this sign indicate the range of meaning attached to it. In Hebrew it is called "Monazanaim," meaning "the scales, weighing"; in Arabic, "Al Zubena," meaning "purchase" or "redemption." In Coptic, "Lambadia," meaning "station of propitiation.

The scales in ancient times were used for purchasing goods. Paper money was unknown, as the ancients dealt in coins, usually of bronze, silver, or gold. These coins were often cut imperfectly, and individuals would at times trim pieces off of them as a form of skimming, or defrauding, the person with whom they were conducting business. For this and other reasons, it was common to weigh out monetary transactions. This way a seller could be insured that he was getting the full amount of bronze, silver, or gold that he was due. Of course, it was also important to insure that the weights that were used in the scales to weigh against the coin, were true weights, neither too light, nor too heavy. The Bible makes frequent mention of using scales to transact business.

Proverbs 16:11

Honest weights and scales are Yahweh's; All the weights in the bag are His work.

Jeremiah 32:9-10

So I bought the field from Hanamel, the son of my uncle who was in Anathoth, and weighed out to him the money - seventeen shekels of silver. And I signed the deed and sealed it, took witnesses, and weighed the money on the

scales.

Yahweh was very much concerned that His people should use just scales and weights.

Micah 6:11

Shall I count pure those with the wicked scales, and with the bag of deceitful weights?

It is not hard to imagine what the scales might represent as a symbol of the atoning work of Christ. Due to the sin of man a great debt was incurred. It is a debt that man cannot pay for himself. No amount of good works can atone for the sins of humanity. If man should place all his good works on one side of the scales of justice they could never balance the scales. It would require one who was sinless, one without spot or blemish, to cover the cost of man's transgressions. This one is Christ.

The names of the stars in this constellation bear witness to this truth. One of the stars in Libra is "Zuben al Genubi," meaning "the price deficient." Another is "Zuben al Shemali," meaning "the price which covers." A third star is "Zuben Akrabi," meaning "the price of the conflict."

There are numerous Scriptures that speak of men being "weighed in the balance," and being found deficient. We are told that Christ paid the price that we might be redeemed from sin and death.

I Corinthians 6:19-20

Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

Christ, the pure Lamb of God, paid the price to redeem mankind. The very word "redeem" is used in the realm of commerce to denote a transaction. Someone may speak of "redeeming coupons," in order to not have to pay the full price for a desired product. Yahshua paid the price in full for the salvation of mankind.

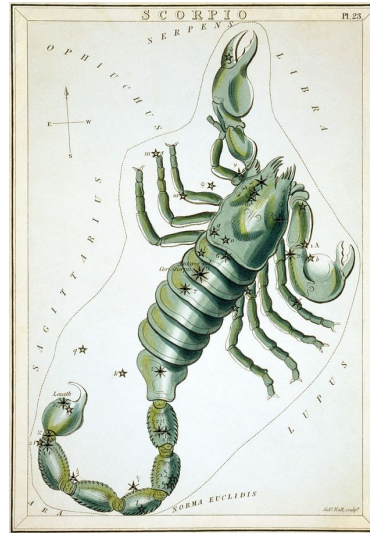
Foundations

Raymond Capt notes that in the Persian zodiac the symbol for Libra is a man or woman who is lifting the scales in one hand while grasping a lamb in the other, the lamb having the form of an ancient weight. Nothing could be clearer. Nonetheless, E.W. Bullinger sets forth an alternate figure and meaning for this symbol. He argues that the symbol for Libra was originally that of an altar, and over time it became corrupted into the form of scales, and in some zodiacs it was even figured as the claws of the scorpion from the adjoining constellation Scorpio. He writes:

There is, however, some reason to suppose that Libra is a very ancient Egyptian corruption... In the more ancient Akkadian the months were called after the names of the signs, and the sign of the seventh month was the sign that we now call Libra. The Akkadian name for it was Tulku. Tul means mound (like dhul and dul) and ku means sacred; hence, Tulku means the sacred mound, or the holy altar.

In an appendix at the end of the book *The Witness of the Stars*, Bullinger sets forth an explanation of how the sign of the Altar was transformed into the symbol of the Scales. He contends that this was an early corruption of Satan that sought to bring in “the way of Cain.” It is suggested that this corruption was used to alter the prophetic story of redemption observed in the heavens, and to bring in an element of human works. Bullinger further contends that the three decans associated with Libra fit more naturally with the symbol of the altar. These decans are Crux (The Cross), Lupus, or Victima (The Victim) which depicts an animal that has been slain, and Corona (The Crown). The message of this set of constellations is that the price for mankind is paid by Christ upon the altar. Christ, by bearing the cross, an instrument of death, surrenders His life as an innocent victim and substitutionary sacrifice, and subsequently receives the crown of life. Bullinger sums the matter up in this manner.

There can be but little doubt, therefore, that the first sign of the Zodiac was Virgo, the second was the Altar, and the third was the Scorpion. The lesson which they teach is clear: The Seed of the woman (Virgo), who was to come as a child, should be a sacrifice (the Altar) for the sins of His people; endure a great conflict with the enemy (Scorpio), in which He should be wounded in the heel; but should in the end crush and tread the enemy under foot.



Scorpio

It has been previously mentioned that there are numerous constellations that serve as signs of the great adversary Satan. He is pictured in the constellation Draco the dragon. He is seen in Serpens, the serpent in the hands of Ophiuchus. He is displayed in Hydra and Cetus. Some have objected to the interpretation of the zodiac as a celestial prophecy of the fall and redemption of man because there is no image of a serpent present in any of the central twelve figures. The serpent figures are all found in the decans associated with the main signs. Previously I cited Dr. Danny Faulkner who wrote an article critical of Frances Rolleston and other Christian authors who have expounded on the gospel message in the stars. One of Faulkner's objections has to do with the fact that a scorpion is not the same thing as a snake. He writes:

[Rolleston] also notes that in some mythologies Orion was stung to death by a scorpion. Some of those stories have Orion stung on the foot, but others do not specify where the scorpion stung Orion. One tradition is that the scorpion in question is Scorpius (a variant of Scorpio)...

There are several problems with Rolleston's connection of Orion and Jesus Christ. First is Rolleston's parallel between Orion dying by means of a scorpion and Christ's heel being bruised by Satan... a scorpion is not a snake. To claim illustration of Genesis 3:15 with a scorpion is a tremendous stretch.

[Source: Ibid]

Parables Bookshelf

While it is true that a scorpion is not the same thing as a snake, there are similarities between the two. Both are creatures that do injury to man. Both crawl or walk close to the ground, placing them near the heel of man. Both do injury by injecting poison into the victim's body either through fangs or a stinger at the end of the tail. Both are considered adversaries to man. Furthermore, Christ Himself links the two creatures together, speaking of them symbolically as being emblematic of those who are members of Satan's kingdom.

Luke 10:17-19

And the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." And He said to them, "I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning. Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon **serpents and scorpions**, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall injure you."

It is clear from the context of this passage that serpents and scorpions are similitudes for Satan and demons, and are characteristic of "the power of the enemy." These are those dark forces that seek to do injury to mankind, yet Christ has given His disciples authority over them. Even as both serpents and scorpions are used as images of Satanic forces that threaten humanity in the New Testament and in the church age, we observe that the same imagery was invoked in the Old Testament.

Deuteronomy 8:15

He led you through the great and terrible wilderness, with its **fiery serpents and scorpions** and thirsty ground where there was no water...

The experiences of the Israelites in the wilderness serve as types and shadows of the conflict that takes place in spiritual realms. In light of these Bible passages, I do not perceive it to be "a tremendous stretch" to associate Satan with the image of a scorpion. Satan has many names in the Bible. In a passage from the Psalms we find a prophecy speaking of the coming Messiah. In the verses of this Psalm it speaks of Christ not only trampling the serpent under His feet, but also trampling upon the lion and the dragon. There are many images that are befitting of the conflict between Christ and Satan.

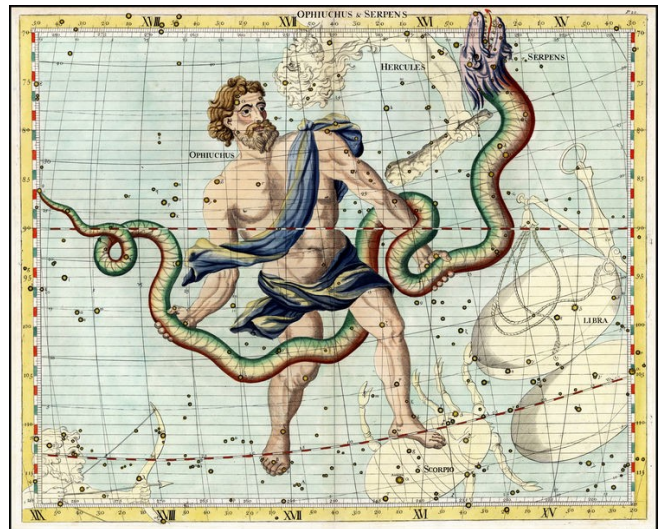
Psalms 91:11-13

For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways. In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone. You shall tread upon the lion and the serpent, the young lion and the dragon you shall trample underfoot.

Joseph Seiss in his book *The Gospel in the Stars* shares the following insight.

The name of this sign in Arabic and Syriac is Al Akrab, which, as a name, means the scorpion, but also "wounding, conflict, war." David uses the root of this word (Ps. 144:1) where he blesses God for teaching his hands to "war." In Coptic the name is Isidis, attack of the enemy - a word from the same root which occurs in Hebrew (Ps. 17:9) in the sense of "oppression" from deadly foes. The word scorpion itself is formed from a root which means "to cleave" in conflict or battle, and this sign of the Zodiac is the house of Mars, the god of war and justice. The principal star in this sign is called Antares, wounding, cutting, tearing...

In the Egyptian Zodiac this sign is represented as a monster serpent, Typhon, or Python... In the Hebrew Zodiac this sign was counted to Dan; and Dan is described as "a serpent by the way, and an adder in the path."



Observing that two of the decans of the constellation are Ophiuchus wrestling with a serpent in his arms, and his

Foundations

foot poised over the scorpion as if to crush it, it is difficult to argue that the message here is not one of conflict with Satan and the manifestation of the divine power to conquer over serpents and scorpions.

The third decan of this constellation is one of similar conflict. It is the constellation Hercules. Some zodiacs depict this constellation with an image of the mighty Hercules, half god and half man, striking a multi-headed serpent with a club while wearing a garment from a lion that has been slain.

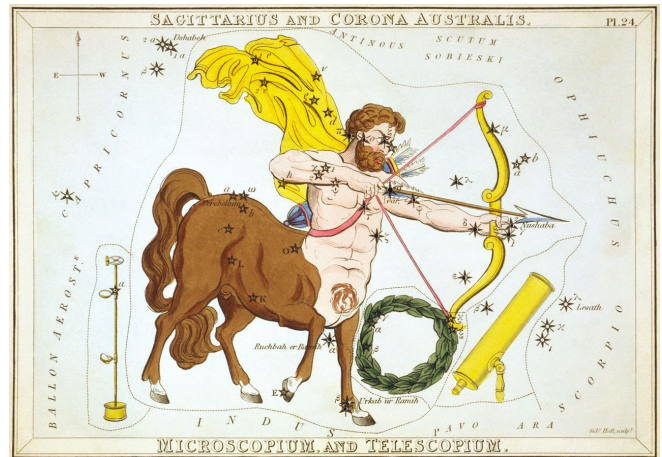
To sum up the message of this constellation and its decans, I will provide the following quotes, the first of which is from Raymond Capt.

Scorpio was everywhere an unfortunate, cursed and war-like constellation. The Mayas called it the "Sign of the Death-god." The Babylonians supposed Scorpio to have been among the monsters created by Tiamat when she rose in rebellion against the gods, and he was ever an opponent of the sun. To the Sumerians, Scorpio was known as "The Perverse One" or "The Lawless One."

Kenneth Fleming writes of this constellation:

The brightest star in Scorpio is Antares, which to the naked eye is similar in appearance to the planet Mars, because of its magnitude and deep red color. From this it is supposed to get its name, which means "The Rival of Ares (Mars). Mars is called The Planet of War... The names of the stars and of the constellation indicate that Scorpio represents the evil one in his efforts to destroy the seed of the woman.

[Source: *God's Voice in the Stars*]



Sagittarius

Next to come into view along the circuit of the sun through the heavens is the constellation Sagittarius. This figure is noted everywhere for being that of an archer, which is the meaning of the Latin name of this sign. In Greek the name is Toxotes, providing the same definition. In Hebrew and in Syriac the name is Kesith, which likewise translates as "the archer." The name in Arabic is Al Kaus, meaning "The Arrow." The image of a Centaur, half horse and half man, signifies great strength combined with great wisdom. Some have suggested that it also alludes to the dual nature of the Son of God who is both God and man.

The heavenly sign shows the archer with his bow bent and an arrow fitted to the string. It is aimed directly at Antares, the star in the heart of Scorpio. In Sagittarius the emphasis shifts from the wounding by the adversary, to one of victory. The arrows of God are shot at the heart of the enemy. In the Zodiac of Dendera under the image of this constellation is the word Knem, meaning "He conquers." We find the same word under the last sign of the Dendera Zodiac, that of Leo the Lion who is standing upon a serpent. This affirms that the Lion of Leo, and the Centaur of Sagittarius, refer to the same person. Numerous Scriptures come to mind in relation to this sign.

Psalms 45:3-5

Gird Your sword upon Your thigh, O Mighty One, with Your glory and Your majesty. And in Your majesty ride prosperously because of truth, humility, and righteous-

Parables Bookshelf

ness; And Your right hand shall teach You awesome things. Your arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies; The peoples fall under You.

Psalms 64:7

God shall shoot at them with an arrow; Suddenly they shall be wounded.

It is suggested by some that the image for Sagittarius was originally of a warrior riding on horseback with his bow drawn and an arrow fitted to the string. There are no star names in this constellation that describe a centaur. They all alike speak of an archer. It is difficult to prove what the original image may have been. The Bible has nothing to say of centaurs, though it does describe many fantastic creatures, from the fire breathing leviathan of the book of Job, to the dragon of seven heads or Revelation, as well as angelic beings with four faces and others with bodies full of eyes. There are scriptures that figure Christ as an archer astride a great horse. It is fitting that the One who was pierced should pierce the hearts of His enemies.

Revelation 6:2

And I looked, and behold, a white horse, and he who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him; and he went out conquering, and to conquer.

As I survey the message of this heavenly sign I am put in mind of the story of Joseph. Joseph serves as a type of Yahshua the Messiah. He was mistreated by His own family. He was betrayed for 20 pieces of silver at the suggestion of his brother Judah. In the New Testament Judas (a Greek variant of the name Judah) betrays Christ for 30 pieces of silver. Joseph was falsely accused and wrongly condemned. He descended into the earth for a time as he was placed in Pharaoh's dungeon. Yet, at the appointed time he ascended to the right hand of the throne of power. From his position of authority he was able to save alive a remnant upon the earth. The ones who mistreated him are met with compassion and forgiveness.

Speaking prophetically to his sons just before his death, Jacob uttered the following words regarding Joseph.

Genesis 49:22-24

Joseph is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a spring; Its branches run over a wall. The archers bitterly attacked him, and shot at him and harassed him; But his bow remained firm, and his arms were agile, from the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob...

Joseph was attacked bitterly, yet he overcame and rose to a position of power. His enemies were placed beneath his feet. Even as Christ is referred to as "The Branch," so too are branches mentioned in this prophecy of Joseph. Christ was subjected to attacks and was bitterly oppressed, but He did not shrink back. Those who were His adversaries will bend the knee before Him even as Joseph's brothers bowed before him.

The three decans of Sagittarius are Lyra (The Harp), Ara (The Altar), and Draco (The Dragon). This latter sign is not like that serpent in Ophiuchus who is engaged in conflict with the man. The Greek meaning of Draco is "trodden on." This is the great dragon subdued.

Psalms 91:13

The young lion and the dragon You shall trample under feet.

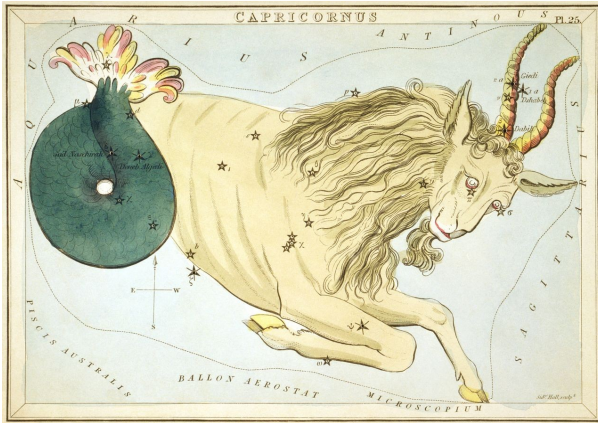
One of the stars in Draco is El Asieh, meaning "the bowed down."

Isaiah 45:23

I have sworn by Myself, the word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness and will not turn back, that to Me every knee will bow...

Though the heavens declare the conflict with Satan, the great dragon and serpent of old, they reveal that he will ultimately be defeated. Satan's authority will be destroyed. The head of the serpent will be crushed. The evil reign of this rebellious angel will soon be brought to an end.

Foundations



Capricorn

The testimony in the heavens we have observed thus far is that a virgin would give birth to one who is the Branch, the Seed of God. The Branch would come to pay the cost for man's redemption, offering Himself as a ransom for man. This One who is the Son of God and the Son of man would enter into a deadly conflict with Satan. He would receive a mortal wound while also crushing the head of the adversary. He would arise triumphant, being Yahweh's appointed Champion to destroy all the works of the enemy.

Even as the Bible conveys truth through symbolism, some of which is quite fantastic, so too do we see some fantastic creatures in the heavens. The centaur of Sagittarius, if it be the original emblem of this constellation, is such an example. In Capricorn we have another unusual creature. From ancient times Capricorn has been drawn as a kneeling goat with the tail of a fish. It is suggested that the posture of the goat with its head bent down reveals that it is wounded and dying, while at the same time the tail appears lively.

One explanation for this is that even as Pisces (the Fishes) follow Aries (the Ram) in the precession of the equinoxes, we have in Capricorn a similar message. The dying of the sacrificial Ram gives rise to the church age symbolized by the fish. Out of death comes life. This is testified in the following words of Christ.

John 12:24

"Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls

into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."

In the book of Revelation, John was shown a scroll which no one was found worthy to open. He was filled with grief and began weeping until one whose appearance was of a lamb that had been slain came forward and was accounted worthy to open the book.

Revelation 5:8-10

Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; For You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth."

Through the death of the Lamb of God a nation of kings and priests was born. Life comes forth out of death. The idea of sacrifice is everywhere connected with this sign. In the Zodiacs of Dendera and Esne this constellation appears as half goat and half fish and is called Hu-penius, meaning "the place of the sacrifice." The Hebrew name for this sign is Gedi, and in Arabic it is Al Gedi, meaning "the kid," or "cut off."

The stars in this sign bear a similar tale. One of the stars is called Al Gedi, another is Daneb Al Gedi, meaning "The Sacrifice Comes." The stars Dabih, Al Dabik, and Al Dehabeh, all bear the meaning of "The Sacrifice Slain." There is also Ma'asad, "The Slaying," and Sa'ad al Naschira, "The Record of the Cutting Off." These testimonies are in keeping with the words and imagery evoked by the prophet Isaiah.

Isaiah 53:7-8

Like *a sheep* that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth. By oppression and judgment He was taken away; And as for His generation, who considered that He was *cut off* out of the land of the living, for the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due?

Parables Bookshelf

The message of Capricorn may seem to be a repeat of that which was observed in previous signs, and indeed it is. This causes some problems for those who look at the constellations as a progressive telling of the message of divine redemption and victory over Satan. We have already observed The Archer with an arrow aimed at the heart of the Scorpion. Why now are we returning to the death of the sacrificial Ram?

Most of the books I have read on this subject have suggested various ways of dividing the signs of the zodiac into logical divisions. The most persuasive categorization of the signs that I have encountered is that set forth by E.W. Bullinger. Bullinger was a Bible scholar who had an eye for patterns. He discovered patterns throughout the entirety of the Bible that are quite profound. Those who are interested in this subject can find it expounded upon in the study Bible he produced called *The Companion Bible*. It is not surprising that he has identified patterns in the constellations as well. Bullinger has divided the twelve constellations up into three books containing four signs apiece. He explains these divisions in the following manner.

The First Book

THE REDEEMER (His first coming)

“The sufferings of Christ”

The Second Book

THE REDEEMED

“The result of the Redeemer’s sufferings”

The Third Book

THE REDEEMER (His second coming)

“The glory that should follow”

There is necessarily some repetition in these three heavenly books as they all deal with the same subject, but focus on different aspects of the story. In this regard these divisions of the zodiacal scroll might be compared to the four Gospels. Each book of the Gospels focuses on the person of Christ and His work, but the themes of the books differ. Consequently, there is significant repetition,

but new insight to be gleaned from each telling of the matter.

Bullinger has observed various parallels throughout these three celestial books. For example, each of the three books concludes similarly.

The first book concludes with the Dragon being cast out of heaven.

The second book concludes with Cetus, the Sea Monster, Leviathan, bound.

The third book concludes with Hydra, the Old Serpent, destroyed.

[Source: *The Witness of the Stars*]

This is quite a remarkable pattern. Even as the Gospel writers each end their books with the resurrection of Christ, the books in the heavens are consistent in the message they portray. It may be said that the message of the zodiac is wider in scope than the Gospels, for the evangelists were primarily focused on those works accomplished at the Messiah’s first coming. The gospel books in the stars go further by speaking of the work of Christ at His second appearing. The limited scope of the work Christ was to accomplish at His first appearing is observed in an incident that occurred at the beginning of His ministry.

Luke 4:16-21

And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read. And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book, and found the place where it was written, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are downtrodden, to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord.” And He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed upon Him. And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”

Foundations

Yahshua cited only a portion of the prophecy Isaiah recorded about the coming Messiah. He left off a critical portion of the prophecy, for it would not be fulfilled until His second coming. Yahshua was reading from what we now identify as the 61st chapter of Isaiah (there were no chapter and verse divisions in His day).

Isaiah 61:1-2

“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the Lord has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, **and the day of vengeance of our God...**

Why did not Yahshua read the phrase “and the day of vengeance of our God”? It was because this part of the prophecy would not be fulfilled until His second appearing upon the earth.

II Thessalonians 1:7-10

When the Lord Yahshua shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Yahshua. And these will pay the penalty of aionian destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed...

The gospel in the stars includes this event, for it encompasses the work Christ will accomplish at His first and second appearing. For this reason, it is fitting that each of the three books in the heavens should all end with the message of Satan being cast down and his authority destroyed.

Bullinger has identified additional patterns within each of the three heavenly books.

The first chapter in each book has for its great subject the Person of the Redeemer in prophecy and promise. The last chapter in each book has for its subject the fulfillment of that prophecy in victory and triumph, in the Person of the

Redeemer: while the two central chapters in each book are occupied with the work which is the accomplishment of the promise, presented in two aspects - the former connected with grace, the latter with conflict.

Taking Bullinger’s divisions, we can view the zodiac as three books consisting of four chapters each. These would be as follows:

Book One

Virgo

Libra

Scorpio

Sagittarius

Book Two

Capricorn

Aquarius

Pisces

Aries

Book Three

Taurus

Gemini

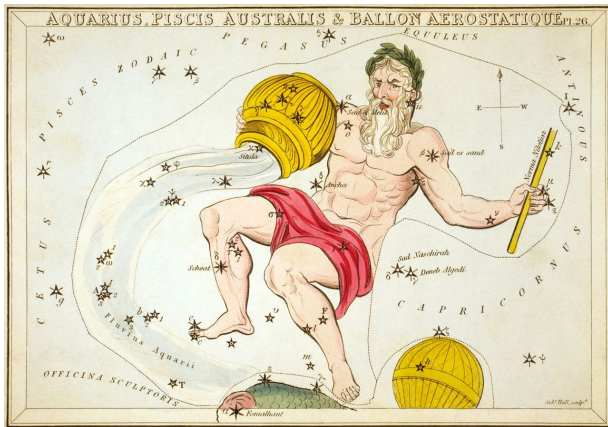
Cancer

Leo

In Capricorn we see a repeat of the promise in Virgo that a seed would come forth who would save mankind from their sins. The seed in Virgo’s hand signifies that grain of wheat that must fall into the ground and die that it might bear much fruit. The parallel is observed in the sacrificial goat of Capricorn whose death gives rise to a great multitude of the redeemed signified by the tail of the fish.

The three decans of Capricorn are Sagitta (the Arrow), Aquila (the Eagle), and Delphinus (the Dolphin).

Parables Bookshelf



Aquarius

Aquarius is a Latin name meaning “the pourer forth of water.” The brightest star is located in the right shoulder and is called Sa’ad Al Melik, meaning “record of the out-pouring.” The next star in brightness is Al Sund, “the pourer out.” A star in the urn bears the Egyptian name Mon, or Meon, being interpreted “the urn.” It is not difficult to find in the Scriptures references to Christ and the pouring forth of water. When Yahshua encountered the woman of Samaria at the well, He said, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, ‘Give Me a drink,’ you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water” (John 4:10). In another place He stated the following.

John 7:37-38

“If any man is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.’”

Significantly, in many zodiacal depictions, the fish of Piscis Australis (the Southern Fish, also called Piscis Austrinus) is depicted as swimming in the streams of water being poured forth from the constellation Aquarius. It is remarkable that there is so much correspondence between the signs in the heavens, and the prophetic imagery of the Bible. Once one understands that both the terrestrial Scriptures, and the heavenly prophecy have the same Author, it no longer seems surprising to find the same messages in both of them. Isaiah once again provides a parallel to the sign in the stars.

Isaiah 44:3-4

“For I will pour out water on the thirsty land and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out My Spirit on your offspring, and My blessing on your descendants; And they will spring up among the grass like poplars by streams of water.”

Throughout the Scriptures we find the divine symbolism of God, His Son, and His Spirit, compared to streams of water. Ezekiel writes of water flowing forth from the Temple of Yahweh in the vision he describes. Similarly, the River of Life features prominently in John’s description of the throne of God.

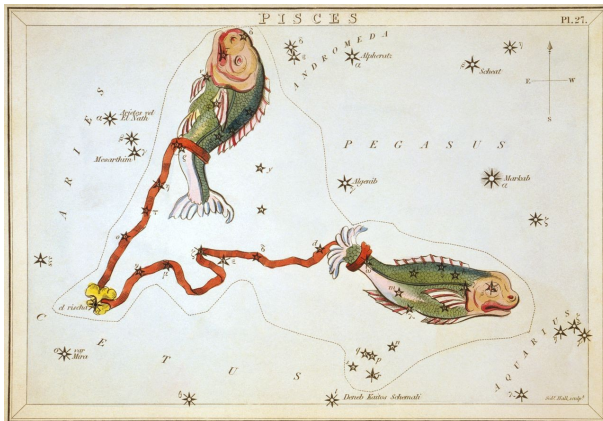
Revelation 22:1-3

And he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the middle of its street. And on either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

In the Zodiac of Dendera Aquarius is represented by an image of a man with two urns, one in each hand, pouring forth water. The Egyptian name is Aru, “the River.”

The image of the Water Pourer is undoubtedly a beneficent sign. It indicates great blessing procured by the Son of God and released upon the dry ground of humanity. The decans associated with Aquarius are Piscis Australis (the Southern Fish), Pegasus (depicted as a winged horse, the name meaning “coming quickly”), and Cygnus (the Swan Circling).

Foundations



Pisces

The unusual feature of this constellation is that the two fish are drawn as being held together by a band. This cord seems to be restraining them. Pisces, of course, is symbolic of the redeemed of the Lord, His church. Yahshua told His disciples, "I will make you fishers of men." The great struggle of humanity, and one that does not end, but merely begins when Christ calls a man or woman to be His disciple, is to be free of the bonds and chains that have kept us bound. The shackles of sin weigh down all mankind and have need of being broken. In our previous discourse on the sign of Capricorn, the words of the prophet Isaiah, spoken by Yahshua as He began His ministry, were cited. "He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are downtrodden, to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord."

In Pisces we see the conflict of man, a conflict that Yahshua triumphantly overcame. The Band that holds the fish is actually the first of the decans of this sign. It affirms the meaning of this chapter of the heavenly book. Mankind is born altogether in sin, enslaved to desires from which he cannot break free. Christ has come to deliver man from his bondage.

Andromeda is the second of the decans. She is depicted as a woman chained. In this she serves as a parallel to the image of the two fish bound together. It is an image of cruel slavery, of being held fast, awaiting a Savior to come and free her.



Regarding Andromeda, the Greek Poet Aratus wrote, "Her feet point to her bridegroom, Perseus, on whose shoulder they rest." The names of the various stars in the constellation Andromeda bear the meanings "the Broken-down," "the Weak," "the Afflicted," "the Chained." Are these words not accurate descriptions of mankind in his separation from God? The glory of Yahweh is observed in His sending forth a Deliverer to rescue humanity. God has sent forth a Savior to loose mankind from their bonds.

John 8:36

"If therefore the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed."

The life of the Christian is not one of ease and pleasure. The life of a disciple is one of struggle and conflict. We have been promised the victory. We are assured of the defeat of Satan and our ultimate victory over sin. Nevertheless, there is a period of time allotted to all of us where we are commanded to "work out your salvation with fear and trembling." Even as the Son of God learned obedience through the things He suffered, so too must His bride. In the bands of Pisces and the chains of Andromeda a prophecy has been written that testifies to the struggle and sufferings of the church. Christ has purchased for us the victory, but it is required of His disciples to exercise themselves unto godliness, to resist the adversary, to buffet their bodies and keep them under subjection, and to crucify the flesh with its passions and desires. "Those who endure to the end shall be saved."

Parables Bookshelf

The third decan of Pisces is Cepheus, depicted as a glorious king seated upon his throne. This is none other than the King of kings, and Lord of Lords. Joseph Seiss shares the following:

On the right shoulder of this figure, in glittering brilliancy, shines a star whose name, Al Deramin, means the Quickly-Returning. In the girdle shines another, equally conspicuous, whose name, Al Phirk, means the Redeemer. In the left knee is still another, whose name means the Shepherd. The Egyptians called this royal figure Pe-ku-hor, the Ruler that cometh. His more common designation is Cepheus, which means the Royal Branch, the King.

I have digressed and given some explanation of the decans of Pisces as they make the image of the two chained fish comprehensible. For those who wish to study the Biblical meaning of the zodiac at greater depth, they will find that the decans for all twelve of the signs serve to amplify the meaning of the zodiacal constellations with which they are associated.



Aries

Kenneth Fleming, in *God's Voice in the Stars*, shares the following:

Aries is the last of the signs in the second group, which includes Capricorn, Aquarius, Pisces, and Aries. This quartet of signs pictures the blessings of salvation. Capricorn signifies the blessings of salvation. Capricorn signifies the blessing of life from death. Aquarius pictures the blessing of salvation's fullness. Pisces signifies the delay of the promised blessing. Now in Aries we see the blessing

fully realized...

Aries has a most interesting and instructive message for the student of the biblical prophecy and the history of salvation. Aries usually carries the symbol of the ram, but many of the oldest zodiacs portray a lamb (with no horns), and in some ancient zodiacs the lamb has a circular crown on its head... The Hebrew name for Aries was Taleh, which means Lamb, while the Arabic name, Hamal, means Sheep, Gentle, Merciful... In Syriac the name for Aries is Amroo, meaning Lamb. The New Testament in that language uses the same word for the Lord Jesus; John the Baptist cried, "Behold the Lamb of God!" (John 1:29)

William Banks comments on how this sign at the end of this second heavenly book, serves as a bookend matching Capricorn at the beginning of the same book. They are drawn as if facing in opposite directions. This seems fitting. We might call this second heavenly book The Scroll of the Sacrifice. In Capricorn the self-denial of the Lord is depicted in the goat sinking down in death. In Aries we have the same sacrificial offering resurrected, and as some zodiacs show, with a crown upon its head. The Lord who submitted to wear the crown of thorns has now received the everlasting crown of glory and honor.

Revelation 14:14

And I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and sitting on the cloud was one like a son of man, having a golden crown on His head...

In the Akkadian zodiac, one of the most ancient, the name they gave to the constellation Aries was Bara-Ziggar, "The Sacrifice of Righteousness." I am reminded of the words of Yahweh recorded by the prophet Isaiah.

Isaiah 53:12

Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, and He will divide the booty with the strong; Because He poured out Himself to death...

The decans of Aries are Cassiopeia (the Enthroned

Foundations

Woman), Cetus (the Sea Monster), and Perseus (the Breaker). The Greeks credited to Perseus the slaying of the great Sea Monster and the rescue of Andromeda. It is not difficult to see in these images shadows of the true story of the triumphant labors of the Son of God.



Taurus

We now come to the third and last book of the heavens according to the divisions assigned by E.W. Bullinger. This is the book of the Redeemer at His second coming. “The glory that should follow.” He writes:

Like the other two books, it consists of four chapters.

The first chapter is the prophecy of the coming Judge of all the earth.

The second sets before us the two-fold nature of the coming Ruler.

The third shows us Messiah’s redeemed possessions - the Redeemed brought safely home, all conflict over.

The fourth describes Messiah’s consummated triumph.

The constellation Taurus has been of special interest to me since I was a child. My parents became Christians when I was three years of age, and I was brought up in the Conservative Baptist denomination. Anything dealing with the zodiac was considered pagan and occult and was to be avoided. Warnings were given by the preacher against

reading the horoscope in the daily newspaper, or becoming involved with any form of astrology. Nevertheless, I was still a youth when I learned that my “birth sign” is Taurus (according to the dates of Tropical Astrology). This information was probably discovered in the pages of the newspaper, for it was common to list the dates of each sign in the horoscope column. The sun transits Taurus from April 20th to May 20th of each year, and I was born on May 7th.

Being warned of the dangers of astrology and reading the horoscope, I never demonstrated any interest in this subject in my youth. It was not until I was well into my adult years that I encountered any teaching that suggested a divine, Scriptural role for the constellations. I mentioned previously that the Pleiades, a group of seven stars, is mentioned several times in the Bible, being twice named in Job and once in Amos. The Pleiades are not a constellation by themselves. They are an integral part of the constellation Taurus.

Although hidden to most eyes due to translation issues, Taurus likely appears elsewhere in the book of Job. Even as Job mentions Leviathan, and this fire-breathing dragon described by Yahweh is figured in the heavens, so too does God speak of the wild ox that was known to the Hebrews as the reem.

Job 39:9-12

“Will the wild ox (Hebrew - rimu) consent to serve you? Or will he spend the night at your manger? Can you bind the wild ox in a furrow with ropes? Or will he harrow the valleys after you? Will you trust him because his strength is great and leave your labor to him? Will you have faith in him that he will return your grain, and gather it from your threshing floor?”

Strong’s Concordance lists this Hebrew word as follows:

re'em (reh-ame'); or re'eym (reh-ame'); or reym (rame); or rem (rame); from OT:7213; a wild bull (from its conspicuousness):

KJV - unicorn.

Parables Bookshelf

The word “unicorn” is a terrible translation. The reem is an actual animal, though now extinct. It was a powerful ox, or wild bull, of a ferocious temperament. There was no possibility of domesticating this animal. Regarding this animal, Joseph Seiss writes:

It has long been a question what animal is meant by the Reem, which is so often referred to in the ancient Scriptures, and which translators have generally called the unicorn. But modern research and discovery have served to clear up the subject in a matter entirely satisfactory. The reem is not a one-horned creature, like the rhinoceros, as has been generally supposed, but a pure animal of the ox kind, though wild, untamable, fierce, and terrible. Two passages prove that it was a great two-horned and mighty creature, now, so far as known, entirely extinct, but once common in North-western Asia, Assyria, and Middle Europe. Remains of it have of late years been discovered in the north of Palestine, and Caesar, in the account of his wars, describes it as being hunted in the Hercynian forest in his day... It was a formidable animal, “scarcely less than the elephant in size, but in nature, color, and form, a true ox.” Its strength and speed were very great, and it was so fierce that it did not spare man or beast when it caught sight of them. It was wholly intractable, and could not be habituated to man, no matter how young it was taken...

This animal was particularly distinguished for its great, outspread, sharp, and irresistible horns, to which the horns of ordinary oxen were not to be compared. Hence Caesar says, when a hunter succeeded in killing one, pit-falls being the chief means of capture, he made a public exhibition of the horns as the trophies of his success, and was the wonder and praise of all who beheld.

Kenneth Fleming adds the following information.

It is now known to be a larger and fiercer type of cattle which modern versions usually term the wild ox. Famous for its size and ferocity, it was the prize of great hunters in the records of Egyptian kings like Tutmose III and Assyrian kings. It seems to have survived at least until the time of the Caesars but is now extinct...

The wild bull (rimu) is a symbol of power and rule. Ba-

laam describes the power of Jehovah on the behalf of Israel: “He is for them like the horns of the wild ox [rimu]” (Numbers 23:22).

I suppose I was in my late thirties when I first read that the tribe of Joseph carried the symbol of the reem, the sign of the constellation we call Taurus, on their banners. This fact is declared by Josephus, the Jewish historian of the first century A.D.. There is much Biblical support to link the tribe of Joseph to this ferocious animal. When Moses pronounced a blessing upon each of the twelve tribes of Israel, he spoke the following words for the tribe of Joseph.

Deuteronomy 33:17

“As the first-born of his ox, majesty is his, and his horns are the horns of the wild ox (rimu); With them he shall push the peoples, all at once, to the ends of the earth. And those are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and those are the thousands of Manasseh.”

The two horns of the reem are compared to the two tribes that descended from Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh. Interestingly, there are two star clusters located in Taurus, an occurrence that is unique among the constellations. These star clusters are referred to as the Pleiades and the Hyades. Even as Joseph was unique among his brothers in receiving the birthright, the honor and preeminence of the first-born son though he was in fact the eleventh son born to Jacob, and this birthright involved inheriting a double portion from his father, so too did Joseph become two tribes in Israel. The two horns of the bull, like the two clusters of stars in the constellation, represent two companies of people. In one sense they are clearly Ephraim and Manasseh. In another they are Israel and the Church. And even as Ephraim was the younger of Joseph’s sons, yet was placed before Manasseh in preeminence and became a much larger company of people, so too do we find the church, the spiritual seed of Christ surpassing in both glory and number the earlier seed chosen by God to be His peculiar people.

Having been given the name of Joseph by my parents, and decades later discovering that Taurus is the sign of the tribe of Joseph, I marveled that Yahweh had chosen for me to be born on a date when the sun was in the very

Foundations

midst of transiting this celestial sign. It is my judgment that too few Christians give consideration to the significance of the abundance of details that pertain to them as individuals. Yahweh has crafted each individual with great care. He has appointed each one for a particular role and calling.

As we look at the life of Joseph, the son of Jacob, we may observe how every facet of his life was ordered by Yahweh. Jacob was 91 years of age when Joseph was born to him through his favorite wife Rachel. Up until this time Rachel had been barren, but in her old age she bore Joseph, following the pattern of Sarah giving birth to Isaac late in her life. Joseph was the son of Jacob's old age, and he was especially precious to his father. Joseph reciprocated this love, having a devotion to his father that excelled that of all of his brothers.

The history of Joseph's life is laid out before us with much detail. It takes up a significant portion of the first book of the Bible. The reason for this is that Joseph is a clear type and foreshadowing of the coming One who was prophesied to save mankind from sin and death. The parallels between Joseph and the Son of God are numerous. Both men were betrayed, sold for money. Not only were both men betrayed by a man named Judah, but both after a sense died and rose again. Joseph's brothers dipped his cloak in the blood of an animal to make their father think Joseph had been slain by a wild beast. Jacob mourned bitterly for his son, years later discovering that he was alive. Both Joseph and Yahshua had their garments stripped from them. Both Joseph and Christ were wounded by those who were close to them. The second brightest star in Taurus is El Nath, meaning "wounded or slain." Both were numbered among the transgressors. Both ascended to the throne after a period of suffering. Both were made rulers and judges of mankind.

The constellation Taurus reveals Christ after His suffering. This heavenly sign is an image of a mighty, unconquerable, irresistible exalted power. The name Pleiades means "the congregation of the judge, or ruler." (Hyades means "congregated.") Joseph Seiss speaks further of the sign Taurus.

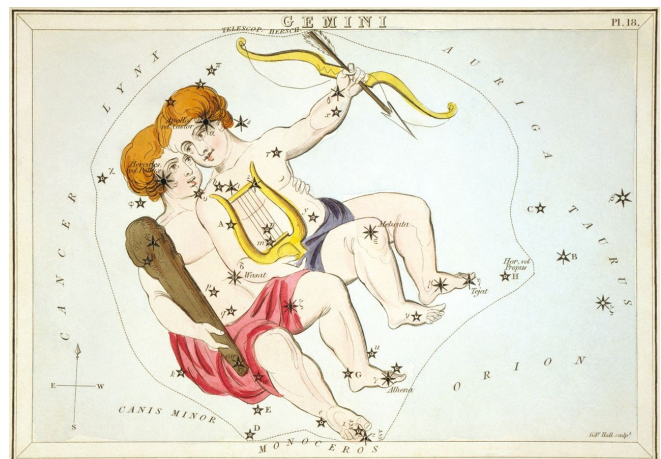
This terrific animal appears here in the intensest rage, dashing forward with a swift and impetuous energy, and

with his sharp horns set as if to run through everything that comes in its way. The Egyptians called it by names signifying the Head, the Captain, the mighty Chieftain who cometh. The chief star in this sign is situated in the Bull's eye; and its name, Al Debaran, means the Captain, Leader, or Governor. The middle and hinder part of the enraged animal includes the body of the enthroned Lamb, out of which it seems to rise. It is also the direct opposite of the Scorpion, so that when it rises the Scorpions sets and disappears.

Fleming writes:

Taurus is the sign of a coming judge and of coming judgment. It is the day of vengeance of our God (Isaiah 61:2).

Even as Taurus contains two star clusters, we are told that the Lord will return with "many thousands of His holy ones, to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him" (Jude 14-15). The decans associated with Taurus are Orion (the Coming Prince), Eridanus (the River of the Judge), and Auriga (the Shepherd).



Gemini

Although this constellation is often depicted as twin infants, or young boys, in Greek and Roman mythology they are great heroes. In Coptic, this constellation was called Pi-mahi, meaning "The United." The Hebrew name Thaumim bears the same meaning. In the Dendera Zodiac a man and a woman are depicted.

Parables Bookshelf

The mythology of the Greeks and Romans have surely corrupted the original meaning of this sign. To them they were Castor and Pollux, both sons of Zeus. Stories told how they cleared the seas of pirates. This led to their patronage by sailors, and explains the appearance of the Twins as figureheads on sailing ships. Sailors commonly swore by them, which is the origin of the oath occasionally heard to this present day, “By Gemini” which is sometimes corrupted to “By Jiminy.”

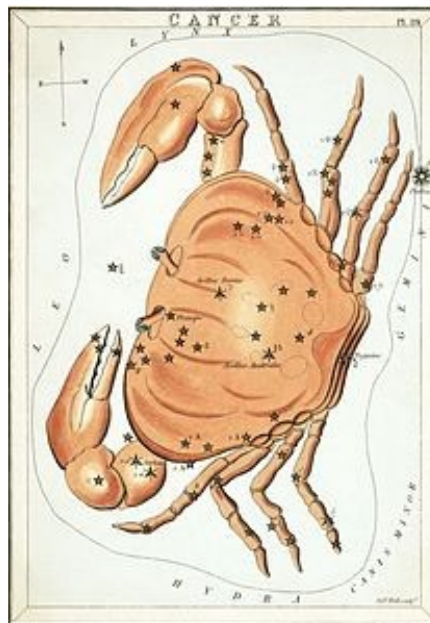
The meaning of the names Castor and Pollux are “The Ruling Judge” and “The Laboring Sufferer.” This testimony is further observed in the two bright stars in this constellation which are identified as Apollo and Hercules. Apollo was seen as a ruler and judge, and Hercules as the laboring sufferer. This sign shows the twin nature of Christ. Not only is Yahshua the suffering servant, but He is the King of kings, and the Judge of all the earth. Numerous stars in this constellation continue this testimony of these two distinct identities of the One who is the Son of God.

The star Al Henah in the foot of Pollux means “Hurt, Wounded, or Afflicted.” Mebsuta in the leg of Castor means “Treading Underfoot.” Numerous other stars in the constellation refer to Christ as “the Branch.” The decans associated with Gemini are Lepus (the Hare, or Enemy) which appears trodden under foot, Canis Major (the Greater Dog - anciently “the Wolf”) or Sirius (the Prince), and Canis Minor (the Lesser Dog). The Egyptian zodiacs show Lepus as a serpent, and Canis Major as a hawk, or an eagle. The Egyptian name for this latter constellation was Naz, “The Hawk,” which also means “Coming swiftly down.” In my judgment, this is the more authentic symbol for the constellation now recognized as Canis Major. The image of a dog is hardly befitting that of the Coming Savior of mankind, and Christ’s adversary, Satan, is never figured as a hare in the Bible, but rather as a serpent. Hawks are natural adversaries of snakes. I have witnessed a hawk carrying a serpent through the sky on more than one occasion.

It is worth noting that the brightest star in the heavens is Sirius, which is commonly called “the dog star.” This star is found in the constellation Canis Major, whose more original emblem was likely that of the Hawk. The name Sirius means “Prince,” and nearby is the star Mirzam meaning “Ruler.” Also in this constellation are the stars

Adara, “the Glorious,” and Wezea, “the Bright, the Shining.”

Similarly, the Egyptians of long ago identified the constellation Canis Minor as Sebak, meaning “Conquering, or Victorious.” They depicted it with the body of a man and the head of a hawk. Kenneth Fleming states that the very earliest name found in any of the zodiacs for this constellation is Procyon, meaning “Redeemer, Savior.” Thus, as in the symbols of the Twins, we have two dogs which are actually two hawks, symbolizing the dual nature of Christ as the Prince and Glorious Ruler of creation, as well as being the Savior and Redeemer of mankind.



Cancer

The message of this constellation and its associated decans appears to be that of the people of God held fast. It prophesies of the saints held securely in the safety of their union with Christ. As with many of the zodiacal images, there are varied depictions and names associated with the constellations of Cancer, but a central theme is very much discernible. A crab is noted by its two great claws. The claws are used for grasping and holding something firmly. When I was 15 and 16 years old, I worked for a time with my father running a crab boat on the Georgia coast. We had crab traps scattered throughout a section of the Atlantic intracoastal waterway, and filled up seven 50 gallon

Foundations

drums each day with blue crabs harvested from the Georgia waters. Working with crabs, I learned very quickly to stay out of reach of their claws. When they grabbed you they pinched very hard, and would not let go.

The Egyptians show a scarab in place of the crab. The scarab was a type of dung beetle renowned for rolling a large ball of dung along the ground. The female scarab lays a single egg in the ball, and hides it in a burrow it constructs in the ground until the young emerges from the ball. Although the Egyptians developed many fables relating to this sacred insect, comparing it to the god Khepri rolling the sun across the sky, and attributing to the scarab the power of resurrection, one can discern the germ of thought linking this symbol to the idea of holding fast one's offspring in the act of the beetle holding fast to the ball it moves along the ground.

The name Cancer stems from a Latin root meaning "to hold," or "to circle." All of the constellations in this sign convey some message of Christ holding firmly onto His people. The Egyptians referred to this sign as Klaria, meaning "Cattlefolds." The Arabic name for it is Al Sar-tan, "Who Holds, or Binds." The Hebrew name was Ausar. This word is used in the following verse.

Genesis 49:11

He **binds** (ausar) his foal to the vine, and his donkey's colt to the choice vine...

The brightest star in Cancer is Tegmine. The name of this star means "Holding." Another star is called in the Hebrew Acubene, "Sheltering, or Hiding Place." Other stars are Ma'alaph, "assembled thousands," and Al Himarein, "the kids, or lambs."

Speaking of the decans of Cancer, Kenneth Fleming writes:

Ursa Minor is widely known as the Little Bear and is paired with Ursa Major, the Great Bear. They are also known as the Big and Little Dippers, though this is very modern. Even the idea of the bears goes no further back than the Greeks. The bear symbol does not appear at all in the old zodiacs of Chaldea, Persia, Egypt, or India... The

bear idea seems to have come from a confusion of words. An old Persian word for bear is similar to the word for sheepfold, and the Greeks appear to have mistaken one word for the other, according to Bullinger.

Bullinger explains this mix-up in the following way.



Here we come to another grievous mistake, or ignorant perversion of the truth, as shown in the ancient names of these two constellations...

No one who had ever seen a bear would have called attention to a tail, such as no bear ever had, by placing in its tip the most important, wondrous, and mysterious Polar Star, the central star of the heavens, round which all others revolve...

The primitive truth that there were two, or a pair of constellations is preserved; and that of these two, one is larger, and the other smaller. But what were they? We have the clue to the answer in the name of the brightest star of the larger constellation, which is called Dubheh. Now Dubheh means "a herd of animals." In Hebrew, Dohver, is a fold; and hence in Chaldee it meant "wealth." The Hebrew Dohveh means "rest or security"; and certainly there is not much of either to be found or enjoyed with bears!...

Here are the two Sheepfolds then; the Greater fold, and Lesser; and here is the rest and security which the flocks will find therein.

Parables Bookshelf

But in Hebrew there is a word very similar in sound, though not in spelling - dohv, which means "a bear!" So we find that in Arabic dub; Persian deeb and dob. We can see, therefore, how the Hebrew Dohver, a fold, and Dohv, a bear, were confused; and how the Arabic Dubah, cattle, might easily have been mistaken by the Greeks, and understood as a bear.

The Pleiades and Hyades, two congregations of Yahweh's people observed in Taurus, find their parallel in the Greater and Lesser Sheepfolds of Cancer. It seems fitting that as we near the end of the celestial prophecy that we find a foretelling of the security of those whom the Seed of the woman would save from the tyranny of the great dragon and serpent of old. Yahshua testified:

John 10:27-29

"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give aionian life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand."

In the final decan for this constellation, we observe a continuation of this theme. The final sign is Argo (the Ship). Some have suggested that this is none other than the ark of Noah serving as a symbol of those whom God has saved from destruction. Significantly, in Kircher's Egyptian Planisphere Argo is represented by two galleys (Egyptian ships) who have at the prow the figure of a Ram, and one of the ships has a fish's tail at the stern. Of further significance, the constellation Argo is immense in size. This is a fitting corollary to the testimony of John in the book of Revelation. After recounting the number of the overcomers, 12,000 from each of the twelve tribes of Israel, John writes:

Revelation 7:9

After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude, which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands...

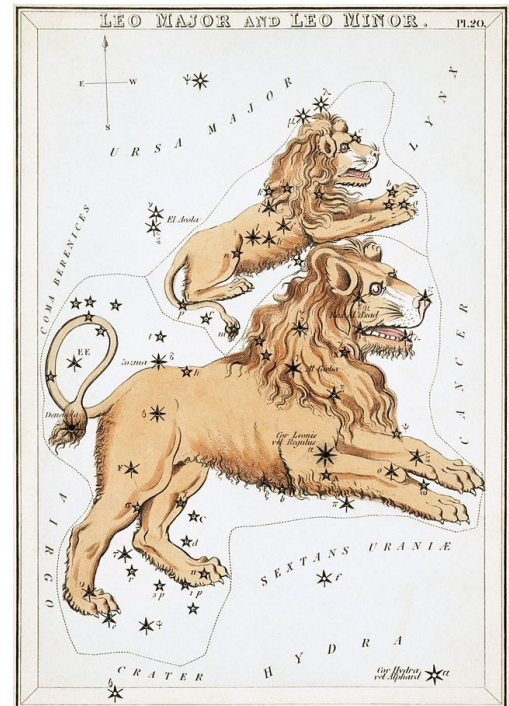
So here are two companies. One small, and one great in size. They are both secure as they stand in the presence of Yahweh and of the Lamb. William Banks writes:

Argo graphically represents the joyous, victorious completion of that journey and mission as the travelers return home, to enter that harbor of safety where no storm can touch them. The ship and its company of passengers are safely at rest in their homeport, with all the dangers of their journey behind them, all trials completed and the victory won.

Seeing that Yahweh has given such a promise of hope to His people in His word, it should not be surprising to find the same testimony written in the heavens.

Isaiah 51:11

So the ransomed of Yahweh will return, and come with joyful shouting to Zion; And everlasting joy will be on their heads. They will obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.



Leo

Foundations

We have arrived at the last constellation and sign of the zodiac. The heavenly testimony ends on a triumphant note after having testified of the labors, struggle, rejection, and sorrow that precedes. It is highly significant that in the Egyptian Zodiac the Lion is depicted as treading upon a serpent. It is amazing that the message of Yahweh's redemption through the labors of His Son remain visible in the Egyptian Plaisphere, but the understanding had been lost. Raymond Capt writes:

All the stars in Leo magnify and exalt Him as the Coming Conqueror and Judge: the brightest star (on the ecliptic) is called "Regulus," meaning "treading under foot..." The next star, in the tip of the tail, is named Denebola, meaning, "the Judge," or "Lord who cometh." The next star (in the mane) is called "Al Giebha" (Arabic) meaning, "the Exaltation." Another star (on the hind part of the back) is called "Zosma," which means "Shining Forth."

Even as the last book of the Bible reveals Christ as the conquering King, seated upon a glorious throne, or riding forth to battle the dragon and his armies, leading a magnificent company of shining ones, we find that the scroll of the heavens has been declaring from the fourth day of creation the ultimate triumph of the Son of God. The obedient Son who humbled Himself and suffered as a meek Lamb, will return again as a mighty conqueror having all power and all authority. His enemies will not be able to stand before the spectacle of His glorious appearing.

One of the decans of Leo is Hydra. Appropriately, this incarnation of the serpent of old is seen fleeing. Additionally there is Crater (The Cup) signifying the cup of the Lord's indignation.

Psalms 75:8

For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup [of His wrath], and the wine foams and is red, well mixed; and He pours out from it, and all the wicked of the earth must drain it and drink its dregs.

[Amplified Bible]

The final decan of Leo, and the last constellation of the heavenly testimony, is Corvus (The Raven) grasping the body of the fleeing serpent with its claws and tearing the

flesh of the serpent with its beak. The raven, too, is a Biblical symbol of the vengeance of the Lord.

Proverbs 30:17

The eye that mocks a father, and scorns a mother, the ravens of the valley will pick it out, and the young eagles will eat it.

Satan is a rebel and a mocker. He deserves nothing better than the judgment due a mocker. The adversary's power will be broken. As Martin Luther wrote in his famous hymn *A Mighty Fortress is Our God*:

And though this world, with devils filled, should threaten to undo us,

We will not fear, for God hath willed His truth to triumph through us:

The Prince of Darkness grim, we tremble not for him;

His rage we can endure, for lo, his doom is sure,

One little word shall fell him.

Revelation 20:10

And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night to the age of the ages.

We see that the message of the heavens speaks the same glorious testimony as that of the Bible. They have the same Author. The Creator who formed the stars and leads them forth has established a divine plan of the ages. It has been moving inexorably forward, and despite all the lies and protestations of Satan and those in league with him, the final chapter has already been written. The story cannot be changed. Yahweh has spoken and His word is final, irresistible, and certain.

Parables Bookshelf

About the Author

Since January 2011, Yahweh has blessed me with a 30 foot school-bus that I converted to a motorhome. It has all the amenities inside, and is fully self contained.

I enjoy the freedom that living in a motorhome provides. With my 16 foot trailer behind me, I have plenty of room for storage. It does make quite a large rig when driving down the road. From the nose of the bus to the rear of the trailer, it is 50 feet in length.



Inside my bus, my dining area doubles as my office. I have my laptop computer and a large color laser printer that I use to print all the newsletters. For local transportation I rely on my recumbent trike which has an electric motor and a battery with a range of about 30 miles.

Motorhome living encourages a person to be content with a modest number of possessions. I used to have a 2,000 square foot house with a detached garage on 3/4 of an acre in town. Life is much simpler now, freeing me up to devote more time to activities that truly matter, such as writing and mailing out newsletters to men in prison.

This world is not our home. We are just passing through. It is good to not get too attached to things and places, but to be free to go wherever God sends, and to do whatever He commands.

As they say in the RV world, "Home is where you park it." - Joseph Herrin

Parables Bookshelf

P.O. Box 804

Montezuma, GA 31063

Websites:

Parables

www.heart4god.ws

Parables Blog

www.parablesblog.blogspot.com

Heart4God/Parables
P.O. Box 804
Montezuma, GA 31063

«AddressBlock»

Parables Bookshelf — Series 1.16.12

PARABLES PRECEPT— The Significance of Numbers



THIRTY

being 3 x 10, denotes in a higher degree *the perfection of Divine order*, as marking *the right moment*. CHRIST was thirty years of age at the commencement of His ministry.

Luke 3:23

And when He began His ministry, Yahshua Himself was about thirty years of age...

JOSEPH, who serves as a type of Christ, also was thirty years old when he began his ministry.

Genesis 41:46

Now Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh, king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and

went through all the land of Egypt.

Providing a three-fold witness to the significance of this number, David was also thirty years of age when he began to rule as king.

II Samuel 5:4

David was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned forty years.

Marvelous are the patterns of Yahweh.