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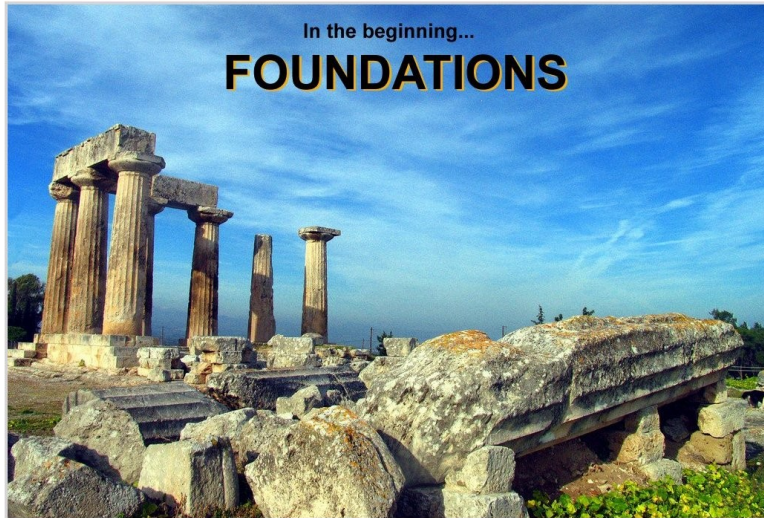
Bringing Hidden Things to Light



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 1.16.9



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 the Parables Bookshelf we continue the book *Foundations*. Chapter 12 sets the stage for an in depth examination of God's use of the stars of the heavens as a means of divine prophecy. There will be four chapters in all which examine the Zodiac as heavenly scroll of divine prophecy.

Scripture Memory

Psalms 19:1-2

The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night reveals knowledge.

Parables Newsletter

- Series 1.16.9
- *Foundations*
- Chapter 12

Foundations

Prophecy in the Heavens



In the preceding chapter we looked at the divinely assigned role of the sun, moon, and stars as markers to indicate to God's people His moedim (seasons, appointed times). Three times each year all the men of Israel were commanded to gather to the place appointed by God to observe the Feasts of Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles. The heavenly lights, specifically the moon, were used to establish the precise day when these events were to take place.

The Feast Days were not the only moedim whose proper time was announced by the lights Yahweh arranged in the heavens. It was previously noted that the appointed time for the birth of the Son of God was announced by a specific star whose message wise men from the East understood and acted upon. Similarly, we are told that the return of the Lord will be announced by signs in the sun, moon, and stars (Luke 21:25).

Christians rarely object to assertions that Yahweh assigned to the heavenly luminaries a **timing** role as

a sort of divine calendar. Yet a Bible teacher will encounter great resistance should he begin to teach upon the **prophetic** role that sun, moon, and stars play in declaring the counsel of God. People fear that advocating a prophetic role for the constellations and various heavenly bodies is tantamount to promoting astrology. Satan has introduced many profane and heretical practices to humanity from the very earliest times. He is called "the great deceiver who deceives the whole world" (Revelation 12:9). Satan has induced men to embrace spiritually dark practices such as communication with the dead, hypnotism, spirit channeling, seances, Ouija boards, astrology and horoscopes. These last two hold a close relationship to the starry hosts and the location of the sun and moon in the heavens.

Astrology is a form of divination. Divination is defined as "*the practice of seeking knowledge about the future, or about the unknown, through supernatural means.*" A patient consideration of the meaning of this word will reveal that there are both lawful and unlawful forms of divination. By lawful, I mean practices of which Yahweh approves. The relationship between the word "divination" and the word "divine," which denotes something from, or like God, is readily evident. A diviner in ancient days was considered to be a person who was able to communicate with the gods, or with a specific god.

Communication with Yahweh, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, is a very good thing. Communication with false gods is an evil thing. Yahweh forbid the practice of idolatry among those who worshiped Him. In contrast, devotion to Yahweh was encouraged. If Christians are able to distinguish between idolatrous worship and worship of Yahweh, they are also able to distinguish between the various forms of lawful and unlawful divination.

Prophecy is a form of divination. It is a supernatu-

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ral means of obtaining knowledge about the future or about hidden things that a person could not comprehend through their natural senses. The Bible is filled with accounts of men and women who prophesied about events to come. This is a form of divination that is found in the New Testament as well as in the Old.

Acts 11:27-30

Now at this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. And one of them named Agabus stood up and began to indicate by the Spirit that there would certainly be a great famine all over the world. And this took place in the reign of Claudius. And in the proportion that any of the disciples had means, each of them determined to send a contribution for the relief of the brethren living in Judea. And this they did, sending it in charge of Barnabas and Saul to the elders.

In this Scripture we see an example of lawful divination. What makes this type of supernatural communication lawful is that Yahweh is the initiator of it. The Holy Spirit speaking through God's prophets made known what was to come. The Bible also provides accounts of unlawful divination.

Acts 16:16-18

And it happened that as we were going to the place of prayer, a certain slave-girl having *a spirit of divination* met us, who was bringing her masters much profit by fortunetelling. Following after Paul and us, she kept crying out, saying, "These men are bond-servants of the Most High God, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation." And she continued doing this for many days. But Paul was greatly annoyed, and turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Yahshua Christ to come out of her!" And it came out at that very moment.

Similar encounters occurred in the life of Christ as demons began to speak through those they possessed, declaring Yahshua to be the Son of God.

Mark 1:23-26

And just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, saying, "What do we have to do with You, Yahshua of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are - the Holy One of God!" And Yahshua rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet, and come out of him!" And throwing him into convulsions, the unclean spirit cried out with a loud voice, and came out of him.

Notice that in both cases the unclean spirits spoke truth. Paul was indeed "a bond-servant of the Most High God," and Yahshua is "the Holy One of God." Nevertheless, what these spirits were doing was unlawful in God's sight. They had not been sent by God to prophesy these messages. Lawlessness is the condition of being out from under authority. It is doing or speaking something of one's own initiative, rather than being subject to the rule of God.

These spirits, and the people they were speaking through, were prophesying. I am certain that the servant girl who was bringing much profit to her masters was declaring many amazing things about people that proved to be true. At times this may have included speaking about future events in a person's life that would come to pass. The Bible reveals that evil spirits can impart supernatural information to people in imitation of the work of the Holy Spirit. This in no way negates the legitimacy of prophecy and words of knowledge as divine gifts bequeathed to the body of Christ.

Foundations

I Corinthians 12:8-11

For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.

Like Agabus, those individuals who lawfully use the gifts are able to bring much benefit to the people of God. We would err if we were to condemn all supernatural words of prophecy within the body of Christ simply because Satan has a counterfeit gift. Sadly, many who proclaim to be Christians are prophesying under the influence of unclean spirits. For this reason, discernment must be exercised among Christians. We are commanded to “test the spirits”

I John 4:1

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

There are many pastors, churches, and entire denominations that reject the gift of prophecy among the body of Christ. Doctrines have been embraced that declare the gifts of the Spirit to have ended when the Bible was canonized. This rejection of prophecy is not in accordance with the mind of Christ. If a famine were to occur in our day, as it did in the days of Barnabus and Saul, the Bible would not inform us of it, but the Spirit of Christ speaking through a gifted prophet could. The Bible was never intended to be a replacement for the Spirit of Christ. It is just one more means by which

the Holy Spirit communicates the mind of God to mankind. Christians should value the Scriptures while being careful not to quench the Spirit by refusing to let Him speak through other means.

I Thessalonians 5:19-20

Do not quench the Spirit; do not despise prophetic utterances.

Those who reject the gift of prophecy among the body of Christ are quenching the Spirit. They are effectually saying, “We will not permit the Spirit of Christ to communicate to us through this means. We will only allow the Spirit to speak to us through the Scriptures.” In the same way, Christians who reject the starry hosts as a form of divine communication are quenching the Spirit. Out of fear for Satan’s counterfeit, they reject the voice of God as it speaks through the heavens.

Psalms 19:1-4

The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words; Their voice is not heard. Their utterance has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.

Christians need to be discerning. Divination is not an all or nothing proposition. Accepting that Yahweh speaks to mankind through the sun, moon, and stars does not necessitate that the individual accept Satanic forms of astrology. The corollary to this truth is that rejecting the unlawful practice of astrology does not necessitate that a Christian reject God’s voice in the heavens. The magi embraced God’s voice in the heavens and they were informed of the birth of the Savior of mankind. Yahweh spoke to these same wise men through a dream, warning them not to return to Herod, but to go

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home another way.



Having God communicate through the stars, and through a dream, may seem atypical to many Christians, but they are both common modes of communication that Yahweh regularly employs. The Bible is filled with examples of God speaking through the stars, through dreams, through visions, through signs and wonders, through angels, and through prophets. Those who would reject these forms of divine communication do injury to themselves, and to those whose lives they influence.

Yahweh is a great communicator. The Son of God is called “the Word made flesh” (John 1:14). A word is the basic unit of communication. Christ is the ultimate expression of God. He fully disclosed the Father to mankind. Although Christ has now ascended to the Father, He continues to speak. He has sent forth His Spirit to open the minds of men to understand the speech of God. This speech may come through the reading of the Scriptures, but it may also come through other ways.

Hebrews 1:1-2

God, after *He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways*, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son...

Job 33:14-16

Indeed God speaks once, or twice, yet no one notices it. *In a dream, a vision of the night*, when sound sleep falls on men, while they slumber in their beds, then He opens the ears of men, and seals their instruction...

If you will accept that God speaks through visions, dreams, and words of prophecy, then you should accept that God will communicate profound and specific things through the heavens as well. Speaking of the hour in which we now live, Yahweh declared the following through the prophet Joel:

Joel 2:28-31

“And it will come about after this that I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; And your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. And even on the male and female servants I will pour out My Spirit in those days. ***And I will display wonders in the sky and on the earth, blood, fire, and columns of smoke. The sun will be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and awesome day of Yahweh comes.***”

Cast away dreams, cast away visions, cast away prophecy, cast away God’s messages through the heavens: The result will be that you will render yourself deaf and blind to the Spirit of God.

Isaiah 42:18-20

“Hear, you deaf! And look, you blind, that you may see. Who is blind but My servant, or so deaf as My messenger whom I send? Who is so blind as he that is at peace with Me, or so blind as the servant of Yahweh? You have seen many things, but you do not observe them; Your ears are open, but none hears.”

Foundations

As I have been studying this subject of God speaking through the heavenly bodies, I have purposely chosen to read what people are saying who oppose this form of divine speech. It is wise to hear all sides of a matter. Oftentimes those who are cheerleaders of some truth manifest too much exuberance. There is a temptation to go beyond the revelation that has been given to them, or too speak with confidence where caution is due. As a Bible teacher I am aware of the danger of transgressing in this matter. I have erred at times, and had to later retract some statement that was imprudently uttered. James spoke of the need to guard our speech.

James 3:1-2

Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we shall incur a stricter judgment. For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well.

I am not yet a “perfect man,” but I am desirous of making consistent progress toward conformity to the image of Christ. I have found that patient consideration of alternative, or antagonistic views on a matter, is one way in which I can discern pitfalls and errors in a subject and avoid an excess of enthusiasm that has led some to stray into error. The Bible recommends the practice of hearing all sides of an issue before forming a judgment.

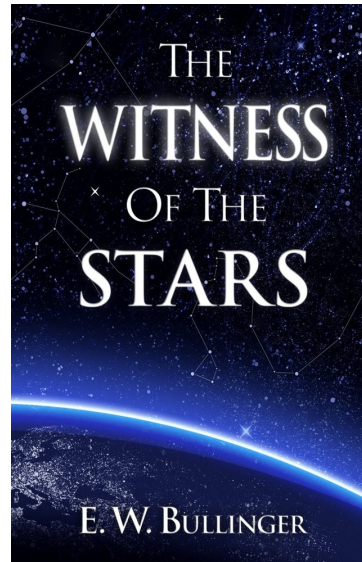
Proverbs 18:13

He who gives an answer before he hears, it is folly and shame to him.

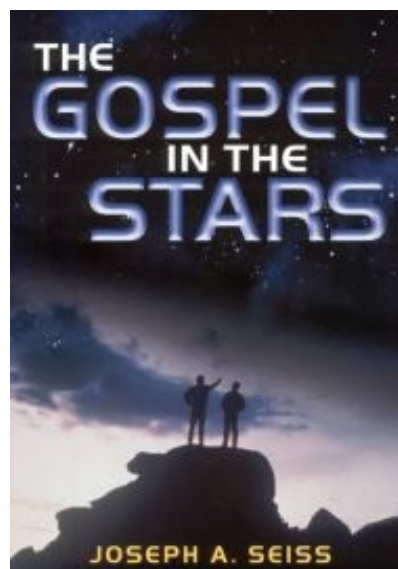
Proverbs 18:17

The first to plead his case seems just, until another comes and examines him.

I do not know where I first heard a teaching on the Gospel in the stars, it may have been E.W. Bullinger’s book *The Witness of the Stars*.



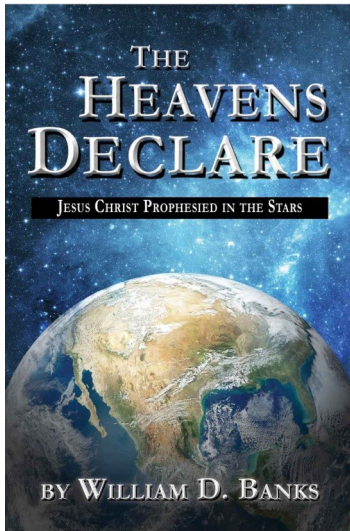
It was some years back that I first looked into this subject and I acquired and read three books in close succession. The other two books were *The Gospel in the Stars* by Joseph A. Seiss and *The Heavens Declare...* by William D. Banks. The oldest of the three books was written by Seiss in 1882.



Bullinger’s book was published a decade later. William Bank’s book is more recent, having been pub-

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lished in 1985.



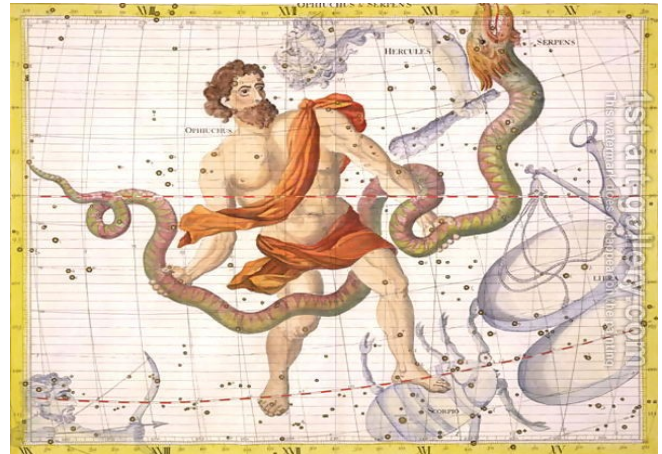
All three of these books present a nearly identical testimony of the constellations of the zodiac having an ancient origin that was intended to serve as a prophecy of the redemption of man as they described the work of Jesus Christ/Yahshua the Messiah. Some of the constellations lend themselves quite readily to this understanding. It is easy to see in Virgo the promise of God that the Seed of the woman would one day crush the head of the serpent, Satan. Virgo is understood to serve as a direct corollary to the prophecy of Isaiah.

Isaiah 7:14

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



The constellation Leo brings to mind the references to Christ as “the lion of the tribe of Judah” (Revelation 5:5). Although they are not among the 12 major constellations of the zodiac, there are numerous constellations in the heavens representing a dragon or a serpent. Among them are Draco, Hydra, and Serpens whose coils seem to interweave themselves throughout the starry testimony.



Ophiuchus and Serpens

There are multiple images of mighty men who are struggling against various beasts, whether it be Orion, Ophiuchus, Hercules, Perseus, or others, they all in some way can be related to the labors of Christ to destroy the works of Satan, that great dragon and serpent of old, in order to free mankind from sin and death.

The three books named paint a remarkably consistent testimony of the Gospel in the heavens. In them, all twelve constellations of the zodiac, and their 36 associated decans (minor constellations) are in various ways demonstrated to be part of a larger testimony that God had set in the heavens to foretell the conflict between Christ, the Seed of the woman, and Satan, the serpent. From the birth of the Son of God in Virgo to the triumph and reign of Christ in Leo, and in all of the constellations in between, it is declared by these authors that not only

Foundations

the constellations, but the names of the individual stars, give assent to God's plan of redemption for a fallen creation.

In reading these three books, it was apparent that one reason for the great similarity of testimony between them is due to all three authors drawing heavily upon the research of Frances Rolleston (1781-1864) whose book *Mazzaroth: or the Constellations* was published in the year 1862 (Note: some sources vary on the original date of publication, but only slightly.). In his book, William Banks provides the following biographical information on Frances Rolleston.

Anyone who approaches the study of the ancient names of the stars, will soon become aware of the great debt owed to an amazing lady, Frances Rolleston. It was she who devoted over fifty years of her life to the compilation of a massive series of notes which was published under the title "Mazzaroth - The Constellations" in 1863, when she was in her 80's.

Miss Rolleston was a scholar in every sense of the word. She was a classicist, a linguist, and one who worked and consulted with many of the most educated people in England during the 1800's. She also corresponded with many other experts from around the world.

Frances was a gifted student who became deeply committed to her studies and began diligently studying Hebrew in 1818 and continued as a student through 1835. She read daily from the original Hebrew Scriptures even after completing her formal study of the language. Among her other exceptional accomplishments were the following: she studied Latin and Greek doing her own translations of Homer, and other Greek poetry ("just to keep my hand in"); she also mastered French, Egyptian

(Coptic and Hieroglyphics); the Semitic root languages of Arabic, Syriac, Aramaic, Sanscrit, and Chaldee; and became an authority on the origin and roots of language...

In addition Frances was a charitable person. When she heard of the plight of the American Negroes in 1811, she became actively involved in working for their emancipation at that very early date. She remained quite concerned and later sent aid for the "15000 [sic] negroes left masterless and destitute by this dreadful [Civil] war." She regularly visited the elderly and needy in her own area...

When Frances was only nine, she overheard part of a funeral service which made a lasting impression on her and shaped the course of her life. The passage which she heard quoted was, "I know my Redeemer liveth." This became her theme and remained so in her final hours.

At the time of her death in her late 80's (Joseph's note: she was either 82 or 83 years old at her death, rather than her "late 80's"), she was excited about working on a new edition of "Mazzaroth." It was to include a new find, seven zodiacs from India, "none older than Abraham, from the Ancient Chaldean astronomy in Sanscrit."

Even at the end of her life Miss Rolleston had things in proper perspective. This fact is evident in the closing statement of an 1862 letter to a colleague in the United States, "... what concerns you and me is, be ye ready, for ye know not in what hour your Lord cometh."

[Source: Preface to *The Heavens Declare...*, William D. Banks]

These are words of high praise for this woman, both for her scholarship and her character. He does

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not cite the source of his information on Miss Rolleston's life, and since he was writing his own book more than a century after her death, he could not have had personal knowledge of her. It is very likely Mr. Banks drew his information from the biographical book published by Caroline Dent in 1867, three years after Miss Rolleston's death. The book is titled *Letters of Miss Frances Rolleston of Keswick*. It consists primarily of the personal correspondence that Miss Rolleston carried on throughout the course of her life, with some brief commentary by Caroline Dent. The book is available freely on Google Books and runs to more than 600 pages in length.

In this book there is a letter written to a Mr. Henry Crowther in the year 1830 in which Frances Rolleston shares her excitement about her study of the subject of the zodiac and its Biblical references. It provides a concise summary of many of the apparent links she saw between the heavenly constellations and the Biblical account of man's redemption.

My Dear Henry...

I am now so engaged on a subject I think I must have mentioned to you, that I can scarcely think of anything else. You have heard me say that I was persuaded that the signs of the Zodiac were all emblems to the glory of Messiah, rather than to the nonsense usually attached to them. I have been following up the inquiry, and have interested several men of learning and piety on the subject. We are discussing in what form to bring it forward. All the languages of Babel are required in evidence, but as I chiefly desire to interest young persons with the results, what shall we do with the tongues? Some say notes, some say an appendix stating the facts in plain English. So I will try how the theory appears to you, without the abundant evidence belonging to it, which every day accumulates.

Tradition and internal evidence agree in attributing the origin of astronomy to a time about 5500 years ago, and a place between forty and fifty degrees of north latitude. Tradition goes yet further, and by Josephus names Seth, the son of Adam, as its originator and traces it through Abraham to the Egyptians and Chaldees, from them to Persia and India, etc.. Refer to the prophecy recorded as given to Adam, the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head, but the serpent shall bruise his heel... Sacrifice also was instituted, and no doubt explained; and Enoch, who prophesied of the day of Judgment, evidently had further revelations than those. I find it generally allowed by ancient writers that the sign of Aries had a sacred, design, and mystical meaning, and was often considered to be the sacrificial Lamb; such I hold it, "The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," the promised Lamb of God. In Taurus you find the first Cherubic head, the Bull's; in Gemini, the Man's, also explaining the double nature of the expected Messiah; in Cancer the Eagle, still existing in the Egyptian Zodiacs of Esne and Dendera; in Leo, the fourth, the Lion; as you will find them in Ezekiel, chap. 1st. These heads are considered as typical of the Triune God, in union with the human nature: the Bull, from a Hebrew word signifying far and clear sightedness, symbolizes omniscience; the Eagle, from its rapid flight, Omnipresence (see Job xxxix. 3); the Lion, Omnipotence. Virgo was in all ancient spheres a woman nursing an infant, and holding an ear of corn in her hand, which to all nations spoke His name, the Seed. Albumazar, an Arabian astronomer of the ninth century, says, speaking of Virgo, "This infant is by the Hebrews called Issa, the Savior, whom the Greeks call Christ." The next sign, Libra, was formerly the crown, and called the house of propitiation; justification by the Messiah was expressed by a man bearing the scales. In Scorpio is a man bearing a serpent, and with his foot on the head of a scorpion; called in ancient Egyptian (it is supposed) the house of preservation or deliverance. Sagittarius, a figure with two faces, a man's and a lion's, with the

Foundations

body of a horse, the type of swiftness (“Behold, I come quickly,” etc.), the scorpion stinging the horse’s heel; anciently called the station of loving-kindness. The Messiah’s attribute of arrows will occur to you, but you will not divine that, in pronouncing arrow in Hebrew and other ancient tongues, they recalled the first name by which He was announced, Shiloh. Capricornus, anciently the house of sacrifice, where the victim, “hind of the morning,” is escaping from the mouth of Leviathan, a type of death and the power of Satan. Aquarius, house of benefits or gifts; the risen Messiah pouring out the gifts of the Holy Spirit, under the appointed type of water. Pisces, two fishes, above united by a band, which also holds the Leviathan bound below, [typifies] the union of the Jewish and Gentile churches (fish meaning multitude, congregation) and the final binding of the adversary Satan...

Now the proof of all this would fill a volume. I wish you would think it over, and make every objection that occurs to you, and point out where proof seems wanted. Every constellation, except those not visible in Chaldea and northward, is also a memorial of a prophecy of Him who was to come, the Desire of Nations; I will give you those to consider when I hear what you say to these. I find the study most devotional, and opening Scripture to me daily. “The heavens declare the glory of God,” most magnificently when so viewed.

[Source: *Letters of Miss Frances Rolleston of Keswick*, Caroline Dent]

This excitement of Miss Rolleston’s was exhibited in this letter more than three decades before she finally published the first edition of *Mazzaroth*. She had largely completed her study of the subject by 1840, but was prevented by her financial situation from publishing the book until near the end of her life in the early 1860s. She likely would have had the funds available, except that she was quite generous in giving alms to the needy whenever she was able.

From 1840 to the end of her life she continued to refine and perfect her material on *Mazzaroth*, a fact which is very evident from her correspondence that is preserved to this day. Miss Rolleston’s presentation of the matter was convincing to many who were lovers of truth, including Joseph Seiss and Ethelbert Bullinger. Both of these men confessed the benefit they derived from Miss Rolleston’s labors. Joseph Seiss lived during the same time as Frances Rolleston, though his book does not indicate that he knew her personally. He writes:

A more valuable aid to the study of the subject as treated in this volume is Frances Rolleston’s “Mazzaroth: Or, the Constellations” - a book from an authoress of great linguistic and general literary attainments, whom Providence rarely favored for the collection of important facts and materials, particularly as respects the ancient stellar nomenclature. The tables drawn up by Ulugh Beigh, the Tartar prince and astronomer, about A.D. 1420, giving Arabian astronomy as it had come down to his time, with the ancient Coptic and Egyptian names, likewise the much earlier presentations, made about A.D. 850 by Albumazer, the great Arab astronomer of the Caliphs of Grenada, and Aben Ezra’s commentaries on the same, are, to a considerable extent, reproduced in her book. Facsimilies of the Dendera and Esne Zodiacs are also given in the last edition (1875) of her work. And from her tables and references the writer of these Lectures was helped to some of his best information, without which this book could hardly have become what it is.

[Source: Preface to *The Gospel in the Stars*, Joseph A. Seiss]

Bullinger similarly declares his reliance upon the work of Frances Rolleston.

Some years ago it was my privilege to enjoy the acquaintance of Miss Frances Rolleston, of Keswick, and to carry on a correspondence with her with respect to her work, “Mazzaroth or, the Constellations.” She was the first to create an interest

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in this important subject. Since then Dr. Joseph A. Seiss, of Philadelphia, has endeavored to popularize her work on the other side of the Atlantic; and brief references have been made to the subject in such books as "Moses and Geology," by Dr. Kinns, and in "Primeval Man"; but it was felt, for many reasons, that it was desirable to make another effort to set forth, in a more complete form, the witness of the stars to prophetic truth, so necessary in these last days.

To the late Miss Rolleston, however, belongs the honor of collecting a mass of information bearing on this subject; but, published as it was, chiefly in the form of notes, unarranged and unindexed, it was suited only for, but was most valuable to, the student. It was she who performed the drudgery of collecting the facts presented by Albumazer, the Arab astronomer to the Caliphs of Grenada, AD 850; and the Tables drawn up by Ulugh Beigh, the Tartar prince and astronomer, about AD 1450, who gives the Arabian astronomy as it had come down from the earliest times.

[Source: Preface to *The Witness of the Stars*, E.W. Bullinger]



your very affectionate daughter
F. Rolleston

Frances Rolleston Silhouette

(From the book *Letters of Miss Frances Rolleston of Keswick*)

With Miss Rolleston's research playing such a great role in the promotion of this particular view of the heaven's prophetic role, it is certainly warranted to delve a little deeper into her character and beliefs. One reader of the Parables Blog sent me an e-mail suggesting I read a book by Tim Warner titled *Mystery of the Mazzaroth*. I had not heard of this book, but reading the book's description on Amazon's website, my curiosity was piqued.

In 1862, Francis Rolleston published "Mazzaroth," attempting to link the Zodiac with Christianity based on similarities between phonetic sounds of Arabic star names and certain Hebrew words. Her theory has been copied and repackaged by Joseph Seiss, E. W. Bullinger, D. James Kennedy, and Chuck Missler. However, the whole basis for her theory has been thoroughly refuted by Christian apologetic ministries. Thus, all of these knockoffs of Rolleston's book have equally been soundly refuted.

"Mystery of the Mazzaroth" presents a completely new approach. Never before has the sequence of Zodiac signs been understood in light of Biblical prophecy, telling the sequential story of Israel's history and redemption. The connections between the Zodiac signs, the pagan myths associated with them, and the story of Israel are so numerous and profound, that they cannot be dismissed by any honest truth-seeker. This book will open your eyes to a powerful reason to believe that God exists, and that the Creator is the same God who appeared to Abraham.

It seemed a bit uncharitable for Mr. Warner to describe the works of Seiss, Bullinger, and others as "knockoffs of Rolleston's book." These men contributed a good deal of their own material, and in many instances supplied sources where they were absent in Miss Rolleston's book. They also labored to present what was basically a large amalgamation of notes into a highly readable form that would

Foundations

hold the interest of the average reader. Despite what seemed to be a somewhat prejudiced view against Miss Rolleston's writing, and recognizing the profit to be gained by hearing multiple views on a subject, I ordered Mr. Warner's book with an interest to see how he refuted Frances Rolleston's work.

It should be noted that Tim Warner is not antagonistic to the idea of the heavens being used in a prophetic manner by God. Rather, he finds fault with Miss Rolleston's interpretation of the heavenly message and would propose an alternate account of that which God has written in the stars. I was hoping that Mr. Warner would provide links to the sources he referred to when he stated "*the whole basis for her theory has been thoroughly refuted by Christian apologetic ministries.*" I wanted to know what ministries these were, and what evidence and arguments they had to set forth.

On page 24 of *Mystery of the Mazzaroth* I found Tim Warner's refutation of Frances Rolleston's work. It was even more terse than the book description on Amazon. He writes:

"More recently, apologetics and creation ministries have debunked the work of Frances Rolleston (and with it all of the other books based on her work), showing it as non-scientific and subjective, and rightly so."

That is it! One sentence, and the labor of a lifetime is cast into the gutter. At the bottom of the page there was a link to an article written by Dr. Danny Faulkner in 2007 that is located on the *Answers in Genesis* website. I hoped the link would still be functional, for I wanted very much to read this thorough debunking of Miss Rolleston's magnum opus, a work that kept her attention for decades. I was relieved to find that the webpage was still ac-

tive even though the article has a date on it of December 13, 2007. At the same time I was disappointed to see that the article was only 12 paragraphs long. How do you "thoroughly debunk" a body of information that is spread across more than 300 pages (as is the case with the book *Mazzaroth*) in only 12 paragraphs?

After reading the article on the *Answers in Genesis* website, I had to conclude that Mr. Warner was guilty of overstatement. Danny Faulkner addressed only two words out of hundreds that Frances Rolleston provided as evidence in her book. He writes:

As an example of Rolleston's methodology, consider the meaning that she found for the star Deneb, the brightest star in the constellation Cygnus. She reasoned that it was a perversion of the Hebrew dan, which means "judge." Because Hebrew scribes added marks for vowels much later, one could suppose that this is possible. However, why search for some other meaning when the traditional Arabic meaning works so well? The Arab word deneb means "tail," and it marks the tail of Cygnus. Incidentally, several other stars contain deneb as a portion of their names, and in each case they mark the tails of their respective constellations. Yet Rolleston persisted with her reinterpretation of words...

Far more problematic is the Hebrew word used for Orion. Elsewhere in the Old Testament this word is translated "fool." For instance, chesil is the word translated "fool" eight times in Proverbs 26. Thus, by the Hebrew name for him, we can see that Orion is not an individual worthy of respect and devotion. To equate this fool with a type of Christ borders on blasphemy, and most Christians ought to find this offensive. If Rolleston had been as proficient in Hebrew as required to do word studies, then she ought to have known that the Hebrew word for Orion is the same as a "fool."

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[Source: *Answers in Genesis*, Dr. Danny Faulkner]

Whether Frances Rolleston's suggested meanings for these two words (deneb and chesil) are correct, I am unable to tell. I am NOT an expert in ancient languages. I would say, however, that "Fool" is an unlikely meaning to associate with the constellation Orion. Orion is commonly depicted as a warrior with a club in one hand, and a lion skin draped over the other arm as if it had been slain ("Satan goes about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.") In alternate depictions, Orion has a shield in his left arm rather than a lion skin.



The word "Fool" does not fit the image of Orion. Danny Faulkner does not attempt to explain how this meaning would apply to the constellation. He seems content to cast doubt upon the meaning set forth by Frances Rolleston. Yet, if "Fool" is an altogether unbecoming descriptor for this figure in the heavens, then his argument loses its force. Another meaning must be sought.

Looking up the word "chesil" in *Strong's Concordance*, one finds three listings for this word. Whenever the word is used to denote a constellation in the heavens, which occurs four times in the Bible (Job 9:9, 38:31, Isaiah 13:10, Amos 5:8), the entry is listed as following.

OT:3685

Keciyl (kes-eel'); the same as OT:3684; any notable constellation; specifically Orion (as if a **burly** one):

KJV - constellation, Orion.

When the word is used to denote a fool, Strong's has a separate entry.

OT:3684

keciyl (kes-eel'); from OT:3688; **properly, fat**, i.e. (figuratively) stupid or silly:

KJV - fool (-ish).

Note that the word properly means "fat," but an alternate and related meaning is "burly." When the word is understood as "fat" it can figuratively mean silly or stupid. A strong, heavily muscled man can appear fat, but a far better word is burly, meaning "large and strong." When used in this manner, the word chesil aptly describes the figure recognized as Orion. Danny Faulkner has not allowed for the possibility of a single Hebrew word holding more than one meaning. His denigration of Frances Rolleston's work is therefore based upon a flawed argument, for words in any language can, and do, hold a variety of meanings.

To provide an example, the Hebrew word "natsar" (Strong's #5341) conveys multiple meanings. It can denote someone who is "cunning," or the idea of "protecting, as if hiding or concealing." Consequently, this word is used to denote the activity of a harlot, as well as the actions of Yahweh.

Proverbs 7:10

And behold, a woman comes to meet him, dressed as a harlot and **cunning** (natsar) of heart.

Foundations

Psalms 12:7

You shall keep them, O Lord, You shall *preserve* (natsar) them from this generation forever.

It would be poor logic to suggest that using a word in one place to describe the actions of a harlot and in another place to describe the action of God, “borders on blasphemy.” Toward the end of his brief writing, Dr. Faulkner shares what he believes to be a more serious objection to Frances Roll-eston’s teaching that the Gospel is portrayed in the stars. His objection equally applies to Tim Warner’s alternate teaching about the message in the heavens, which makes one wonder about the prudence of Tim Warner citing this particular writing.

But there is a far more serious objection to the gospel in the stars: it contradicts biblical texts. The New Testament calls the gospel a “mystery” (1 Corinthians 2:7; Ephesians 6:19, 3:8–12; Colossians 4:3). In the New Testament, a mystery is something that was previously unknown but now is revealed to us. Romans 16:25–26 states that this mystery was hidden for long ages and was revealed through prophetic writings (that is, in the Old Testament, not in the stars). 1 Corinthians 2:8 further tells us that, if the princes of this world had known of this mystery, “they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.” 1 Peter 1:10–12 suggests that, while the prophets “searched diligently,” they failed to grasp fully the gospel before its time.

[Source: Ibid]

I agree that most men failed to “grasp” the gospel before its time. This failure of comprehension was not due to a lack of foretelling of what was to come, for the Old Testament contains a profusion of types, shadows, and plain words of prophecy concerning the suffering Savior and His ultimate triumph over Satan, sin, and death. The inability to grasp the gospel message before it was fulfilled

was largely due to the great disparity in man’s thought and God’s thoughts.

Isaiah 55:8-9

“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways,” declares Yahweh. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.”

Men may fail to comprehend the mind of God even when He speaks to them in the plainest of speech. An example of this is observed in the following words.

Mark 9:31-32

For He was teaching His disciples and telling them, “The Son of Man is to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill Him; and when He has been killed, He will rise three days later.” But they did not understand this statement, and they were afraid to ask Him.

There was a veil that remained over the minds of Christ’s disciples. Many of the things that Christ declared to them did not make sense until after they were fulfilled. This is one function of prophecy. It is to let us know after an event occurs that God was the Author of it, and the matter was according to His plan. This is made plain in the following verses.

John 2:19-22

Yahshua answered and said to them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” The Jews therefore said, “It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?” But He was speaking of the temple of His body. When therefore He was raised from the dead, His

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disciples remembered that He said this; and they believed the Scripture, and the word which Yahshua had spoken.

The Jewish people and their religious leaders had the plain testimony of the prophets who spoke often of the promised Messiah. Nevertheless, when they read the Scriptures a veil was over their minds, preventing them from comprehending the truth of what they were reading.

II Corinthians 3:14-16

But their minds were hardened; for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains unlifted, because it is removed in Christ. But to this day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart; but whenever a man turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

To suggest that the gospel was unknown, or undeclared, before the time of its fulfillment is an absolutely untenable position to defend. From the third chapter of Genesis we see God beginning to prophesy through words and signs that a Savior would one day come to redeem humanity and break the bonds of Satan. We see this in God's words stating that the Seed of the woman would crush the serpent's head. It is observed in the garment of animal skins that God provided as a covering for mankind's nakedness. This required an animal to be sacrificed, looking forward to the Lamb of God who is Christ one day becoming a covering for all who believe. The Gospel is seen in the Passover Lamb that was slain so that others might live. The betrayal of Christ is observed in Judah suggesting to his brothers that they sell Joseph for 20 pieces of silver, serving as a type of Judas (a Greek form of the name Judah) betraying Yahshua for 30 pieces of silver. The prophets declared that a virgin would be with child. They foretold the suffering Servant, the One who would be pierced for our transgressions. The very words of Christ on the cross were

prophetically uttered by David in the Psalms centuries before the fulfillment.

Psalms 22:1-7

For the choir director; upon Aijeleth Hashshahar. A Psalm of David.

My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? Far from my deliverance are the words of my groaning.... But I am a worm, and not a man, a reproach of men, and despised by the people. All who see me sneer at me; They separate with the lip, they wag the head, saying, "Commit yourself to Yahweh; let Him deliver him; Let Him rescue him, because He delights in him..." I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It is melted within me. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaves to my jaws; And You do lay me in the dust of death. For dogs have surrounded me; A band of evildoers has encompassed me; They pierced my hands and my feet. I can count all my bones. They look, they stare at me; They divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.

If the message of Christ being born of a virgin, living a sinless life as the spotless Passover Lamb, suffering death on a cross, and rising again remained a mystery to men and angels, it was NOT due to a lack of God foretelling these events. Rather, it was due to the unbelief and dullness of those who heard the message. Dr. Faulkner's argument is a hollow one. If God could foretell the entirety of the Gospel message through types, shadows, and words of prophecy recorded in the Old Testament, yet the Gospel be referred to as "a mystery" in the New Testament, it reasonably follows that the same message declared in the stars of the heavens could be present yet the Gospel remain a veiled testimony not comprehended by the majority of humanity. The apostle Paul argues this very point, stating that the Gospel was proclaimed, but its message was not believed.

Foundations

Romans 10:14-18

How then shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things!" However, they did not all heed the glad tidings; for Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our report?" So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ. **But I say, surely they have never heard, have they? Indeed they have;** "Their utterance has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world."

In the last sentence of the Scripture above, the apostle Paul is quoting David's words from Psalm 19. Let us look at this passage again and compare it to the statement made by Paul.

Psalms 19:1-4

The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words; Their voice is not heard. **Their utterance has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.**

Can the matter be more plainly stated than Paul has made it? He both asks and answers the question of whether the Gospel had been proclaimed to humanity before Christ came. "However, they did not all heed the glad tidings (Gospel); for Isaiah says, 'Lord, who has believed our report?...' But I say, surely they have never heard, have they? **Indeed they have...**" Paul not only tells us that the Gospel has been proclaimed, but he provides two witnesses on the matter. He cites the prophets, among whom Isaiah was one of the chief to foretell of the coming Messiah, His suffering, and ultimate triumph, and

Paul makes mention of the heavens as a second witness to the Gospel message by reciting the 19th Psalm.

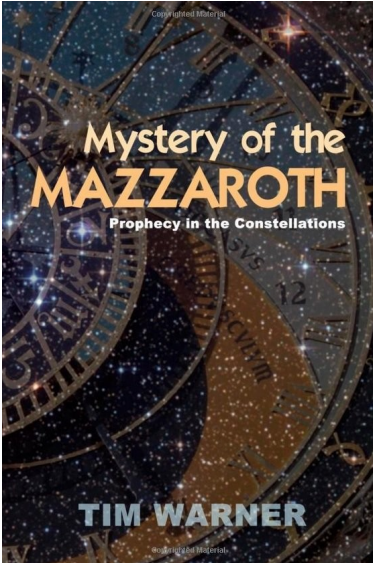
By doing so, Paul has fulfilled the mandate of the Law that all things be established by two or more witnesses. There are many prophets who foretold the coming of Messiah. Paul could have mentioned them alone to provide the requisite number of witnesses, but he goes beyond this. Paul provides two different *types* of witnesses. There is the witness of God's Spirit speaking through man, and the witness of God's Spirit speaking through the heavens.

Tim Warner has surely misstated the matter when he writes "*apologetics [sic] and creation ministries have debunked the work of Frances Rolleston (and with it all of the other books based on her work), showing it as non-scientific and subjective...*" I believe Tim meant to state that "apologists," not "apologetics," have debunked the work of Frances Rolleston. In either case, Tim Warner has exaggerated, for even as he also uses the plural word "ministries," he provides only one link to the writing of one man on one ministry's website. The only apologist Tim Warner cites is Dr. Danny Faulkner, and Dr. Faulkner is not even on staff with the creation ministry that posted his writing. He was merely a guest writer whose article was approved for posting on the *Answers in Genesis* website. Perhaps it was an over exuberance in promoting his own theory on this subject that led him to overstate the matter.

About the time Tim Warner's book came out, Dr. Danny Faulkner greatly expanded his writing that argues against the veracity of Frances Rolleston's book and those who have followed her. The *Answers In Genesis* website once more published his letter, evidently after Warner's book was published, as there is only a link to the much earlier and shorter writing of Dr. Faulkner in the book. Dr.

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Faulkner mentions in the expanded update to this writing that he received some objections to his previous critical work, and felt the need to expand it.



<https://answersingenesis.org/astronomy/stars/a-further-examination-of-the-gospel-in-the-stars/>

Danny Faulkner admits that he did not have access to Frances Rolleston’s book when he wrote his first criticism, for *Mazzaroth* had long been out of print. Now that the book is once more readily available in print and to be read or downloaded freely online, he was able to do a much more thorough vetting of the book, and I am impressed with his scholarship in this second attempt at the writing. His second writing is all the more impressive when held up against the deficiencies of his first effort on this topic. I would recommend strongly that anyone with an interest in this subject read Dr. Faulkner’s revised and expanded writing that is dated February 6, 2013 (see the link above). It is very well written, and patiently researched, though it continues to manifest some deficiencies.

Some of the fault I find with his refutation of Frances Rolleston’s work I would describe as errors of argument, or reason. For example, it is mentioned more than once that Dr. Faulkner could not find the

subject of the prophetic foretelling of the Gospel in the stars in any of the Bible commentaries that he consulted. This is not surprising. I have largely avoided Bible commentaries for the past two decades as I have found them to be very shallow, and often wrong-minded, in their expositions of Scriptures. Most Bible commentaries perceive only the most elemental truths in the Scriptures. Although these elemental truths may be profound, and certainly should not be denigrated, I was so frequently met with disappointment at the lack of deeper insight by the authors of these works that I long ago stopped looking to them for answers to the deeper things of God. I am put in mind of Paul’s lament to the Hebrews.

Hebrews 5:12-6:3

For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil. Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of instruction about washings, and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. And this we shall do, if God permits.

Although Bible commentaries can provide useful information regarding ancient traditions and customs, geographical locations, and assorted historical data, when it comes to teaching on doctrines, they seldom rise above the level of those subjects Paul described as “elementary teaching about the Christ.” It should not discourage any seeker after truth to find that a topic that is outside of the normal purview of Christianity is not addressed in the

Foundations

Bible commentaries. The omissions of Bible commentaries are great and varied.

Another objection I have to Dr. Faulkner's treatise is his assertion that because the testimony of the stars is "non-verbal" it must also be "non-specific." He argues that a non-verbal form of communication could only convey general information, and would lack the ability to communicate something as detailed as the Gospel of Christ. He further argues that non-verbal communication is subject to the vagaries of interpretation. He writes:

Non-verbal communication can convey information, but it lacks precision and specificity, and thus it is very easily misunderstood... Even in human interaction we frequently communicate by non-verbal means, for body language and facial expressions can convey thoughts. Unfortunately, those non-verbal communications can be tricky to interpret. We can easily misinterpret these silent messages to mean something other than what was intended. A direct verbal statement clearly is preferable to a non-verbal message, as all marriage counselors advise when they are trying to help a couple whose marriage is in trouble... For even though general revelation is everywhere, it is silent. Even though it is available in general (to all), it only gives us general information about God, not the specific information needed to know God. The gospel is not in the stars.

An example of the type of things Dr. Faulkner suggests that the stars may legitimately express is the presence and greatness of God. A person may look at the heavens, consider their vastness, and the order that is present, and infer from this witness that there is a Creator and He possesses wisdom and power of a magnitude that far surpasses that of mankind. Dr. Faulkner does not allow for the possibility that the heavens could convey specific data, or information. Would not the revelation that the

King of the Jews had been born be an example of the heavens conveying precise and specific information? Then we have the example of other passages of Scripture.

Revelation 12:1-5

And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars; and she was with child; and she cried out, being in labor and in pain to give birth. And another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems... And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child. And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.

This is precisely the type of very detailed information that Rolleston, Seiss, Bullinger, Banks, Warner, and others suggest that God has been conveying through the heavens from the time of the first man. As a minister who has been called to expound to the saints of God the parabolic speech that Yahweh so often employs to declare truth through non-verbal means, I find great fault with Dr. Faulkner's argument. Signs are a form of non-verbal communication and they carry within them the ability to convey very specific meaning. The Bible is filled with this type of non-verbal communication, though few in the church today are aware of its presence.

From the first book of the Bible to the very last book, Yahweh has been communicating just as much (I would say "more") through non-verbal communication as he has through the written or spoken word. The book of Revelations begins with the following words:

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Revelation 1:1-2

The Revelation of Yahshua Christ, which God gave Him to *show* to His bond-servants, the things which must shortly take place; and He sent and *signified* (semaino) it by His angel to His bond-servant John, who bore witness to the *word* of God and to the testimony of Yahshua Christ, even to all that he *saw*.

The Greek word “semaino” that is translated as “signified” means “to show forth through signs.” The book of Revelation is filled with images and visions that were revealed to John to show forth very detailed and specific information about things to come. There is a saying that “a picture is worth a thousand words,” and this is certainly true of the book of Revelation. Many multiplied thousands of words have been written about every image that John was shown in this book.

From the first chapter of Genesis God has been speaking through means of symbolic speech, through types and shadows. I have written volumes on the parable contained in the seven days of creation that is set forth in the first chapter of the Bible. This is where commentaries prove themselves deficient, for they see only the surface message, and do not look to the parables contained within them.

When God wanted to speak to Joseph, the son of Jacob, He showed this young man images in dreams by night.

Genesis 37:5-11

Then Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers, they hated him even more. And he said to them, "Please listen to this dream which I have had; for behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and lo, my sheaf rose up and also stood erect; and behold, your sheaves gathered around and bowed down to my sheaf." Then his brothers said to him, "Are you actually going to reign over us? Or are

you really going to rule over us?" So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words. Now he had still another dream, and related it to his brothers, and said, "Lo, I have had still another dream; and behold, the sun and the moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me." And he related it to his father and to his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, "What is this dream that you have had? Shall I and your mother and your brothers actually come to bow ourselves down before you to the ground?" And his brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the saying in mind.



Joseph's Dreams

The images shown to Joseph are very similar to images one might encounter in the constellations. They are simple graphics used to convey specific truth. Joseph's brothers and father understood these images to be conveying very precise information. There was no ambiguity. The communication was readily comprehensible. I must reject Dr. Faulkner's contention that non-verbal communication is incapable of conveying specific and precise information.

Where Dr. Faulkner has done a commendable job is in his explication of the names of constellations and

Foundations

stars. In this area he has done his research, and he documents it very well. A lack of source documentation is one of the chief complaints he had about the writing of Frances Rolleston, though he graciously acknowledges that she died before completing her work which could partially explain the absence of clear accreditation of source material in her book.

I found Dr. Faulkner's arguments about the names and meanings assigned to stars to be well reasoned. Having read Frances Rolleston's own accounts of her struggles to arrive at the meaning of names, and having reservations in my own mind about her belief that Hebrew was the pre-Babel language of all mankind, I am very much open to questioning the names and meanings that Frances Rolleston has supplied for individual stars and the constellations.

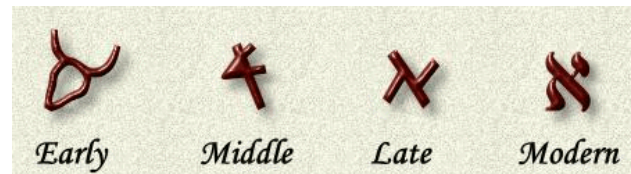
Miss Rolleston held an unorthodox view on languages. It is apparent from the biographical work produced by Caroline Dent that Miss Rolleston had an exceptional grasp of a large number of ancient languages, but this fact does not automatically suggest that her views on the origin and transmission of languages was correct. Miss Rolleston's views are set forth in her book.

*The names are here explained on the supposition that the first language was given by the Creator to the first man, conveying ideas to the mind by sounds, as impressions of form and colour are conveyed by sight. In all languages these sounds are traceable, conveying the same ideas. In the dialects of the most ancient and earliest civilized nations they are the most recognizable: in those the most barbarous the most obscured. This primitive language appears to have been spoken by Noah, from the names given by him to his sons. **In the confusion of the lip at Babel, pronunciation, and not words or roots, were altered. This may be inferred from the presence of the Hebrew roots in the dia-***

lects of all nations.

[Source: *Mazzaroth*, Frances Rolleston]

It is possible that the first language of man linked specific thoughts to corresponding sounds. In this sense, there would be an alphabet of sounds, each of which could be combined with other sounds to express the thoughts within a person's mind. Some years ago I came across the teaching of Jeff A. Benner on the origins of the Paleo-Hebrew alphabet. Mr Benner, quite correctly I believe, suggested that each letter of the most ancient Hebrew alphabet, referred to as Paleo-Hebrew, was in fact a pictogram. That is, each letter was drawn as an image of something commonly recognizable to those who used this language. For example, the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, corresponding to the English letter "A" is the Aleph. It is depicted as the head of an ox.



Aleph


The graphic above indicates how this letter's representation has changed over the centuries. There is a noticeable similarity between the "Early" Paleo-Hebrew character and the "Middle" period character. However, when Israel went into Babylonian captivity they adopted the Babylonian alphabetic characters which are closer to the square script used in the Hebrew language today.

Jeff Benner has shown that each of the characters of the Hebrew alphabet (Aleph-Bet) were originally pictograms.

Each image, such as the ox head of the Aleph bore

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a meaning associated with the image. For example, Benner suggests that the ox represented strength, power, or a leader. When a person was combining letters they were actually combining the thoughts or ideas associated with the letters, in order to form a word. The word for shepherd was formed by combining the letter resh which resembled the image of a man's head, with the letter ayin that looked like a man's eye. Since a shepherd is someone who "watches" over the flock, the image of a man and an eye conveyed the idea of a man watching.

Ra-ah - 

Shepherd Written in Paleo-Hebrew

(Hebrew is read from right to left)

I read several of Jeff Benner's books, and I believe his underlying thesis regarding the origin of the Hebrew language is correct. I believe each letter in the Paleo-Hebrew alphabet is a picture that conveys a meaning. By combining pictures a person forms more complex thoughts which become words. Putting words together allows for very complex ideas to be conveyed through written or oral speech.

What Frances Rolleston seems to be suggesting is that specific sounds in man's original language were linked to ideas. This concept fits very well with Jeff Benner's premise. As an example, the letter ayin which is written as an image of a human eye is pronounced "ah." Jeff Benner suggests that it conveys an idea of watchfulness. If Yahweh instilled in the first man an innate knowledge of a primeval alphabet and speech, linking sounds with thoughts, then one can well imagine the process Adam went through when Yahweh brought all the animals before him to see what the man would call them.

Perhaps Adam studied each animal and observed

characteristics of it. In a lion he might observe that it was swift and strong, or graceful and glorious, and combined sounds together that conveyed those ideas to form the name of the animal. I have no problem envisioning such a scenario occurring. I am not convinced, however, that Hebrew was man's first language. I am also unable to substantiate Miss Rolleston's suggestion that at the tower of Babel, when God confused the languages of man, that the words and roots of words were not changed, that only the pronunciation was changed.

To clarify what Miss Rolleston seems to be suggesting, consider that the Hebrew letter ayin signifies watchfulness and is produced "ah." According to her theory, or belief, all that changed at Babel was the pronunciation. Instead of saying "ah" one man might say "eesh," and another "oke." They would retain the same basic building blocks of vocabulary, but they would no longer be able to understand one another.

I am reminded of when I returned to Georgia when I was around fifteen years of age after having spent the previous 14 years in Oregon in America's Pacific Northwest. People in the Southern states such as Georgia are renowned for their accented speech. It is at times difficult for someone from a Northern state to understand the speech of someone in the South, even though they are speaking the same words. The pronunciation has changed.

One of the first things my parents had to do upon moving us to Georgia was to get my sisters, my brother, and I enrolled in school. They took a couple of us to the local High School and asked an employee for directions. This Southern woman told my father he needed to take us to the "guidance office." I remember my dad asking her repeatedly "Where?" The woman was pronouncing "guidance" as "goddance" and none of us had a clue what a "goddance office" was.

Foundations

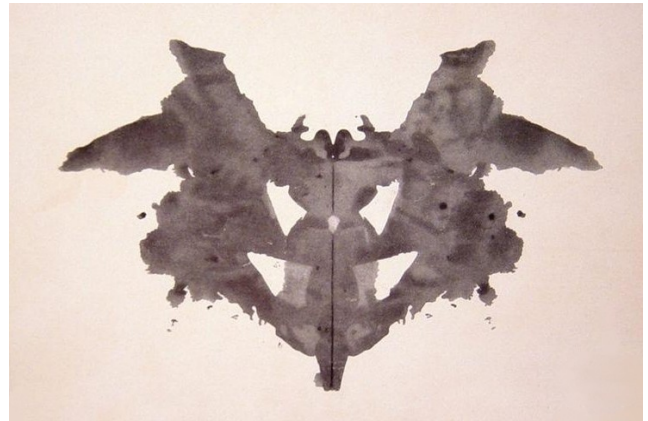
Jeff Benner has produced a Lexicon of Hebrew words where he suggests various origins for words based upon the pictograms formed by the letters. I would refer you to the graphic above of the word for shepherd as an example. Although I believe that Jeff Benner is correct in principle, I found many of the entries in his Lexicon unconvincing. There is a great deal of sleuthing and guesswork involved in trying to reconstruct the origin of words when there is no historical record of their etymology. One could wish for a Rosetta Stone that would demonstrably prove the thought attached to each character in the Paleo-Hebrew alphabet. However, no such key to understanding has been discovered.

The same situation exists when one considers the subject of the constellations and their original meaning. I find the evidence and arguments set forth by Rolleston, Seiss, Bullinger, Banks, Ken Fleming, and others persuasive. I believe the underlying thesis they are presenting is correct. I perceive that it harmonizes with the testimony of the Scriptures. Nevertheless, I must concur with Dr. Danny Faulkner when he suggests that there is some ambiguity present in the constellations and the meanings attached to them. He compares interpreting the signs in the heavens to a Rorschach Test.

The gospel in the stars thesis amounts to a sort of Rorschach test—one sees what one wants to see in the constellations...

Here Seiss appeals to self-consistency for ultimate proof of the arrangement. That is, the three other constellations supposedly associated with each zodiacal sign complement each other so well as to demonstrate that the arrangement is true. Given how much of a Rorschach test that much of this amounts to, one probably could find connections in any number of possible combinations of constellations.

[Source: Ibid]



Rorschach (Inkblot) Test

There is a great amount of knowledge that has been lost to mankind over the millennia. Some of the best data Frances Rolleston and others have to work from are the star catalogs provided by Arab astronomers in the 9th and 15th centuries A.D.. It is hoped that the names of stars, their locations, and the descriptions of the constellations they appear in have been accurately preserved for millennia, but proving the matter is problematic. There are great gaps in the historical record.

The Dendera Planisphere, a representation of the stars in the heavens and the constellations that was found in a 2,000 year old temple building in Egypt, promises a greater antiquity. The temple complex is of much greater antiquity than the building the planisphere is located in (it is assumed the building had been reconstructed around 50 B.C.). The planisphere itself depicts what the heavens would have looked like approximately 2,700 years B.C.. This is much closer to the time of man's creation, but there are uncertainties present. Was the Dendera Zodiac accurately preserved over the millennia? Do the images reflect knowledge of Egyptian astronomy in 50 B.C., or in 2,700 B.C.?

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Dendera Zodiac

It is a massive undertaking to begin fact checking claims about what was understood in the past. An example of how easy it is to err is found in Danny Faulkner's critique of Frances Rolleston's work. He states:

The source of the drawing appears to be the Dendera planisphere, a stone star chart found in Dendera, Egypt, which is about 2,000 years old (though at the time of Rolleston, Seiss, and Bullinger, it was thought to be far older).

Faulkner suggests that Rolleston, Seiss, and Bullinger, who all lived in the 1800s, thought that the Dendera Zodiac was of much greater antiquity than scholars now date it to be (50 B.C.). Faulkner evidently was not aware of the biographical work on Frances Rolleston's life, being acquainted only with her book *Mazzaroth*. In the writing *Letters of Frances Rolleston of Keswick*, the following statement is made by Rolleston in one of her letters.

I enclose a copy of my Lithograph from the Dendera Planisphere, the figures indicating 2,000 B.C., the temple being comparatively modern, [of the] age of the Caesars in Egypt, it is said.

[Source: *Letters of Frances Rolleston of Keswick*, page 511]

The highlighted words reveal that Frances Roll-eston understood that the Planisphere at Dendera was from the time of the Caesars, not thousands of years earlier. It is very easy to err when one tries to pin down what people knew 150 years ago. How much more difficult must it be to speak authorita-tively about what people know 5,000-6,000 years ago?

I share this information as a prelude to speaking about the message contained in the heavens. I want the reader to understand that although there is much evidence and good arguments to put forth in sup-port of Yahweh using the heavens as a mode of communication of prophecy, there is also a need to exercise some restraint. Specific details cannot al-ways be set forth with great confidence. There must be room left for debate and further exploration of this subject. We should also manifest patience with those who hold to other views. Our hope is that Yahweh might restore the knowledge of that which has been obscured by the passage of millennia and the corruptions of men and angels.

Jeremiah 6:16

Thus says Yahweh, "Stand by the ways and see and ask for the ancient paths..."

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PARABLES PRECEPT— The Significance of Numbers



Continued...

Bullinger provides two significant lists of 17 items that occur in Scripture. Each list is divided into a group of 7 and a group of 10. Following is the second list which is found in HEBREWS 12:18-24.

"Ye are not come

1. Unto the mount that might be touched,
2. And that burned with fire,
3. Nor unto blackness,
4. And darkness,
5. And tempest,
6. And the sound of a trumpet,
7. And the voice of words...

but ye are come

1. Unto Mount Zion,
2. And unto the city of the living God.

3. The heavenly Jerusalem,
4. And to an innumerable company of angels,
5. To the general assembly,
6. And church of the firstborn which are written in heaven,
7. And to God the judge of all,
8. And to the spirits of just men made perfect,
9. And to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant,
10. And to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel."