

Jesus' Star

The Heavens Declare God's Stories

Bruce Alan Killian

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Table of Contents | ii |
| Table of Figures | v |
| Chapter 1 A Bible detective investigates the star | 1 |
| Matthew's star of Bethlehem account | 2 |
| What star? | 3 |
| What is the bright morning star? | 4 |
| When does a star rise? | 6 |
| What did the wise men see? | 7 |
| Why did God make the sun, moon, and stars? | 9 |
| What does it mean? | 10 |
| Does the Bible help interpret it? | 10 |
| Why didn't many seek the king? | 11 |
| Chapter 2 Esther and the king | 12 |
| Esther's story in the Bible | 12 |
| Esther's movie in the sky | 16 |
| Esther's signs interpreted | 27 |
| The Scepter reveals the Christ | 28 |
| Chapter 3 Jesus' birth | 29 |
| Mary's pregnancy | 29 |
| Shepherds watched by night | 31 |
| A sign wrapped in swaddling cloths | 33 |
| Jesus presented in the Temple | 37 |
| Chapter 4 Wise men go to Jerusalem | 39 |
| Who were the wise men? | 39 |
| How did the wise men get to Jerusalem? | 41 |
| When did the wise men arrive in Jerusalem? | 41 |
| Why did the wise men come to worship? | 42 |
| The wise men visit the king's palace | 43 |
| The daystar | 45 |
| Chapter 5 The wise men in Bethlehem | 47 |
| A failed quest? | 49 |
| Can a star help? | 50 |
| Led by a star? | 51 |
| Where did Jesus live? | 58 |
| The wise men's gifts | 58 |
| The flight to Egypt | 60 |
| King Herod killed the boys of Bethlehem | 65 |
| The Holy Family returned to Israel | 65 |
| Chapter 6 Dating Jesus | 67 |
| Census records date Jesus' birth | 68 |
| History dates Jesus' birth | 68 |
| Dating John the Baptist's conception and birth | 70 |
| Dating Jesus' conception | 71 |
| Dating Jesus' crucifixion | 72 |
| The sun and moon witnessed to Jesus' life | 73 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| The clouds witness to Jesus' life..... | 75 |
| Morning stars sang together..... | 75 |
| The heavens worship Jesus | 76 |
| Chapter 7 Jesus' star announced His mission | 79 |
| A ladder to heaven | 80 |
| The Lamb of God..... | 83 |
| Angels ascending and descending | 84 |
| A highway in the wilderness..... | 85 |
| A highway to heaven | 88 |
| Paired signs bookend Jesus..... | 89 |
| The Spirit descended and remained on Jesus..... | 91 |
| When darkness reigned | 92 |
| Jesus' lamp..... | 93 |
| Jesus' resurrection..... | 95 |
| Chapter 8 God's signature | 97 |
| A pagan asked God for help..... | 97 |
| Sometimes God needs a nuke | 99 |
| A sign transforms an empire | 101 |
| Chapter 9 The nations watched Venus..... | 103 |
| The New World prepared..... | 105 |
| Venus and Mexico: Our Lady of Guadalupe | 106 |
| Our Lady appeared to Juan Diego | 107 |
| Chapter 10 The sundial's shadow returned..... | 114 |
| Satan's ascent..... | 116 |
| When did this sign occur?..... | 117 |
| What happens when the poles shift? | 118 |
| Where were the poles? | 119 |
| How do the poles shift?..... | 121 |
| Chapter 11 Joshua's long day | 123 |
| Pole shifts formed the continents..... | 127 |
| Chapter 12 Revelation's great signs | 129 |
| Timing the signs..... | 130 |
| Interpreting the signs..... | 134 |
| Dating the great signs..... | 143 |
| The sign of the Cross | 145 |
| Timing our Lord's return | 148 |
| Summary | 149 |
| Chapter 13 Conclusion: the signs' glory..... | 152 |
| Appendix A: Star of Bethlehem theory problems | 157 |
| Nazareth or Bethlehem?..... | 162 |
| Why did the Holy Family remain in Bethlehem? | 163 |
| Appendix B: Census of Quirinius..... | 165 |
| Connecting King Herod's death to Passover | 166 |
| Herod's sons' coregencies | 168 |
| Appendix C: Timeline of heavenly events | 169 |
| Appendix D: Priestly courses date Jesus' birth | 170 |

| | | |
|-------------|---|-----|
| Appendix E: | Planetary visibility | 172 |
| Appendix F: | Thirty questions any star theory should answer..... | 174 |
| Appendix G: | Venus in the Bible..... | 176 |
| Appendix H: | Revelation 12 constellations | 179 |
| Appendix I: | Sequencing Revelation's events | 180 |
| Appendix J: | Alphabetical Old Testament Index | 182 |
| Appendix K: | Alphabetical New Testament Index..... | 185 |
| Appendix L: | Endnotes..... | 189 |

Table of Figures

| | |
|--|-----|
| Figure 1: Venus marked a picture in Leo..... | 8 |
| Figure 2: Banner of Judah..... | 9 |
| Figure 3: Venus' cycle..... | 17 |
| Figure 4: The king took Esther into his chamber: conception..... | 18 |
| Figure 5: The king's staff..... | 19 |
| Figure 6: Ahasuerus with a staff..... | 19 |
| Figure 7: Esther selected queen..... | 20 |
| Figure 8: The king tips his golden scepter to Esther..... | 21 |
| Figure 9: Ahasuerus III's coin with lotus staff..... | 22 |
| Figure 10: Esther's attendants..... | 23 |
| Figure 11: Mercury honors Mars dressed as Jupiter..... | 24 |
| Figure 12: Haman's ten sons and a high pole..... | 25 |
| Figure 13: Comet tail depicts a Persian hanging..... | 26 |
| Figure 14: Table of Esther's story daily events..... | 27 |
| Figure 15: Map where the Roman and Parthian Empires collide..... | 40 |
| Figure 16: Venus phases and relative size..... | 46 |
| Figure 17: Map of Bethlehem area..... | 48 |
| Figure 18: Venus' heliacal rise in Aries March 27, A.D. 1..... | 50 |
| Figure 19: Venus' descent after sunset..... | 52 |
| Figure 20: Venus waited over Jesus' house..... | 53 |
| Figure 21: The view as they followed the star..... | 54 |
| Figure 22: The wise men's route to Jesus' home..... | 55 |
| Figure 23: Ancient magi depiction..... | 57 |
| Figure 24: Roman-era road in Bethlehem..... | 58 |
| Figure 25: Map of Judea..... | 63 |
| Figure 26: Map of Egypt..... | 64 |
| Figure 27: Planets heliacal rising periods..... | 65 |
| Figure 28: Titus' Arch menorah relief..... | 68 |
| Figure 29: Jesus' birth and death blood moon..... | 72 |
| Figure 30: How the moon reddens..... | 73 |
| Figure 31: Lamb on a cross structure..... | 84 |
| Figure 32: A highway or ladder to heaven..... | 85 |
| Figure 33: Jesus' ascension highway..... | 89 |
| Figure 34: Golgotha's menorah..... | 93 |
| Figure 35: Evening sky near Rome October 27, 312 A.D..... | 100 |
| Figure 36: Constantine's XP standard..... | 101 |
| Figure 37: Babylonian Venus Ammisaduqa tablets..... | 104 |
| Figure 38: Dresden Codex Mayan Venus table..... | 104 |
| Figure 39: Greek Antikythera mechanism..... | 104 |
| Figure 40: Synagogue Zodiac mural..... | 105 |
| Figure 41: Aztec solar, lunar, and Venus calendar..... | 105 |
| Figure 42: Eagle atop cactus eats snake..... | 106 |
| Figure 43: Our Lady of Guadalupe..... | 109 |
| Figure 44: Sign at dawn December 12, 1531 A.D..... | 110 |
| Figure 45: The North Pole's previous position..... | 119 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Figure 46: Solomon's Temple orientation | 119 |
| Figure 47: Map ice age America..... | 121 |
| Figure 48: Map of the four most recent pole locations | 126 |
| Figure 49: Map of ice age Europe..... | 126 |
| Figure 50: Atlantic seafloor | 127 |
| Figure 51: Sign dragon ready to eat Jesus at birth | 132 |
| Figure 52: Leonid meteor storm of November 13, 1833 | 140 |
| Figure 53: Constellation Draco | 143 |
| Figure 54: Draco cast down, and Crux rises | 145 |
| Figure 55: Effect of a comet hitting Jupiter | 147 |
| Figure 56: Jupiter "crowns" Regulus | 160 |
| Figure 57: Motion of Jupiter and Saturn as viewed from Earth | 160 |

Notations and abbreviations used throughout this book

FOREIGN a word from Hebrew, Greek, Latin, etc.

[Square brackets] often used for an alternate translation

“Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from The ESV® Catholic Edition Bible with Deuterocanonical Books, copyright © 2017 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.”

“Discovering things is much more gratifying if there has been some difficulty in the search for them.” St. Augustine

“The works of God are to be declared and made known” (Tobit 12:11).

Some won't be convinced. The Pharisees and Sadducees came, and to test him they asked him to show them a sign from heaven. “An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah.” (Matthew 16:1, 4)

Updated September 07, 2022 A.D.

<http://www.scripturescholar.com/StarBook.pdf>

Contact info:

1812 Chaparral Lane; Edmond, OK 73013-6636

bakillian @ earthlink.net (remove spaces)

(714) 209-5819 (text first)

Word count 57,934

Chapter 1

A Bible detective investigates the star

God tells timely, relevant stories and paints meaningful pictures with heaven's lights. He calls them signs. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork" (Psalm 19:1). Have you wondered how? We can see many of God's heavenly signs with an astronomy program. I'll show many signs and tell His stories. Jesus was born, ministered, died, and ascended on heaven's dates. With correct dates, we can find His signs.

Jesus' first disciples beheld a sign in the sky, inaugurating His ministry (John 1:51). His apostles saw a similar sign as He ascended to heaven. Some reveal Jesus' person and destiny.

John the Baptist proclaimed, "Make straight the way for the Lord." "Behold, the Lamb of God." Jesus said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man" (John 1:23, 36, 51). Jesus alluded to Jacob's dream of angels ascending and descending a ladder on earth reaching heaven (Genesis 27:35–36). The next evening, the sky depicted Jesus' mission and pointed to His home. God's Lamb

would open a ladder or highway¹ to heaven, which we can review today!

His star ‘marked’ stories the lights in the sky told. It challenges reason; a star led men to worship a baby king. “It is God’s glory to conceal things, but the glory of kings is to search them out” (Proverbs 25:2). Like wise kings, let’s dive for His pearls. God’s artistry will surprise you, and this book doesn’t exhaust them; there are many signs to discover.

What did God say? Where did He hide the Christmas star? How did the wise men find it? We’ll learn how the heavens worshiped Jesus. The signs were subtle but clear; Christ, the world ruler, was born. We’ll answer these questions as we systematically solve this mystery.

Since Kepler and Newton, many have searched for the star, and I embrace science. But their theories haven’t withstood scrutiny. Many assert we’d have found any natural Bethlehem star long ago. Matthew (2:2–10) said what it did; God wants us to know when, where, why, and how. Let’s strive to think God’s thoughts.

The Bible provides for our needs. I won’t use astrology or debunked theories except to highlight their errors. We’ll learn the sky marked Jesus’ birth. How a star, not an angel, waited over Him and revealed the Lamb to protect God’s family. How it waited reveals Jesus’ location, when the wise men arrived, and why they greatly rejoiced. The magi knew things about the stars alluded to in the Scripture that you probably don’t know. I’ll reveal them in this book.

We’ll focus our search in Scripture, not the sky. “The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever” (Deuteronomy 29:29). Scripture identifies the star of Bethlehem and when it rose. We start in Matthew.

Matthew’s star of Bethlehem account

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to

be born. They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

‘And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who will shepherd my people Israel.’”

Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him.” After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they saw² when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. And going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way. (Matthew 2:1–12)

What star?

Heaven’s lights other than the sun and moon, the Bible calls stars; they include planets, asteroids, comets, supernovas, etc.³ Our experts, astronomers, search the sky near Jesus’ birth and look for any star they can shoehorn into Matthew’s story. They imagine how it caused the wise men to seek a young Jewish king. The wise men carefully watched without telescopes, something modern astronomers seldom do.

Astronomers have identified dozens of candidates. Still, many are unpersuaded by any proposed explanation. Are there other experts? With no natural explanation, Scripture scholars often determine it was supernatural. It was an angel or something like the pillar of fire that led Israel in the wilderness.

The Bible sometimes links angels and stars.⁴ They believe it did things stars can’t do—guide men to a particular house. An angel or pillar of fire leading the wise men reveals nothing about where, when, or why they found Jesus. If an angel led the wise men, there is little more for us to discover—an angel led them to a house in Bethlehem. Why did they go to Jerusalem?

If the shepherds saw an angel or a pillar of fire, they’d have investigated it. The shepherd Moses investigated the burning bush. Shepherding is boring. Whatever the wise men saw in

Bethlehem, they'd check. If an angel led like a star, then Satan, like a star, could deceive.

Matthew discusses stars and angels without conflating them.

The Bible relates this story and provides sufficient interpretive help to understand this enigmatic star. With careful study, what do we find?

The wise men asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." They saw *his star*, not just *a star*. We seek *His star*. His refers to Jesus, so we are looking for Jesus' star.

What's Jesus' star? The Bible's last chapter says, "I, Jesus, have sent my angel to you with this testimony for the churches. *I am* the root and the offspring of David, *the bright morning star*" (Revelation 22:16 (emphasis added)). Jesus reveals they saw the bright morning star, our first important clue.

What is the bright morning star?

Is the bright morning star the brightest star in the morning? Often yes, but it defines a specific star. An astronomer wrote the bright morning star is Venus. His statement is true. Connecting Jesus as the bright morning star to Venus launched this book. Often, Bible familiarity helps; in Revelation, Jesus answered a question He'd asked decades earlier.

Before the Last Supper, many asked controversial questions to snare Jesus. The truth in His insightful answers turned the tables.⁵ Then Jesus asked,

"What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?" They said to him, "The son of David." He said to them, "How is it then that David, in the Spirit, calls him Lord, saying, "'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet?"' If then David calls him Lord, how is he his son?" And no one was able to answer him a word, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions. (Matthew 22:41–46)

Jesus' question referenced the most quoted Scripture in the New Testament.⁶

A Psalm of David.

The LORD says to my Lord:

“Sit at my right hand,
 until I make your enemies your footstool.”
 The LORD sends forth from Zion
 your mighty scepter.
 Rule in the midst of your enemies!
 With you is dominion
 in the day of your power,
 in the splendors of your saints:
 I have begotten you from the womb
 before the dawn bringer [*HEOSPHOSOS*].⁷ (Psalm 110:1–3)

HEOSPHOSOS, or dawn bringer, is the Greek name for Venus as the bright morning star.⁸

The morning stars watched God lay the earth’s foundation (Job 38:4–7).

To help us understand, Jesus from heaven answered and revealed the *Septuagint* preserved the original meaning.⁹ The Hebrew meaning is unclear. Jesus is the root and offspring of David and the bright morning star. He didn’t use the word Venus but defined it with bright, morning, and star. Note this messianic psalm includes a *scepter* and *Venus*, two subtle but crucial clues.

The planets are wandering stars (Jude 13). Planet means wanderer; the ancients knew of five Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. These planets are brighter and visible after sundown before the other stars and in hazy conditions. They circulate through the fixed stars near the sun and moon’s path called the ecliptic. The ecliptic passes through the zodiac constellations.

Mercury and Venus are either morning stars or evening stars because they are closer to the sun than the earth. Near Israel’s latitude, one can see Mercury for just over an hour before dawn or after sunset. Venus, the brightest star-like object, can be visible for 3.5 hours. One can see the other stars throughout the night. When visible in the morning, Venus is the bright morning star.¹⁰

Venus rises as either the morning or the evening star. Since Jesus is the bright *morning* star, Venus rose in the morning, not in the evening. Venus spends nearly half of its cycle (263

days) as a morning star. Mercury and Venus are always near the sun and never visible in the middle of the night. The morning star is always in the east near sunrise.

When does a star rise?

We can see Venus most nights, but when did it rise? A word the wise men used gives a vital hint. They saw Venus *rise*. A Greek speaker could use three words for ‘rise in the sky.’ The explanation is technical but crucial.

- *ANABAINO* means to ascend like smoke *rising*. It’s a common word for people, e.g., Jesus *ascended* the mountain.
- *ANATELLO* means the rise of any celestial object at any time, like a cloud or a star.¹¹
- *ANATOLE* means to rise *with* the sun. The wise men used *ANATOLE* twice to describe His star’s rise.¹² The plural of *ANATOLE* is *ANATOLWN*. It means east because the sun rises there. The wise men came from the east (Matthew 2:1).

How do we identify the specific time the star rose? Here’s a simplified lexical definition of *ANATOLE*. In Matthew 2:2, the phrase ‘*EN TE ANATOLE*’ (in its rising), because it’s in the singular, with the article and in contrast to *APO ANATOLWN* (from the east) in Matthew 2:1, probably isn’t a geographical expression, but an astronomical expression; simultaneously with its rising [near the horizon] also Matthew 2:9.¹³ The term refers to a star rising simultaneously with the sun, a heliacal rising. An important clue, the wise men saw Venus rise with the sun.

The heliacal¹⁴ rise of a fixed star occurs once per year in the east. The Egyptians watched Sirius’ helical rise, the brightest fixed star, because it signaled the Nile flood season’s start. The Babylonians made the ephemerides tablets, a daily chart of the planets’ positions. They were primarily interested in planetary heliacal risings and settings.¹⁵

A star rises with the sun when one can first see it in the east immediately before sunrise. The wise men used *ANATOLE* to describe how, on two occasions, His star rose. A particular star’s

heliacal rise occurs at a specific time. Herod's question about when the star *appeared* confirms this meaning. The king understood *ANATOLE* as *appeared*, implying when they first saw it.

Venus rises heliacally every 1.6 years (584 days)¹⁶ after hiding eight days near the sun.¹⁷ One can see it only when the eastern horizon is clear. The scene lasts only a few minutes. Two more clues, after leaving Herod, Venus rose with the sun again 1.6 years later.

Our clues: Jesus' star, Venus, rose with the sun in the east on two occasions 1.6 years apart. The first, the wise men were in the east, and the second, after meeting Herod.

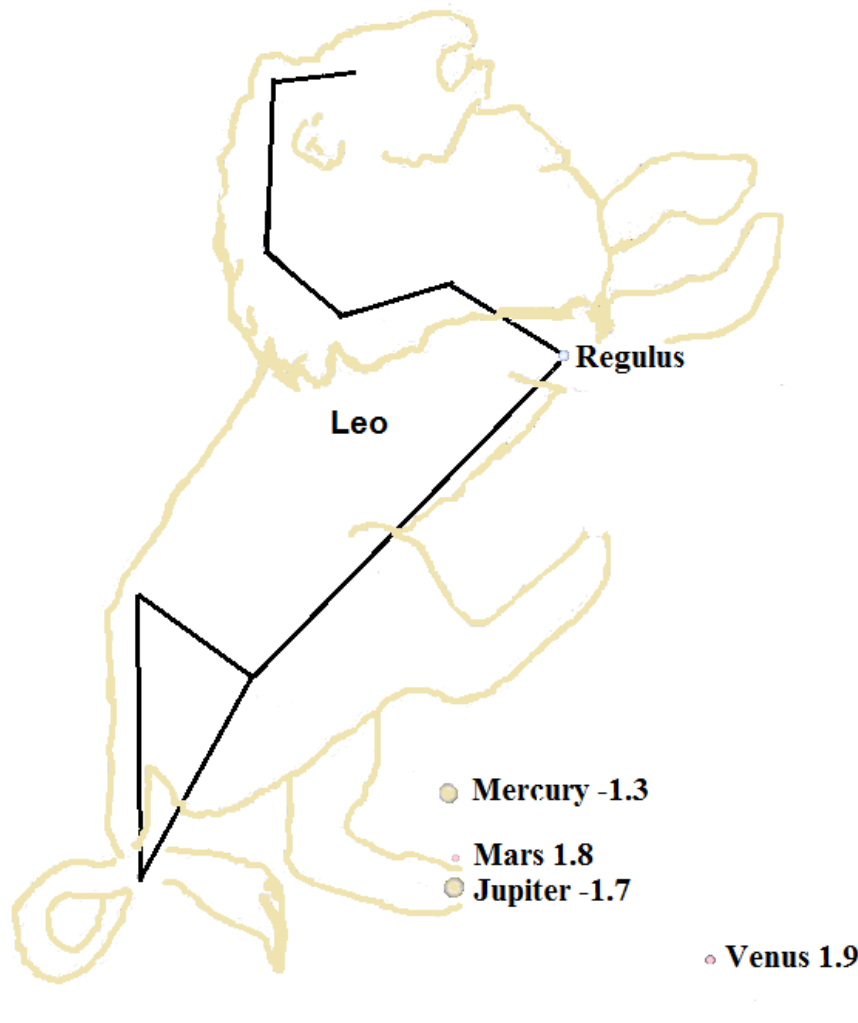
What did the wise men see?

The wise men were magi (professional astronomers); they spotted Venus the morning it rose. The key "scene" would be what they saw when it rose in each cycle. The ephemerides tablets predicted the five planets' heliacal rise times;¹⁸ they knew when to expect it. At sunrise, the scene vanished; they could remember and chart the sky snapshot.¹⁹

The wise men *saw* his star. The verb "we saw" (*EIDOMEN*) is in the aorist tense, meaning at a point in time. So they came because of a particular Venus heliacal rise. The incident didn't endure for months, such as a series of planetary conjunctions. Most mistranslate: if Matthew meant "we have seen," he would have used a different tense. Matthew 2:9 says, '*they saw*' (again, aorist, not "*they had seen*"). They saw Venus' subsequent helical rise. Another clue, the wise men saw each rise; no calculation was required.

Some say it can't be Venus. It's too bright, well-known, and prominent. King Herod wouldn't ask about it; everyone would've known about it. But the wise men could say the hill to the east blocks your view. Another clue, the Mount of Olives blocks Jerusalem's view of any heliacal rise.²⁰

**Before sunrise
August 24, 2 B.C.**



The Constellation
Leo with lines to show the
figure before sunrise;²¹ all
dates are Julian.

Three Planets align
vertically between the
lion's feet. The numbers
and size represent the
brightness; lower numbers
are brighter, and negative
numbers are very bright.

Eastern horizon

Figure 1: Venus marked a picture in Leo

The free program, *Cartes du Ciel*,²² enables an accurate view of the sky from any terrestrial location in any direction throughout history.²³ I chose dates around the expected birth of Jesus. For those who wish to do additional research, here are four sequential Venus heliacal rise dates: June 15, 5 B.C.; January 15, 3 B.C.; August 24, 2 B.C.; and March 27, A.D. 1. The last date was Passover, which proves to be significant.

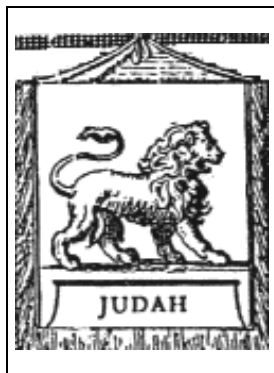
August 24, 2 B.C. is near Jesus' anticipated birth date, and the eastern horizon is unusually busy with planets. See Figure 1, p. 8. I'll explain its significance with the Scriptures.

One can only see the brightest stars near the horizon because extinction dims their light.

Extinction reduces light intensity as it passes through the atmosphere due to absorption, reflection, and scattering; red and yellow fade less.²⁴ They saw Venus rise. Extinction changes the planets' color, similar to the sun at the horizon. Low in the sky, Venus was rosy-colored, and Mars was naturally rosy. Jupiter and Mercury, slightly higher, were golden. The scene is similar worldwide and was the same on August 23, 2 B.C. but only briefly visible.²⁵

Why did God make the sun, moon, and stars?

The Bible's first chapter reveals why God made the sun, moon, and stars. "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens²⁶ to separate the day from the night. And let them be for *signs* and for seasons, and for days and years" (Genesis 1:14). The Bible groups the sun, moon, stars, planets, comets, etc. Their purpose is to be lights, separate day and night, order time, and be for signs.²⁷



What does a sign mean? Basically, it's synonymous with a picture.²⁸ Some stars form connect-the-dots images called constellations. The Bible mentions the Bear, Orion, and Pleiades.²⁹

Judah's banner had a lion's picture (Numbers 2:3, 10:14), and Christ is the Lion of Judah. Judah's constellation is Leo, Latin for lion.³⁰

Figure 2: Banner of Judah³¹

Signs are timed; they associate with seasons, days, and years.³² The purposes for the sun, moon, and stars are to be lights, pictures, separate day and night, and mark appointed times.³³

Lunar and planetary motions function like giant clocks. We can wind them forward or back to see their positions in software. Before Jesus, Greek engineers did it with a mechanism (see Figure 39, p. 104). Kepler explained the planetary orbits (c. 1621). Then Newton invented the mathematics to calculate planetary positions (c. 1687). When both discovered the planetary motions, each tried to identify the star of Bethlehem.

Most ancient historians date Jesus' birth in 3 or 2 B.C.³⁴ Kepler dated the lunar eclipse Josephus mentioned before King Herod died to March 13, 4 B.C. A footnote in Whiston's translation of Josephus (1737) used Kepler's date.³⁵ He wrote before the lunar position was well established, and another eclipse is a better choice. His date for Herod's death became the standard.

What does it mean?

What does the sign mean? For a year, I didn't know. The wise men saw Venus rise to mark a vertical line of planets between Leo's feet at the dawning horizon. This unique sign fulfilled Jacob's famous Messianic prophecy.

Judah is a lion's cub;
 from the prey, my son, you have gone up.
 He stooped down; he crouched as a *lion*
 and as a lioness; who dares rouse him?
 The *scepter* shall not depart from Judah,
 nor the *ruler's staff* from *between his feet*,
 until tribute comes to him;
 and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples. (Genesis 49:9–10 (emphasis added))

The wise men could interpret this sign because King Nebuchadnezzar (c. 600 B.C.) made Daniel the chief of his wise men (Daniel 2:48). Daniel introduced the Bible to them. The line of planets appears to be a scepter or a ruler's staff, a big clue.

Does the Bible help interpret it?

Interpreting stars without God's help can be astrology or pagan worship. Connecting a heavenly picture to one or more Bible passages can lead to proper interpretation(s).

How can the Bible help to interpret this sign? The Bible often links passages with similar words or phrases. To understand a sign involving a star and a scepter in Leo, searching the Bible for star, scepter, and lion may help interpret it. The wise men would be familiar with astronomical passages like Balaam's oracle.

He crouched, he lay down like a *lion*...,
I see *him*, but not now;
I behold *him*, but not near:
a *star* shall come out of Jacob,
and a *scepter* shall rise out of Israel; (Numbers 24:9, 17 (emphasis added))

This is the first mention of a single star, and theories usually discuss it. The passage is poetic, linking star and scepter. Hebrew poetry rhymes similar meaning words or concepts in a parallel or chiasmic manner rather than sound; it remains poetic when translated. The second/third line frequently repeats the first line using a similar idea but different words. This is synonymous parallelism, a common parallelism type. Star and scepter meanings are related. Jacob and Israel are both names for the father of Israel's tribes.

It refers to the star as "him." Identifying a star with "Him" reveals why the wise men said they saw "his star." This confirms that scepter, star, and lion are scriptural themes linked to this sign in the heavens.

Why didn't many seek the king?

Many nations watched Venus. If the sign was obvious, why didn't many come?

- Many locations couldn't view the eastern horizon, or it was cloudy.
- The sign only lasted four minutes. Most wouldn't see it, but the wise men watched for it.
- One needed to be rich and able to travel. God chose and prepared these men.
- One needed the Bible's help to interpret it.
- They knew God gave heavenly signs and studied to understand His messages!

In the next chapter, we'll study one more passage to understand why they sought Christ.

Chapter 2

Esther and the king

God projected worldwide the movie *Esther*³⁶ in the sky convincingly for the magi. As Esther entered on the third day, the lion-king extended his golden scepter. It's obscure unless you know Esther in Persian means Venus. Haman means Mercury, Mordecai means Mars, and Ahasuerus means lion-king.³⁷ Leo is the lion, and Jupiter is the king.³⁸

Esther's story in the Bible

In c. 475 B.C., Hadassah, a beautiful orphan maiden, lived with her cousin Mordecai as a daughter. He asked her not to reveal her Jewish heritage. He was a doorkeeper in King Ahasuerus' palace in Susa, Persia. Ahasuerus' Empire stretched from India to Ethiopia.

Mordecai dreamed of two dragons in a great battle.³⁹ We learn the dragons are Mordecai and Haman near the story's end. In his dream, a light came, and then the sun rose.

The king held a six-month-long feast, followed by a seven-day banquet in his garden. Queen Vashti, meanwhile, held a banquet for the women in the palace. The king summoned his

wife, beautiful Queen Vashti, to appear before his court officials wearing her royal crown on the seventh day. She refused. Therefore, in anger, he divorced her.

The king held an empire-wide beauty contest to select her replacement. Hadassah [myrtle], now renamed Esther, was among those selected. Each woman had six months of cleansing and six months of beauty treatments in preparation for the king. Esther gained favor and was the palace staff's choice.

Esther went from the virgin harem in her turn with the king one evening, and in the morning, she went to the other harem. Then he chose her by name, set the royal crown on her head, and Esther became his wife and queen.

Mordecai overheard two doorkeepers plot to assassinate the king. He told Esther, and she told the king, who thwarted it. They recorded Mordecai's act in the king's chronicles.

The king placed Haman over all his officials and commanded them to bow to Haman. Mordecai didn't bow, so Haman hated Mordecai and the Jews because Mordecai was Jewish. Haman is the story's villain and the Jews' enemy.

Haman hated Mordecai, so he schemed to destroy every Jew in the empire. He bribed the king with ten thousand silver talents to decree his plot would advance. By lot, Haman chose the extermination date. When Mordecai learned of Haman's decree, he put on sackcloth. He persuaded Esther to intercede with the king for her people.

Esther's problem, she couldn't approach the king uninvited, and it was more than a month since he had called her. Entering the inner court to the king's presence uninvited was always at the risk of death. If the king didn't extend his scepter toward you, his guards immediately executed you!

Before Esther entered the lion's presence, she asked the Jews to pray and fast in sackcloth

until the third day. Esther and her handmaids also did so. The Jews fasted, wept, and many used sackcloth and ashes. Esther wore mourning clothes, covered herself with ashes, and tangled her hair.⁴⁰ Esther, in terror for her life, prayed for her people. Give me eloquent speech before the lion and turn his heart to hate Haman.

On the third day, Esther dressed in royal apparel (Esther 5:1–2). Terrified, she entered the king's court. He sat on his throne, clothed in his full majestic array, covered with gold and precious stones. The king looked with fierce anger, and she was rosy and faint. She leaned on one handmaid while another bore her train. God changed the king's heart; he extended his golden scepter to Esther. She paled; he said the law doesn't apply to you; you're always welcome.

Esther invited the king and Haman to a private banquet in the palace that day. At the feast, the king cheered with wine, asked Esther what she wanted, and he would give it to her up to half his kingdom. Rather than make her request, the queen invited them to a banquet the following day. As Haman left the palace, Mordecai refused to bow. In wrath, Haman built a high pole (gallows) to hang him.

Unable to sleep, the king had his chronicles read, reminding him Mordecai saved his life. When he learned he hadn't rewarded Mordecai, he decided to honor him and asked who was outside the court. Haman waited, so he invited him in and asked, "How would you honor someone the king desired to honor?"

Thinking the king wished to honor him, Haman said, "Dress the honoree in the king's royal robes, crown, and steed. Let the first of the king's nobles lead him around the city square, announcing this is how the king honors one he wishes to honor."

The king said, "Immediately honor Mordecai in this way and leave nothing out."

Haman had waited to ask permission to execute Mordecai. Humiliated, Haman led

Mordecai around the city square, arrayed as the king and announcing him. Haman covered his head and went home in shame.

While the king drank wine at the second banquet, he asked Esther, “What’s your request? I will grant it even up to half my kingdom.” Esther said, “If I have found favor in your sight, spare my life and the lives of my people. We have been sold to be annihilated!”

The king asked, “Who?”

Esther responded, “Our enemy and adversary is this wicked Haman.”

The king went into his garden to consider the matter. Haman begged for his life. When the king returned, Haman was on top of Queen Esther. Enraged, the king condemned Haman. They covered his head, led him away, and hanged him on the pole he built for Mordecai. They also executed Haman’s ten sons.

The king gave Mordecai Haman’s royal position. He decreed his officials would defend the Jews. On the day appointed, the Jews suffered no loss. They celebrated God’s deliverance and instituted the annual festival of Purim.

Esther’s scene components—a list to describe the cast and scenes we will review

1. **The king’s court, garden, or city square**—the area at Leo’s feet, enclosed outdoor areas.
2. **The entrance to the king’s court**—the actors enter at the horizon (at Leo’s feet).
3. **Venus—the queen—Vashti or Esther**—the bright morning star
4. **Jupiter—the king** (or Mordecai dressed as the king), the second brightest star.
5. **Mercury—Haman**—the most important man after the king (Esther 3:1).
6. **Mars—Mordecai**—initially a doorkeeper at the king’s palace entrance.
7. **Heliacal rise**—a light came, and the sun rose (Esther 1:1k). Three planets rose heliacally about this time: Mars (8/17), Jupiter (8/18), and Venus (8/23–24)
8. **The constellation Leo**—depicts Ahasuerus the Lion King (Greek Xerxes or Artaxerxes).

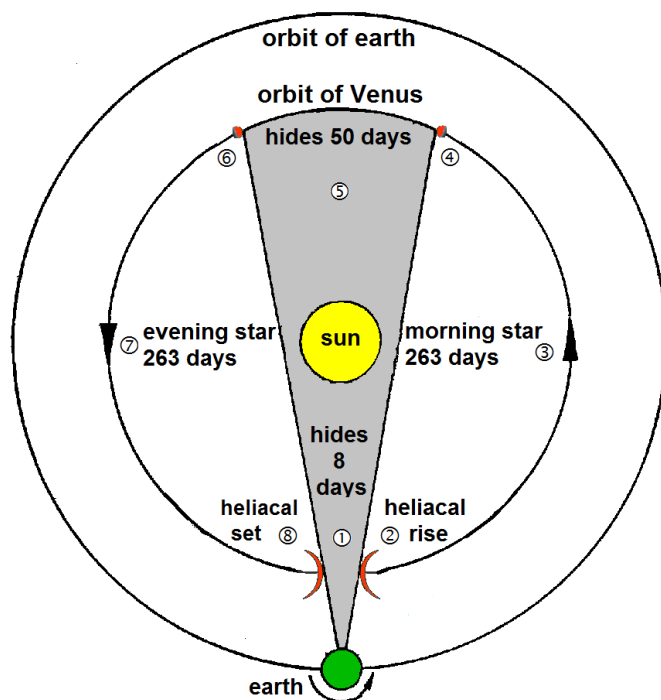
9. **The constellation Virgo**—depicts a virgin woman.
10. **Inside the palace, e.g., either harem**—Invisible, anything with a roof is hidden from view.
11. **The line of planets Jupiter-Mars-Mercury**—the king's staff or golden scepter
12. **The Jews**—many of the stars
13. **Moon**—Woman (maybe also lotus flower)
14. **Haman's ten sons**—ten little stars around Haman (Esther 9:9–14).
15. **Esther's handmaids**—two little stars near Venus visible on 8/28. See page 23.
16. **Royal apparel or crown**—makes one conspicuous
17. **Sackcloth, mourning clothes, or covered head**—one wearing sackcloth couldn't enter the king's presence (Esther 4:2). It hid one from view.
18. **Weeping**—rain (Esther 4:3)
19. **Dragons**—Mercury and Mars (Haman and Mordecai)
20. **Pole (gallows)**—a wooden pole to impale a person, a comet's tail see Figure 13, p. 8.
21. **Drinking or cheered with wine**—a wine-colored sky.

I won't discuss every sky sign, e.g., white, green, and blue hangings (Esther 1:6), etc.

Esther's movie in the sky

For nearly three weeks, the wise men watched God's movie. In the middle, Venus heliacally rose in Leo to mark the scepter. Because they connected the sky events to Esther, we can deduce the wise men spoke Persian. The prominent cast members in Esther's movie had Persian planet names. The names helped the wise men interpret these signs. Leo and these planets are the actors in the scene corresponding to His star and scepter's rise. As the movie opened, Mordecai dreamed, "a light came and then the sun rose" (Esther 10:6, 11:11). This verse succinctly describes Venus' heliacal rise, and Esther was the light.

This diagram depicts Venus' cycle—I will point out where it matters.



Venus cycle

- ① The inferior conjunction, Venus hides for eight days in the sun's glare (really 7.5 days)
 - ② Its heliacal rise is visible first as a bright, thin crescent; Most of the time, it appears only as a point of light
 - ③ It continues as the bright morning star for about 263 days
 - ④ It simultaneously heliacally rises and sets
 - ⑤ It disappears on the far side of the sun for about 50 days
 - ⑥ It reappears as the bright evening star
 - ⑦ It gradually brightens as the evening star for about 263 days
 - ⑧ It sets in the evening with the sun
- Return to ①

Figure 3: Venus' cycle
Venus as Vashti

Initially, Vashti, the king, and the people of Susa feasted for 180-days. Then the king's party moved to his garden. Vashti and the women went to party inside the palace, disappearing from the sky. Vashti's disappearance marks the inferior conjunction's start. Venus, the bright evening star, set.

King Ahasuerus summoned Queen Vashti to his garden party on the seventh day. Venus hides in the sun's glare for eight days before rising with the sun as the bright morning star. The Babylonian record has one instance where Venus rose on the seventh day rather than its usual eighth-day appearance.⁴¹ Ahasuerus wanted to see Venus early. When she didn't come, he divorced her. See Figure 3 point ① page 17. Vashti's failure to appear came at an earlier heliacal rising of Venus (e.g., January 15, 3 B.C.).

Venus as Esther

This series of signs tells Esther's story. It confirms the magi interpreted the line of planets as a scepter of the Lion of Judah.

The king searched his empire for a bevy of beautiful virgin maidens to replace Vashti. Then Esther took Vashti's role, so Venus represented Esther; Esther underwent a six-month-long cleansing period. This period went from the beginning of September until the end of February. The fall and winter clouds frequently hid Venus. She then went through a six-month-long beautifying period. From February to August, Venus, week by week, became more visible. When Esther's beauty peaked, her turn arrived. Esther went in with the king.

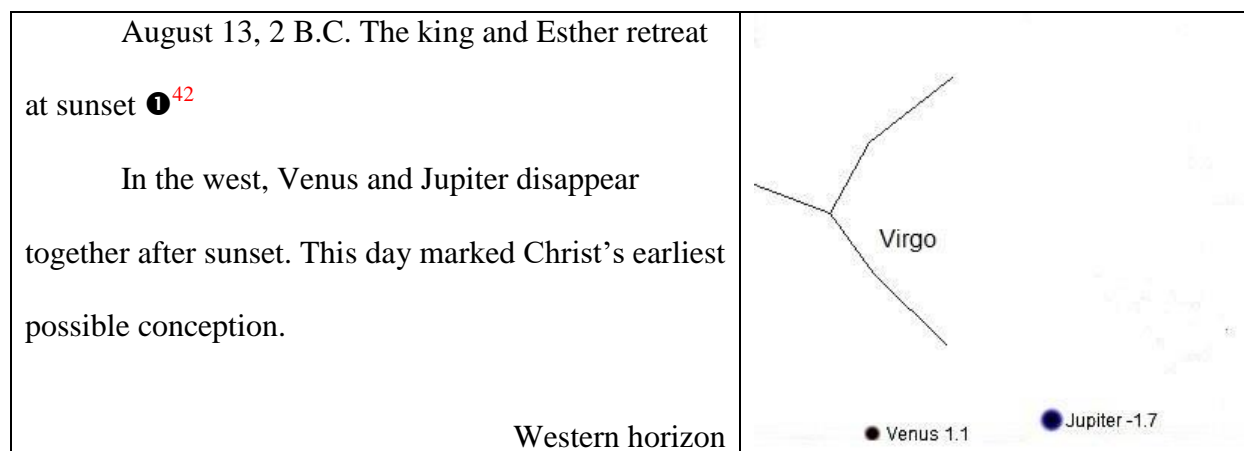


Figure 4: The king took Esther into his chamber: conception

Esther and the king appear after sunset and promptly disappear. From the virgin harem, Esther went with the king into his chamber. In the morning, she went into the concubine harem. The bright evening star and the king went for their first private night; Esther could conceive on August 13, 2 B.C. Jupiter, Venus, and the sun set together, leaving the constellation Virgo [Virgin].⁴³ The sign lingered for three days, so did the king spend three nights with Esther?

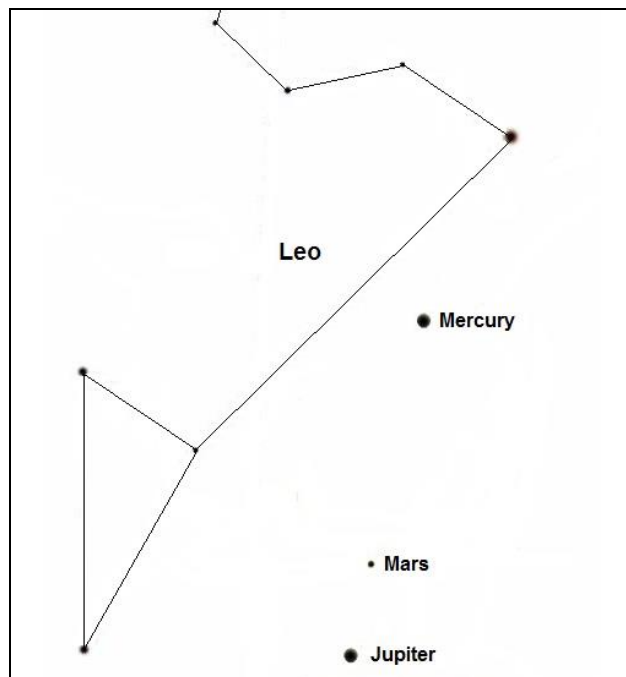
This image depicts Venus' last moment as the bright evening star. See Figure 3 point ⑧ page 17. She and the king departed into his chamber to "know" each other. Soon, as the bright morning star, she came out as queen. Eunuchs and harems meant it was the king's child. We have another clue, Jesus' earliest conception date.

Here's how others propose the wise men knew the king was born. Some use horoscopes,

which we reject. Others see a Jupiter-Venus conjunction as conception, so the parents visibly coupled in the evening sky. Another group links His birth to Revelation 12, where the woman gives birth in the sky. This prophecy came long after Jesus' birth; the wise men couldn't know about it. They don't mention the sign they 'infer' occurred while the sun shined when it can't be seen. Colin Nicholls sees a growing comet pass through Virgo's hips as the king's birth.⁴⁴

The following figures include a dated snapshot of the eastern dawn focused on the king's courtyard at the lion king's feet. The snapshots are the scenes the magi witnessed; the sky displays Esther's movie. The eastern horizon and entrance is at the bottom of each picture.

Four days after Esther went to the king, on August 17, Mars rose heliacally two dragons faced off in the sky. The doorkeeper took his position.

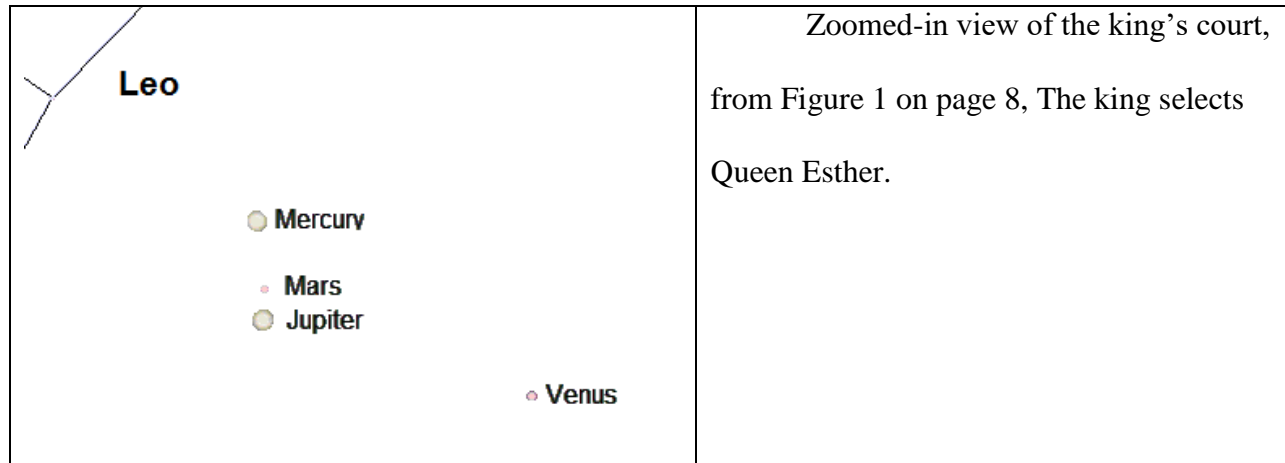


**Figure 5: The king's staff
8/18 Jupiter's heliacal rise—at dawn ②**



**Figure 6: Ahasuerus with a staff
Lion King on his throne relief**

Jupiter rose heliacally the next day, August 18, the king returned. Jupiter completed a ruler's staff between the lion's feet (Genesis 49:10). The king hadn't selected a queen. The relief of Ahasuerus with staff and sky show the same picture.



8/24 Venus' heliacal rise, vertical gold scepter ③

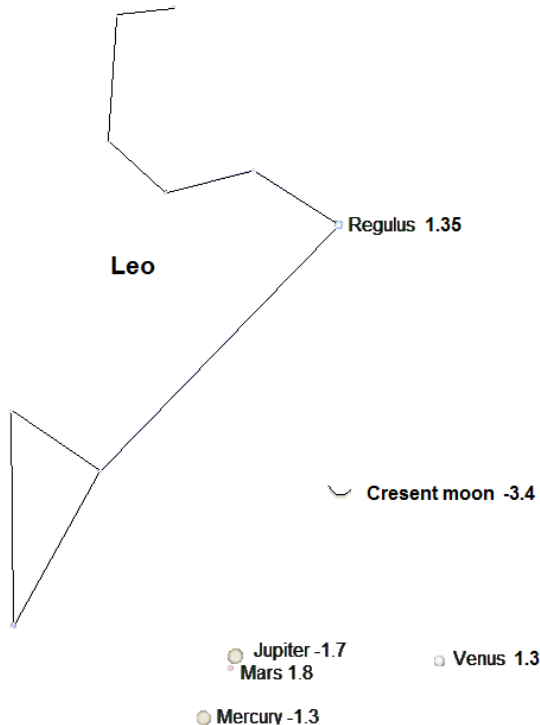
Figure 7: Esther selected queen

Daily, the staff shortened and pivoted to form a vertical golden scepter between the lion king's feet. That dawn (August 23, 2 B.C.), Venus rose with the sun. We studied this same scene earlier for Venus' heliacal rise. The king selected his queen and summoned her in royal apparel into his court. The people saw the new queen as the bright morning star. It was the seventh day of the king's return, so Esther did what Vashti didn't do.

Haman promised the king a bribe equivalent to a quarter-billion dollars to destroy the Jews. The king issued a decree allowing the Jews to be killed and plundered. Mordecai learned of the decree and put on sackcloth, so Mars, the doorkeeper disappeared. Esther asked why Mordecai wore sackcloth and learned of the decree. She and her handmaids put on mourning clothes and ashes, so Venus and her companions disappeared. The starry host represents Abraham's descendants, the Jews. They dressed in sackcloth and ashes and disappeared from the sky. They weep, so their tears fall as rain. At most only Mercury and Jupiter were visible.

The sky was hazy for the next two days, August 25–26. The stars traded places, and the scepter reformed, extending toward Venus. Mars was never seen below Mercury unless the king (Jupiter) was below Mars, so Mordecai didn't bow to Haman. God controlled the visibility. One can infer from the text the daily atmospheric clarity.

One can only see the sun, Venus, and maybe Jupiter near the horizon at sunrise. Extinction reddens the sun, moon, and planets near the horizon⁴⁵ and higher turns them golden. Venus' visibility depends on where it is in its orbit. Usually, the closer to earth, the more visible except when hidden in the sun's glare. It depends on how much of Venus' illuminated surface is visible from earth.



This scene, visible worldwide, lasted thirty minutes; anyone could observe it.

Only the moon's position in this scene varies throughout the world.

The king's golden scepter welcomed Esther. Venus was pale, Jupiter and Mercury golden, and Mars rosy.



Ahasuerus welcomes Esther

Figure 8: The king tips his golden scepter to Esther

8/28 golden scepter extended to Venus & moon ⑤ the brightest dawn

The next day, August 28, 2 B.C., the sky cleared, and the actors were all visible. The king's court was the area before the lion's feet. Esther, in royal attire, entered (Esther 5:1–2; 15:1); Venus was very bright. Esther's train reached the earth (Esther 15:7). Esther was royally attired, and her face rosy; all saw rosy Venus enter. Esther paled as she approached the king. Venus whitened (Esther 15:8–10).

The lion king (Esther 14:13) arrayed in gold and precious gems (Esther 15:6). When

Esther entered his court, the lion king extended his gold scepter (Esther 4:11). See Figure 8, p. 21.

The wise men saw this spectacular sign! The movie progressed at one scene per day. For a few weeks annually, Leo is upright, above the horizon. Jupiter had circulated in Leo for the last year. It returns every twelve years. All of these planets near their heliacal rising with those positions is unique. The waning crescent moon would disappear in minutes. The three brightest objects in the night sky formed an upright equilateral triangle along with the scepter. The six brightest sky objects participated in this sign, the brightest dawn.

The moon at the top of his staff may represent a lotus flower. The lotus flower found in India and Egypt may symbolize his kingdom's vast extent.



Figure 9: Ahasuerus III's coin with lotus staff

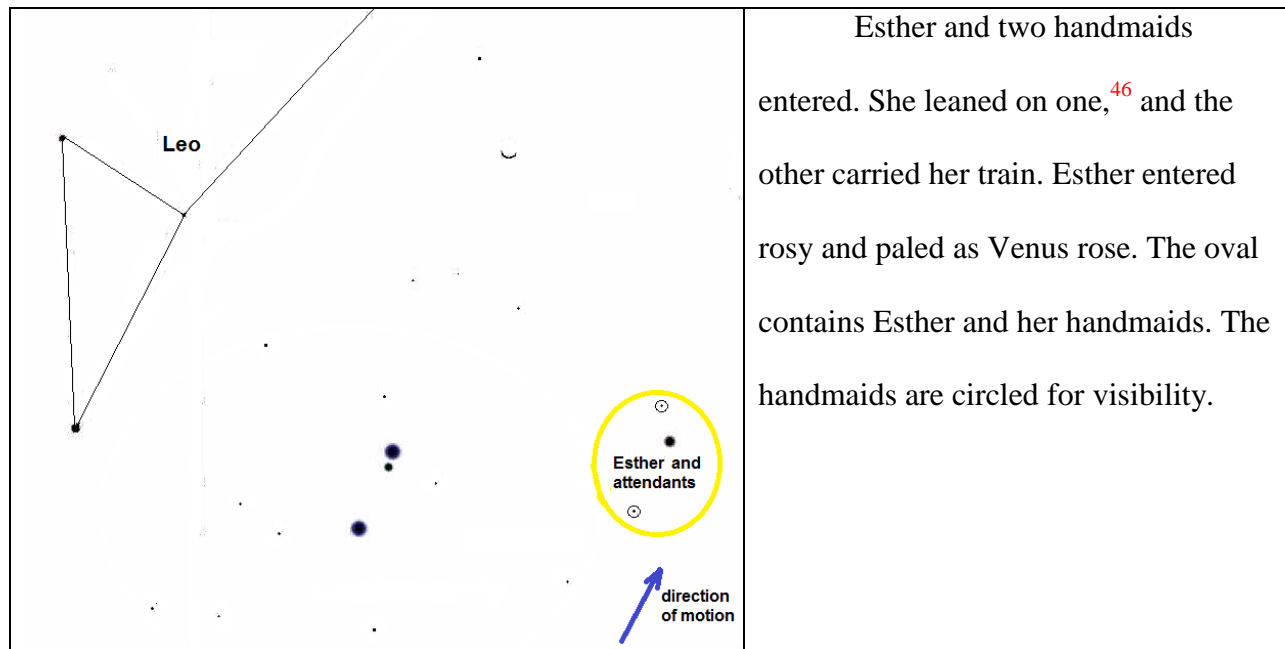


Figure 10: Esther's attendants

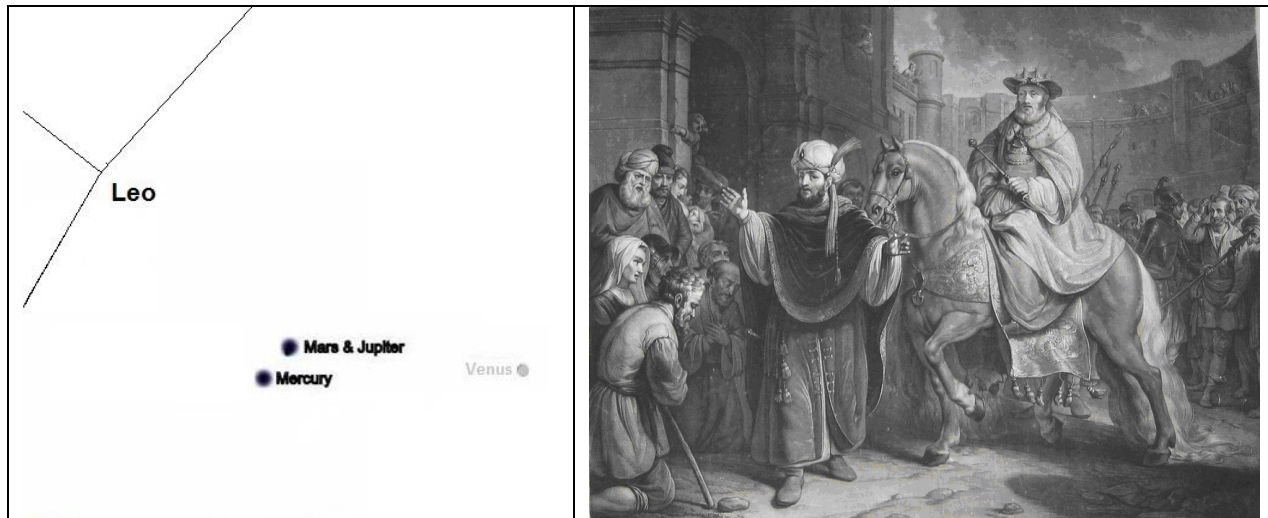
The scepter was also extended toward the waning crescent moon, a fascinating but cryptic picture. The moon and Venus both represent Esther, and the king extended his scepter to both. The king permitted Esther, the brightest celestial object except for the sun, entry to his court at any time.

This is the only scene in this movie where the moon appears. What does it mean?

- In Joseph's dream, the sun represented his father, the moon his mother, and the eleven stars his brothers (Genesis 37:9–10).
- As man and woman rule the earth (Genesis 1:26), the sun rules the day, and the moon rules the night (Genesis 1:16).
- Solomon sings of his bride, "Who is she fair as the moon?" (Song 6:10)

When Haman left Esther's first banquet (Esther 15:8), Mars, higher in the sky than Mercury, didn't bow. Haman erected a high pole for Mordecai (to impale the victim (Esther 6:14)). From the Scripture, we infer a comet tail formed. A comet's tail points away from the sun and can develop rapidly. Before dawn, it looked like an erected pole; see Figure 12, page 25.

The scene is a flashback to the scene the previous day. At the king's command, on August 27, humiliated Haman (Mercury) honored Mordecai (Mars), dressed as the king (Jupiter) (Esther 6:7–11). When Mars (Mordecai) and Jupiter (the king) merged, Mordecai wore the king's clothing, crown, and steed. Haman honored him, leading from below around the city square. Haman then covered his head (Esther 6:12).



8/27 sky less clear, Venus invisible ④

Figure 11: Mercury honors Mars dressed as Jupiter

Artist depicts Haman leading Mordecai riding the king's horse and dressed in the king's robes. Rather than bowing to Haman, Mordecai was raised above him on the king's horse.

Mars was twelve arc minutes from Jupiter,⁴⁷ so Mercury led Mars wearing Jupiter aptly describes the scene.

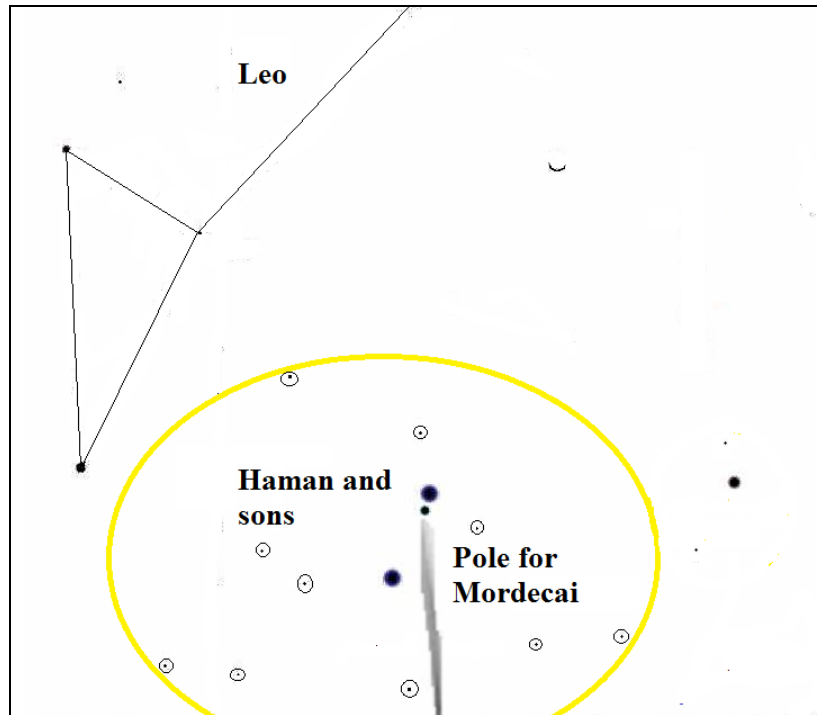
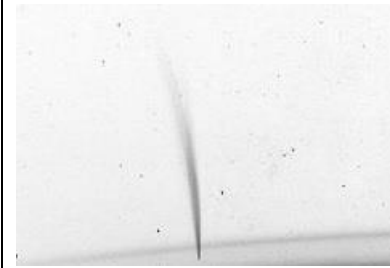


Figure 12: Haman's ten sons and a high pole ⑤

They executed Haman's ten sons (circled); nearby lesser stars disappeared. See Figure 13, page 26. Haman and his sons are in the oval. Afterward, in a less clear sky, the sons vanish.



horizon comet tail

At the second banquet, Haman, below the queen, begged for his life. The king returned from his garden and condemned Haman. The next day all saw Haman impaled on the high pole.⁴⁸ The comet impaled Mercury and Haman died. (Esther 7:9–10). The ancients commonly viewed comets as representing disaster;⁴⁹ Haman would concur.

The action this day is inside the palace. Drinking wine implies a wine-colored sky. We don't see Haman beg or on top of Esther; they're inside.

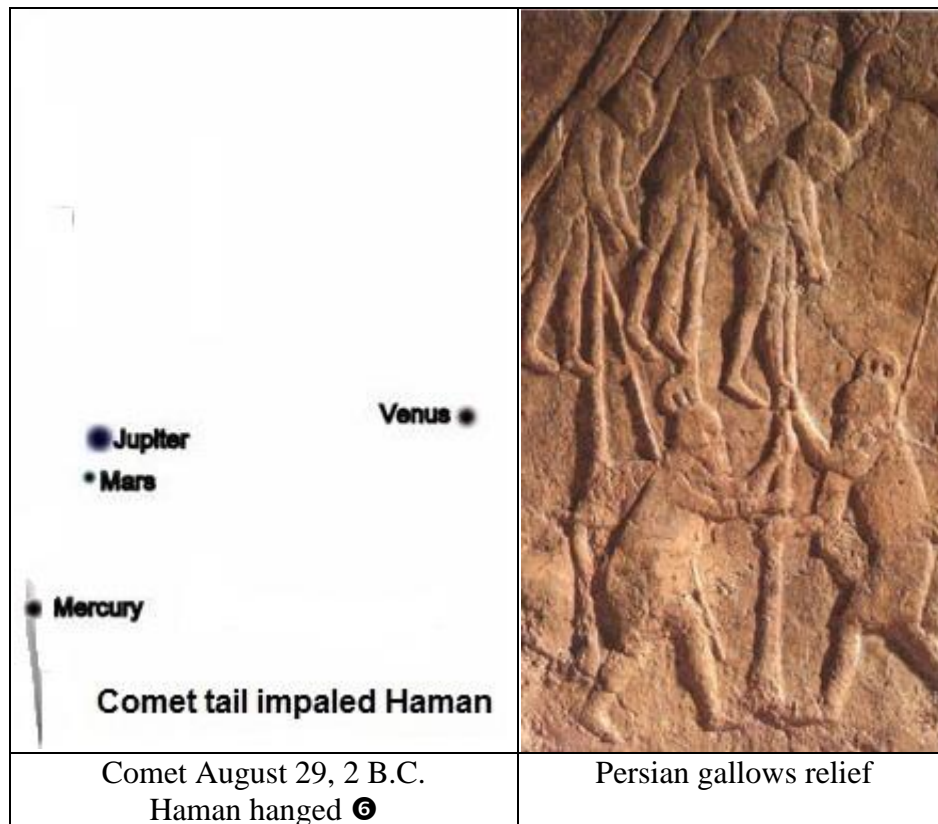


Figure 13: Comet tail depicts a Persian hanging

Mordecai, a doorkeeper, became the king's highest official and the head of his house.

The king gave Mordecai Haman's office. His dragon defeated Haman's dragon.

The Bible's description of these signs answers these questions: Did the wise men interpret the line of planets as a scepter? Yes. Did the wise men see the signs in the morning sky? Yes. Does the Bible have anything more to say about that sign? Yes. They understood these signs included the queen's first conception. The Bible and the sky give us additional details telling the story.⁵⁰ God revealed His plans for the world to watch.

Esther's story scenes summary table

| Date most in 2 B.C. | The scene on the eastern horizon or western horizon | Interpretation of Esther's sky scenes | Sky clarity |
|---------------------|---|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 180-days Sep-Feb | Venus, the waning morning and waxing evening star | Esther's cleansing treatments | winter clouds |
| 180-days Feb-Aug | Venus, the brightening evening star | Esther's beautifying treatments | increasingly clear |

| | | | |
|--------------|---|---|---------------------|
| 8/11–13 ❶ | Jupiter, Venus, and the sun set together in Virgo; Venus and Jupiter heliacally set | Esther went in with the king from the virgin harem. King Jesus' earliest conception of (2:11–16) ⁵¹ | extremely clear |
| 8/14–8/22 | Venus' inferior conjunction | King undecided on wife choice | unknown |
| 8/17 | Mars' heliacal rise | Mercury and Mars battling dragons | extra clear |
| 8/18 ❷ | Jupiter's heliacal rise , a king's staff forms in Leo | In Leo, a scepter/ruler's staff formed by Jupiter, Mars, and Mercury | extremely clear |
| 8/23–24 ❸ | Venus rose before the sun, vertical golden scepter formed before Leo in the king's court | Queen Esther Venus; king with his scepter (Genesis 49:9–10; Numbers 24:17; Psalm 110:2–3) | extremely clear |
| 8/25 day 1 | Scepter breaks up; Mercury down; Jupiter up; Mars & Venus hide (they are fainter) | Mordecai in sackcloth (4:1) Venus in mourning clothes (14:2) Jews of Susa in sackcloth (4:3) | overcast |
| 8/26 day 2 | Jupiter & Mercury trade places Venus & Mars hide | Mordecai didn't bow to Haman (3:2–6); Esther mourns | overcast |
| 8/27 day 3 ❹ | Mercury led Mars arrayed with Jupiter , then Mercury hid. Scepter stretching out | Haman led and honored Mordecai in the square dressed as the king (6:7–11); Haman covered his head (6:12) | clear to less clear |
| 8/28 day 4 ❺ | The king's golden scepter extended toward Venus ; Jupiter-Venus-moon—equilateral triangle, moon-woman; | Golden scepter extended (4:11), king in gold, and gems (15:6). Esther's glorious attire (5:1–2; 15:1) Esther's train reached earth (15:7), Esther's rosy color paled (15:8–10) | extremely clear |
| 8/29 – 9/3 ❻ | Mercury impaled on a pole as the comet tail moved | Haman and king to a second feast Haman impaled (7:1–10). Haman's sons were executed. | less clear |

Figure 14: Table of Esther's story daily events

Esther's signs interpreted

Venus's personality changed from Vashti to Esther. Hadassah became Esther or Myrtle became Venus. The wise men didn't *infer* a planet, e.g., if they didn't see Mars, it didn't bow to Mercury even though they could calculate its position. God controlled the stars and clouds.

Venus was the queen and Jesus' star. Venus can depict a queen pregnant with the king.

The wise men knew the sky story was centuries after Esther. God organized the heavens and wrote Esther to reveal this king. The signs told a similar but more important story. Esther foreshadowed the events they witnessed, a king and queen greater than Ahasuerus and Esther.⁵²

This story implies that some wise men visited Susa, a Parthian capital, to be familiar with

Esther's story. These heavenly signs depicted Queen Mother⁵³ Mary and her Son, Jesus. The wise men searched for a child ten months old or younger.⁵⁴ We can infer Mary was a beautiful woman. King Herod interpreted a child *conceived* as born and rounded 1.6 to two years. Maybe he thought, can my soldiers correctly estimate a child's age? Better to kill too many than miss Christ.

The Scepter reveals the Christ

A scepter marked three famous Messianic passages and Esther.

- The Davidic Messiah had a *scepter* and the *bright morning star* (Psalm 110:2–3). In Revelation 22:16, Jesus revealed He was Venus, and He is also the 'root of David,' linking only to Revelation 5:5, where Jesus is the lion of the tribe of Judah.
- The crouching *Lion* of Judah had a *scepter*, and *He* would arrive (Genesis 49:9–10).
- A crouching *lion* received a *scepter* and *him*—a *star* rising from Jacob (Numbers 24:9, 17).
- The *lion* king tipped his *scepter* to *Venus* (Esther 1–16).
- The first three passages are poetic, and except for Psalms, these books are mostly prose.

These four passages revealed Jesus as the begotten of God, the Lion of Judah with scepter⁵⁵ ruling the world as King marked by His morning star. There's more.

Scripture adds the script changing a sign into a movie. Hebrew poetry linked the ruler's staff and scepter. The star and scepter have related meanings, and Venus is associated with the scepter. Many Bethlehem star theorists identify the scepter as Regulus, the brightest star in Leo; in Latin, it means petty king. Colin Nicholl speculated a very great scepter-shaped comet.⁵⁶

Rome took power over life and death from the Sanhedrin after Jesus' conception.⁵⁷ The Jews had to get Rome's authorization for any execution. The Jews mourned the scepter had passed from Judah.⁵⁸ The Sanhedrin needed Rome's permission to execute Jesus.

We know when and why the wise men came, but they needed a star to find Jesus; why?

Chapter 3

Jesus' birth

To discover Jesus' signs, we need accurate dates. I worked out Jesus' timeline before discovering His signs. I had to reconcile conflicting data. This chapter provides dates and answers questions that will inevitably arise. We must better understand the Christmas story.

Mary's pregnancy

While Mary kept the Passover watch, angel Gabriel came to her at midnight. When she consented to God's request, the Holy Spirit conceived Jesus, and she became the mother of the Most High's Son. She departed that night in haste for Judah's hill country to help Elizabeth. Their husbands, Zechariah and Joseph, were in Jerusalem for Passover. Elizabeth's pregnancy kept her home from the feast. The Spirit, not Mary, revealed her Son to Elizabeth. Elizabeth quickened and felt John's first leap at Mary's greeting. Mary attended to Elizabeth during her final months of pregnancy. Elizabeth didn't tell her son that Jesus was the Christ; John learned when the Spirit descended as a dove.

Mary returned to Nazareth and told Joseph, “I’m pregnant.” A first pregnancy doesn’t show at three months. She told no one, not even Joseph, that her child was Christ. An angel told Joseph in a dream to take Mary as his wife and name her holy child Jesus (Matthew 1:20–21). He also told no one. Jesus began His ministry in Nazareth, subtly revealing He was the Christ. His family didn’t believe Him, and His hometown tried to throw Him off a cliff (Luke 4:16–30). Only Jesus, Mary, and Joseph knew His origin, not even their families.

When Peter said, “You are the Christ, the son of the living God.” Jesus said, “tell no one” (Matthew 16:16, 20). Before He died, Jews confronted Jesus, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly” (John 10:24). The High Priest put Jesus under oath and asked, “Are you the Christ?” He acknowledged He was. They immediately convicted Him of blasphemy and condemned Him to death (Matthew 26:63–65).

Jesus’ traditional birth date, midnight Sunday, December 25, 1 B.C.,⁵⁹ is correct. I’ll support this assertion. Mary conceived after Venus’ heliacal set about August 13, 2 B.C. The conception sign we saw in the story of Esther. I state this to simplify the following discussions. Here is Luke’s account of Jesus’ birth.

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. (Luke 2:1–7)

Details of this registration are scant. Only Joseph needed to register, but Mary accompanied him. The couple was poor; they walked, no donkey, but the hundred-mile (160 km) trek prepared Mary’s body for delivery. Traveling from Nazareth to Bethlehem via the Jordan River would be less strenuous. It avoided the worst of the wet weather.

I'll narrate a possible story. On the road south of Jerusalem, Joseph rested while Mary relieved herself. A squad of soldiers approached, and one said, "Carry my gear."

Joseph stashed his gear, shouldered the burden, and headed toward Jerusalem. After a mile, the soldier said, "You're finished."

Joseph said, "It's only a short way to the city. I'll carry it the last mile."

The soldier asked, "Why are you traveling today?" I'm going to my ancestral home Bethlehem to register for the census.

The soldier said, "Why did you help me?"

Joseph said, "My God prompted me to be grateful; I've never been robbed. Rome does a fine job maintaining peace."

While running back, clouds menaced. The darkness further shortened the day near the solstice. Joseph tightened his cloak. They raced to reach Bethlehem before the Sabbath.

It poured just before they arrived. Their tent would be cramped and wet. Joseph inquired about lodging while Mary sheltered. Edersheim proposed the inn was packed because the holy family arrived late in the day.⁶⁰ Bad weather heightened the need for shelter.

Joseph said, "The inn is full," and thought, "Did my detour mean another family got the last lodging?" Remembering a cave, they soon sheltered there.

The Sabbath started, so they couldn't look for anything better. At midnight the following day, it still rained at Jesus' birth. Mary and Joseph washed, salted, fed, and laid Jesus in a manger. The rain ceased as the tired couple drifted off. Since Jesus wasn't born in the inn, God concealed Him. It was necessary.

Shepherds watched by night

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them,

“Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. (Luke 2:8–20)

Sacrificial lamb production

The shepherds of Bethlehem raised lambs for sacrifices. In c. A.D. 66, Jews sacrificed over a quarter-million lambs at Passover.⁶¹ Four centuries later, Saint Jerome translated the Scriptures into Latin in the cave where Jesus was born.

Year-round, most sheep were enclosed in pens at night. Shepherds watched at night in the field during lambing season. Full-term ewes weren’t penned from December into the spring, so newborn lambs weren’t trampled.

Many argue Jesus wasn’t born in winter because it would be too cold and wet to remain in the fields. This argument fails because these shepherds stayed there year-round to provide sacrifices for the Temple’s daily needs.⁶² Bethlehem’s climate is generally mild. The prevailing wind from the Mediterranean Sea moderated the weather; snow is infrequent and of short duration.

According to the Mishnah,⁶³ sacrificial lambs were born near Jerusalem. Migdal Eder [flock tower], about a mile south of Bethlehem,⁶⁴ marked the southern limit of a circle around Jerusalem for these animals.

Where did the angel announce Jesus’ birth? Probably at Migdal Eder, for shelter as they

watched the flocks. See Figure 17, p. 48. Jacob stopped at Migdal Eder after Rachel died in childbirth near Bethlehem (Genesis 35:19–21). This tower was north of Herod's palace-fortress on the highest peak in Judah, southeast of Bethlehem.

Jesus wasn't born during a pilgrim feast like Passover or Pentecost, or most shepherds would've been in Jerusalem for the festival with their flocks (to be available for sacrifices). They watched flocks; they weren't living in a *SUKKAH* (temporary shelters Israelites lived in during the fall feast of Booths/Tabernacles) in Jerusalem.

In any year Jesus could be born, the winter solstice was December 25, the year's longest night. Jesus was born in a cave at midnight on a moonless winter solstice. Baby Jesus arrived in the darkest dark as the Light of the World. Later in Roman history, the solstice became the invincible sun's birthday.

Each family procured a male lamb from Levitical shepherds for Passover. By Jesus' birth, the chief priests no longer allowed a family to bring their own lamb to Jerusalem. All sacrificial animals found in the area belonged to the chief priests. Each family purchased their sacrifice. Then inspectors were certain the animal had never broken a bone.

A sign wrapped in swaddling cloths

A *sign* to the shepherds was a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and laid in a manger. What did sign mean to them?—as Levitical shepherds, their job included certifying sacrifices had no defect. They certified the Lamb of God was without blemish.

Jesus' birth in a cave parallels His burial in a tomb. Mary and Joseph arrived in Bethlehem Friday afternoon, and Jesus was born Sunday, the third day. The guards in both cases were Levites. When Pilate told the chief priests they had a watch, he reminded them they had Temple guards. In both, He was washed, dripping bloody water on the floor. To swaddle was to wrap snugly in cloth. They wrapped Jesus' body in a linen shroud. The shepherds saw the sign, a

sacrifice prepared to be offered.⁶⁵

One bound an ox in a manger to fatten it for sacrifice. Manger means feeding trough and stall where one binds and feeds an animal. For example, the woman had a fattened [stalled] calf and quickly prepared it as a feast (1 Samuel 28:24). Mary bound Jesus and placed Him in a manger like an animal for sacrifice. To the shepherds sign meant inspect for defects.⁶⁶

I'll return to narrating the story. Mary changed His diaper, and a shepherd said, look, He's perfect. The shepherds told the angel's message. They checked the placenta. It wasn't a movie set; a single lamp lit the scene, and darkness shrouded Joseph. When Jesus cried, Mary prepared to nurse, and the shepherds departed.

Why was Jesus born in a stable?

Mary said, "It was nice of the Lord to send visitors to congratulate us since we're far from family and friends."

Joseph said, "One said, 'he couldn't wait to share the news.'" He looked at Mary, and she at him. He flicked his thumb toward the entrance.

She nodded and said, "I'll hide any evidence we were here."

Joseph said, "It's almost dawn. Let's hide on our ancestral property."

Joseph said, "Take long strides. I'll step on your footprints, so it looks like only one passed this way. Our adventure has an additional twist. Lord, please protect and guide us."

He pitched their tent beyond the highway, but only he occupied it.

Joseph asked, "Will we be hiding until He's grown?"

Mary said, "Maybe like Moses for three months."

Mary and the child went further and concealed in the brush where His cry wouldn't be heard from the road. Any donkey would've been conspicuous and easy to track.

The shepherds' spread the good news; a savior was *born this day in the city of David*

(Luke 2:11, 17). If found, all of Bethlehem and soon all of expectant Israel (Luke 3:15) would visit. Since they provided at least two lambs daily, people at the Temple heard their message that morning. When Jerusalem heard, Herod would slay Jesus.

Joseph returned to town near sundown, registered for the census, and fetched water. Joseph overheard lively discussions about the shepherds' report. The consensus, if there was a newborn, he was long gone.

A soldier said, "Have you seen a newborn?"

Joseph said, "No."

The soldier said, "Where's your dwelling?"

Joseph said, "My tent is by the highway. I just registered for the census. Does anyone need a carpenter?"

A man said, "We're too poor to hire anyone. They need carpenters in Jerusalem and if you're a Levite at the Temple."

Joseph overheard one say, "The shepherds concocted another myth."

Joseph shouldered his water jar in the twilight and returned to his tent; no one followed.

Joseph said, "We can't flee. Soldiers are hunting for a newborn boy. Stay hidden, away from the tent, until they forget the shepherds' message and leave. I'll toss a pebble if anyone approaches. I lied to save His life."

Joseph prepared a hiding place for Mary and Jesus.

Mary said, "I've new appreciation for Jochebed hiding Moses from Pharaoh. Thank you, Lord, for the full inn and the rain, so no one saw us arrive. Thank you; we didn't need a midwife, and for the long night, so we could hide. Will Jesus be a shepherd in Bethlehem like David?"

To hide Jesus from King Herod, they hid Him from everyone. Only shepherds saw Jesus.

The stable was private and secluded. Jesus' birth was mainly secret; no drummer boy, family, neighbors, or innkeeper, just shepherds. Jesus was born in a stable and laid in a manger for a purpose. It makes a good Christmas story. He was born like a lamb.

Before dawn, a squad of soldiers roused Joseph.

The leader said, "You sound familiar?"

Joseph said, "I carried your gear to Jerusalem a few days ago."

The soldier said, "He's alone. Tell us if you see an infant."

Joseph said, "Sure, why?"

The soldier, "It doesn't concern you."

During the following days, Joseph watched and warned Mary when anyone approached. He began to repair a dilapidated cottage nearby.

The soldiers reported, "The shepherds lied. The only newborn is a girl." In a few days, they left.

Shepherds were perpetual liars. Remember the boy who cried wolf? They were at the bottom of the social ladder; impoverished, many stole to survive. The rules usually barred shepherds from testifying in court because all assumed they'd lie.⁶⁷ Since *shepherds* reported the Savior's birth, the news faded when nothing confirmed their story. They concluded the shepherds concocted a clever lie for excitement or notoriety.

Joseph said, "Let's remain hidden here. The king is old and ill; we can return to normal when he dies. I'll repair the house and do construction work in Jerusalem. Jesus is young for a journey. We'll soon need to present Him in the Temple and return for Passover. The soldiers have returned to regular patrols."

Jesus' life was at risk. Joseph spent his reserves rebuilding a house on their ancestral

land. He let the people of Bethlehem know that he would settle there.

Jesus' circumcision

On the eighth day, they circumcised Him with a flint flake. They called Him Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb (Luke 2:21). They didn't take Jesus to one trained in circumcision (*MOHEL*), or Herod would hear of it.

Jesus was born Sunday, December 25, 1 B.C. They circumcised and named Him on Sunday, January 1, A.D. 1. The Anno Domini (A.D.) dating system is correct. Perhaps it was at the first hour, one PM. In eight hundred years, it became official. When you date anything, you witness to Jesus' name.⁶⁸ Coincidence? Why not add A.D. to your dates as a subtle witness.

Jesus presented in the Temple

Joseph paid five days' wage to redeem Mary's month-old firstborn son (Numbers 18:15–16). On Monday, January 24, A.D. 1, Joseph redeemed our Redeemer. He may have deferred payment until he presented Jesus at the Temple on Thursday, February 2, A.D. 1. Two and three are the numbers of witnesses—Jesus was presented on the second day of the second month in His second year of life. Simeon and Anna, two witnesses, represented priests and prophets and men and women.

They presented Jesus in the Temple. It met the sacrificial offering requirements. A priest at the Temple accepted all sacrificial offerings. The lamb was presented with unleavened bread and wine (Numbers 15:1–12). It needed to be eight days old and not yet one year old.⁶⁹ Jesus was forty days old (Luke 2:22).

The priest Simeon blessed the Holy Family (Luke 2:34), a priestly function (Numbers 6:23). The offering required for a woman's purification (Leviticus 12:2, 6) wasn't necessary. Jesus was *holy* at birth (Luke 1:35), and so of necessity was Mary at Jesus' conception and birth. Any impurity in Mary, including giving birth like other mothers, would've defiled Jesus because

standard delivery made one unclean (Leviticus 12:2–4).⁷⁰ Since Mary birthed a holy Jesus, her purification offering covered the Passover lamb offering requirements.

The wise men visited after Jesus was presented in the Temple. The offering included a lamb unless the parents were too poor to afford one (Luke 2:22–24, Leviticus 12:2–8). Joseph didn't have a day's wage; he had no gold, frankincense, or myrrh. Joseph could've afforded the standard offering had the wise men come earlier.

We must get to know the magi.

Chapter 4

Wise men go to Jerusalem

Who were the wise men?

The Parthian Empire stretched from India [Indus] to the eastern border of the Roman Empire in modern Turkey. The Parthian court spoke a Persian dialect but adopted Greek as their official language. Established in the third century B.C., they viewed themselves as the Persian Empire's inheritors following their administrative methods and cultural attributes. Parthia and Rome were eternal enemies.⁷¹ Border territories, often puppets, regularly changed hands.

The magi were probably members of the Parthian royal court. Seven wise men were in the Medo-Persian royal court (c. 450 B.C.). They sat first in the kingdom and saw the king's face (Esther 1:13–14). The magi numbers and roles may have remained unchanged through those centuries. The king wouldn't let all leave simultaneously because their advice was vital. They studied the heavens, so they were a living calendar. They could say when to plant and harvest. They knew the times and seasons and their changing (Esther 1:13, Daniel 2:21).

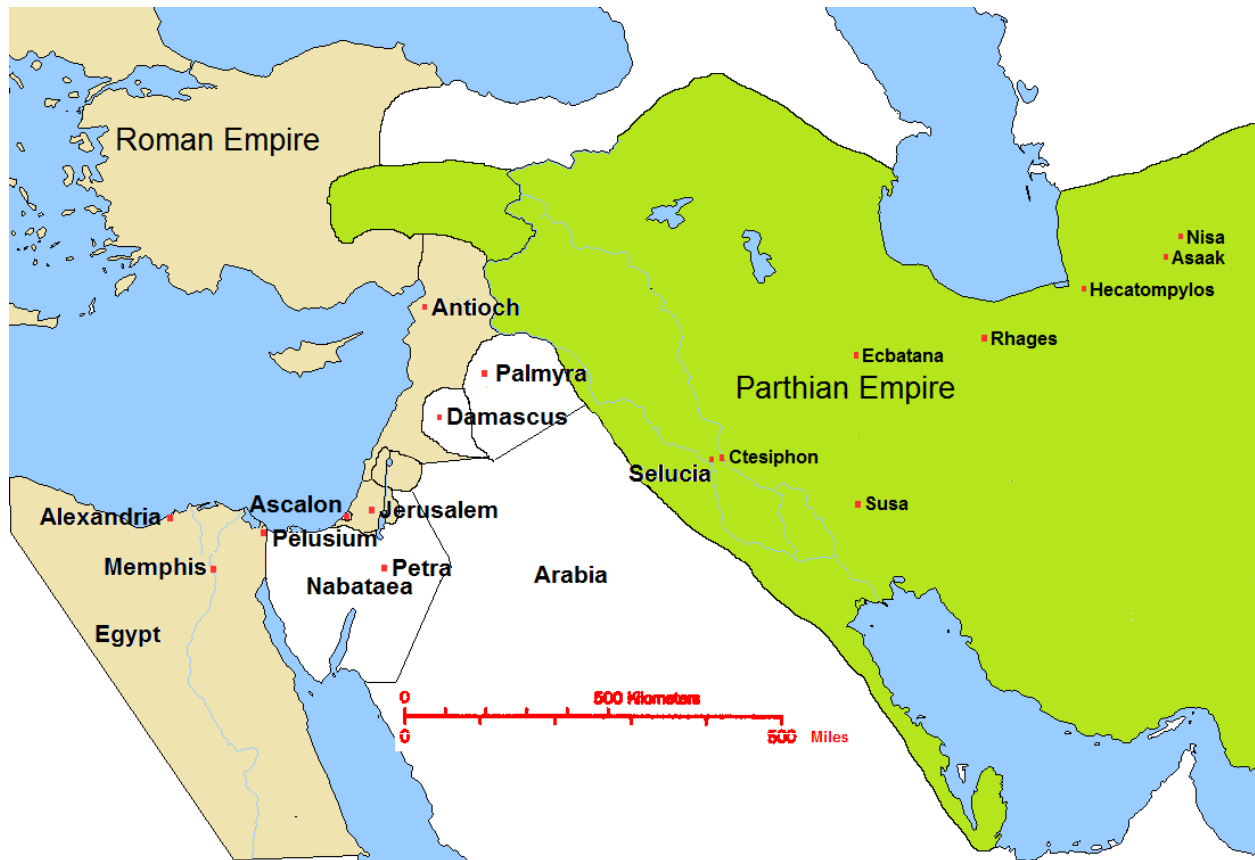


Figure 15: Map where the Roman and Parthian Empires collide

The Parthian court moved annually in a circuit of seven capital cities. Nisa was the original and easternmost capital. The court was at Ctesiphon in the winter, its westerly location on the Tigris River in Mesopotamia.⁷² Ctesiphon, a land and sea trade hub, was on the Silk Road (trade routes from China to Europe). The wise men traveled between many cities, so Matthew said they came from the east.

Logically, they departed from Ctesiphon for Jerusalem. The journey along the Euphrates via Palmyra was six hundred miles (966 km). Pack camels typically traveled twenty-five to forty miles (40–64 km) per day. They traveled for about three weeks.

Parthian nobility were skilled horse archers. Armies of these horse archers defeated and turned back Roman expansion attempts in c. 53 B.C. and 40 B.C. The Roman Senate gave Herod his kingdom after driving Parthia from Judea between c. 37 and 34 B.C. Judea remained a semi-

independent territory until King Herod died. War was ongoing between Rome and Parthia.

Augustus put Gaius (his grandson and planned successor) over Syria on January 29, 1 B.C. To accelerate his training, Caesar made Quirinius, Gaius' tutor. When he arrived, he negotiated a short period of peace.⁷³ Gaius died in battle with Parthia four years later. During this peace, the wise men arrived in Jerusalem. Their party was small, or Herod would've viewed them as a threat. They came with a caravan to transit the bandit-ridden territory between the empires.

How did the wise men get to Jerusalem?

Trade flourished between Rome, Parthia, India, and China. Camel caravans from the Roman Empire traded with Parthia through cities like Palmyra and Petra. Neither empire controlled the deserts of Arabia or Nabataea. Roman traded with India by ships going from Rome to the Nile, then overland to the Red Sea, and then ships to India.

Pilgrims caravanned to Jerusalem for the feasts for safety. Trade caravans from Parthia would often include a thousand camels.

Were the wise men kings?

We can call the wise men kings. Ezra called Artaxerxes, Ahasuerus' Greek name, the king of kings (Ezra 7:12). The wise men were first in rank below the king of kings. Anyone advising the king had to wear a crown, so they were kings.⁷⁴

They were nobles, not understudies. Matthew said, *behold* wise men, they were conspicuous. Their presence upset Herod and all of Jerusalem when it had two million visitors. King Herod invited them into his palace at a hectic time, and when he was so sick, he couldn't sit or stand.⁷⁵ They couldn't sneak back; they had to return home another way.

When did the wise men arrive in Jerusalem?

Since the wise men saw the star heliacally rise *again* shortly after arriving in Jerusalem,

their visit was nearly 1.6 years later. Since the subsequent heliacal rise occurred on Passover, it approached. After leaving Herod, they saw the second sign. They arrived in Jerusalem after the middle of March A.D. 1. They knew the King was born and that He was at most ten months old. I'll discuss dating King Herod's death later.

It was convenient to come in late winter because they were near Judea. They joined pilgrims caravanning to Jerusalem for Passover for safety. At Pentecost, the Apostle Peter noted many pilgrims in Jerusalem, including Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and Mesopotamians (Acts 2:9). Some made the long journey from modern Iran and Iraq to Jerusalem. Those from such a distance would often arrive for Passover and stay through Pentecost.

Jews arrived in Jerusalem five days before Passover (Nissan 10) when each household procured a lamb for the feast (Exodus 12:3). It also allowed them to complete the purification ritual (Numbers 19:11–13, John 11:55). Five days before Passover was March 23, A.D. 1.⁷⁶ The wise men revealed God's choice to the chief priests on that day. They knew Christ had come.

God ordained the timing; Parthian nobility could only safely travel into the Roman Empire during a time of peace. If disguised, Herod wouldn't give them an audience.

Why did the wise men come to worship?

The wise men recognized the sign in the heavens announced a king of the Jews. Why did they come to *worship* Him? When they described the king, King Herod asked where *Christ* was to be born. They came for Christ, *the* King, who would rule the world. The angel Gabriel revealed to Daniel the year the Christ would come (Daniel 9:24–27). All Israel knew His coming neared (Luke 3:15). Christ publically came in A.D. 31.⁷⁷ Daniel the prophet foretold five sequential kingdoms. The fifth would govern forever. Everyone would worship this king.

These men advised kings and chose the next king. They benefited from Daniel's prophetic future history. His predictions were so accurate that many 'elite' Bible scholars (who

don't believe in prophecy) date Daniel's writings four hundred years later. The wise men arrived to worship the everlasting kingdom's Ruler.

Four kingdoms already came: Chaldean,⁷⁸ Medo-Persian, Grecian, and Roman Empires (Daniel 2:39–44; 8:20–22). The wise men came to worship the king all would worship. He was born, and His kingdom neared.

I saw in the night visions,
and behold, with the clouds of heaven
there came one like a son of man,
and he came to the Ancient of Days
and was presented before him.
And to him was given dominion
and glory and a kingdom,
that *all peoples, nations, and languages*
should *serve* [worship] him;
his dominion is an *everlasting dominion*,
which shall not pass away,
and his kingdom one
that shall not be destroyed. (Daniel 7:13–14 (emphasis added))

The wise men went to Jerusalem, Judea's capital because Jew comes from 'Judah,' the prominent surviving tribe of Israel. Judah and Judea are the Hebrew and Greek words for the same place. The scepter indicated kingly rule wouldn't depart *Judah*. He was Jewish. Later we'll discover the heavens worshiped this King.

The wise men visit the king's palace

Two million Jews vastly swelled Jerusalem's population for Passover. Herod brought troops to keep order. The wise men's question troubled Herod and all of Jerusalem. If Herod were disturbed, everyone was disturbed.

They sought the young king at the king's palace, the logical place.⁷⁹ When the wise men asked the king's son's ages, they learned none qualified. God made sure Herod had no grandsons the correct age. If he did, the wise men would have honored his child. The Roman senate titled Herod King of the Jews, but his lineage wasn't Jewish.

When he asked why they came, they quoted a passage that gave him a rationale for killing Christ. Herod pondered; maybe they could locate his rival. Herod was about age seventy, ill, and in pain. He worried about his dynasty.

King Herod promptly assembled the experts. Passover was at hand, so everyone was nearby. Most Jewish kings were born in Jerusalem, but they asked about *the* Jewish king, the Christ. The hereditary king reigned in Jerusalem. One didn't ask who'd be the next king, but which son will reign? Herod killed Bethlehem's boys because they cited this:

I see him, but not now;
 I behold him, but not near:
 a star shall come out of Jacob,
 and a scepter shall rise out of Israel;
 it shall crush the forehead of Moab
 and break down all the sons of Sheth.
 Edom shall be dispossessed;
 Seir also, his enemies, shall be dispossessed.
 Israel is doing valiantly.
 And one from Jacob shall exercise dominion
 and destroy the survivors of cities! (Numbers 24:17–19)

King Herod was Idumean (Edomite). The king would crush his dynasty, people, and country. Herod asked, "Where would the Christ be born?" The chief priests and the scribes answered in Bethlehem.

But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,
 who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,
 from you shall come forth for me
 one who is to be ruler in Israel,
 whose coming forth is from of old,
 from ancient days. (Micah 5:2)

The wise men trusted the Scriptures. When they learned the King was born in Bethlehem, there was no need for a star to point the way. Herod told them where to go, sent them there, and they went. Bethlehem was just five and a half miles (9 km) south, off the main road. They likely promptly purchased and studied a copy of Micah. Let's learn more about this king.

A side trip to Bethlehem

The wise men made a long journey; wouldn't some chief priests and scribes accompany them on a two-hour trip to Bethlehem to see the Christ? If not, why?

Everyone prepared for Passover and needed to be in Jerusalem. They knew there was no king; why?

King Herod said, "search *diligently*;" why diligently? He expected their quest to fail. He'd already unsuccessfully searched when he heard the shepherds' report.

Herod knew he was hated. He imprisoned the principal Jews and commanded them to be executed when he died so the people would lament his death. No one carried out his order.⁸⁰ Herod had two supernatural reports of a rival King in Bethlehem. Maybe the people hid the child. He had the wise men tailed.

The daystar

After Venus' heliacal rise marked His scepter, it went west before the wise men during the day. They watched it *after* sunrise and throughout the day until it disappeared before sunset in Jerusalem's direction! The daystar pointed the way.

I taught about it five years after discovering the star. Afterward, a friend said he was a pilot-navigator during WWII in the Pacific. On a mission, his navigation aids indicated he could use Venus. It was day, and he saw Venus.⁸¹

Saint Peter identified the bright morning star as the daystar. Translations obscure this. "We have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star [*PHŌSPHOROS*] rises in your hearts" (2 Peter 1:19). Most translators don't understand the daystar.⁸² Peter referred to a light that shines in the dark and *with* the sun. The Bible calls Venus the daystar. At that time, one could see it throughout the day. Venus is the only standard celestial light that one can see with

the sun at noon. It's a great light.

In an article on Venus' daytime visibility, Curtis saw it throughout the day.⁸³ *PHŌSPHO-ROS* means light-bringer or light-bearer. Venus' daytime visibility only occurs near (maybe within two months of) its inferior conjunction (between the sun and earth). Venus must be sufficiently separated from the sun;⁸⁴ Curtis viewed Venus with 9.4 degrees of separation. He states, "Any pair of eyes with normal vision could easily have seen Venus that day." This occurs at Venus' helical rise, on its first day of visibility after the inferior conjunction.⁸⁵ Venus went where they were to go.



Here are two telescopic views of Venus. The crescent is near its heliacal rise. About 363 days later, it's further, smaller, and nearly spherical.

Figure 16: Venus phases and relative size

Crescent Venus is brighter because it's much closer. Like the new moon, the crescent Venus looks like horns,⁸⁶ but it appears as a point of light to most people.

In the bright morning star's two helical risings, the wise men cited, Venus rose less than 3 degrees before the sun but separated over 9.5 degrees from the sun. Better conditions than Curtis experienced when ordinary people could see Venus throughout the day. God controlled the visibility. We can still see Venus as the day star if we know where, when, and how to look. So this is another big clue, they saw the star they followed during the day. God didn't hide His light!

Critics, including church fathers like Aquinas, said it couldn't be a real star because it had to lead during the day and point out an individual house. Few knew they could see Venus during the day.

Jesus wasn't easy to find. How did the star help?

Chapter 5

The wise men in Bethlehem

We know the magi's story, a star waited over Jesus, but they don't know or expect that yet, because stars always move. Did they immediately leave if evening approached when Herod sent them to Bethlehem? They were going into unfamiliar rough terrain. Would they risk a mounted night journey, except near the full moon still five days away? They'd no reason to expect a guide star and had a good reason to wait for daylight.

Stars appear at night; proposals have the wise men follow the star or point out Bethlehem at night. It's more reasonable to lead before dark because travel was safer. How'd they know the star was over Bethlehem? If it waited to the south, how far south were they to go, further than Bethlehem? How did a moving light wait?

Here's a possible scenario. The magi woke early and studied the sky, as was their habit, from the Mount of Olives until sunrise. They didn't see Venus. Meanwhile, their servants packed and saddled the horses. On returning, a servant said, "We take the main road west. After the city

gate, we take it south-southwest, following the ridgeline.”

Passing through the city, the crowds forced them into a single file. South of the city, the road crossed the valley and passed through a saddle. Green grass, vineyards, and orchards covered the rocky hills. Nearly five miles south, they glimpsed Bethlehem downslope to the east.

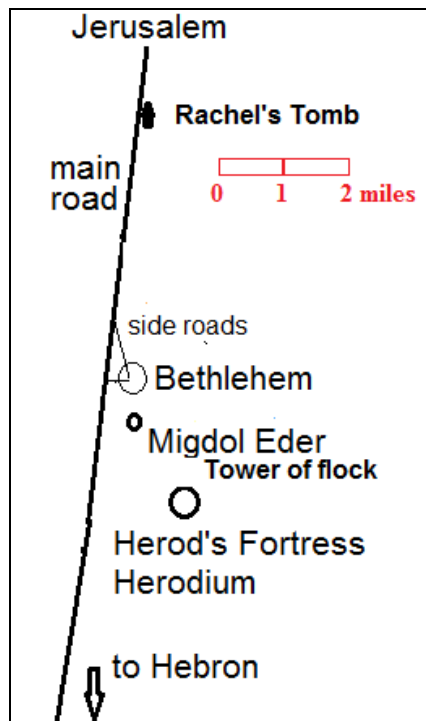


Figure 17: Map of Bethlehem area

Bethlehem's topography indicates two roads from the village to the highway from Jerusalem to Hebron. One to go north, the other south or west. Where the roads met in Bethlehem was the logical place to find the inn.

Nearly every theory had them follow a star south from Jerusalem to Bethlehem at night. Stars constantly move, rising in the east and setting in the west. No star waited for them to find Bethlehem. Since this theory is broken, many conclude it was an angel.

In Bethlehem, most assume the magi easily located the child. The villagers, when asked, said, “He lives in that house.” We already have a reason to challenge this assumption.

Bethlehem was about three hundred meters east of the north-south ridge dividing Judea, about five and a half miles (9 km) south of Jerusalem. Three miles (5 km) southeast of Bethlehem was Herodium, Herod's principal palace-fortress. Bethlehem probably had fewer than five hundred residents. A village was a place where field laborers returned to sleep. The wise men searched Bethlehem for the king but didn't find Him. They learned shepherds visited Christ on the night of his birth. No one had seen Him since that dark night three months earlier. Now they knew the child's age, and it matched their expectation.

Since Passover was near, most men and many families were in Jerusalem. Bethlehem was almost deserted. The shepherds were selling lambs in Jerusalem.

When they asked for the king of the Jews, they heard the shepherd's report. Communication was difficult. Few villagers spoke much Greek. Their accent made them hard to understand. They probably hired a translator and guide. Maybe Herod's spy volunteered for a stipend to help them communicate. The people said, "Check Herod's palace; the next king is his son." They asked the town midwife and *MOHEL*. No birth, synagogue, or circumcision record existed for any boy born near the time reported by the shepherds.

The wise men learned Bethlehem was David, the shepherd king's birthplace. God promised David his descendant would rule the world. When they asked about genealogy, they learned the shepherds were Levites, descendants of Levi, not David. Did they look for a beautiful mother like Queen Esther? When the wise men didn't find Christ at the king's palace or quickly in Bethlehem, they understood their quest was in jeopardy. Where did the king go?

Only the shepherds saw the newborn king. People said they lied. But thank God, shepherds saw Him. The family left when the shepherds left. Many flocks may have returned to pasture at Bethlehem after each household bought a lamb for Passover. Everyone heard the shepherd's story, including King Herod and the chief priests. Where else do they look?

A failed quest?

They searched the cave but found no clues. By the second day, they understood why King Herod said, "search *diligently*." The newborn king was gone. They came too late; their quest failed. It was a Sabbath, so there was even less activity around town.

The wise men searched for three days (Nisan 11–13; March 24–26). They checked every house in town. What now? Even the children lost interest in stalking them.

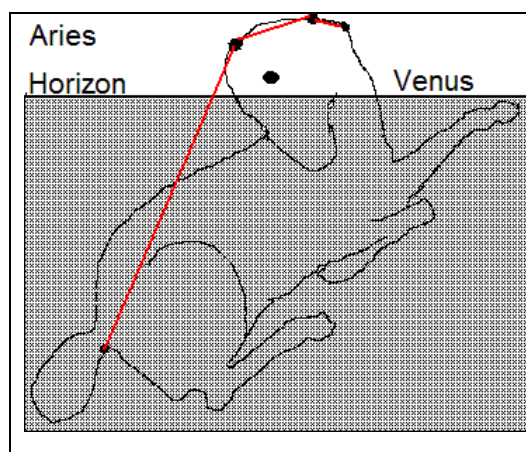
King Herod's spy reported their failure. He got permission to celebrate Passover. As

everyone cleaned the leaven from their homes (Exodus 12:15) and prepared to celebrate Passover, they left the wise men to themselves. Where had the boy gone? They needed a hint on where to look. Could the census records help? Was this town prone to birth tourism? Why did the newborn promptly leave?

The wise men turned to God in prayer. Where should they seek this elusive King? Did God bring them so far to frustrate their quest now? Certainly, the Designer of such spectacular signs meant them to bear fruit. How would He help? They persisted, and so must we!

Can a star help?

They watched Venus' heliacal rise as they habitually did. Where did they observe from? They needed an eastern horizon view. Bethlehem was on the eastern slope of a ridge elevation (2543 feet, 775m); anywhere not blocked by a building would do. Therefore, the wise men observe from near the inn, which had no room for the Holy Family.



Monday, March 27, A.D. 1, twelve hours before Passover, Venus heliacally rose in the constellation of Aries. The slain lamb's head peeked over the horizon. God's Lamb, who would take away the world's sins (John 1:29), had arrived. They watched the daystar. After sunset, it was in the west.

Figure 18: Venus' heliacal rise in Aries March 27, A.D. 1

Exceedingly rejoice

Why did the wise men exceedingly rejoice when they saw the bright morning star when and where they expected it? They realized God orchestrated another sign. They were in a town of sheep raised to be sacrificed. Jesus' star pointed to a heavenly slain sacrificial lamb.⁸⁷ Jesus was the Passover Lamb. That day they sacrificed the lambs (Exodus 12:6). Though it was spring, they

rejoiced because the sky was clear enough to see Venus rise.

Studying their new scroll, identifying Bethlehem as the king's birthplace, they learned He would shepherd His flock (Micah 5:2–4). A shepherd in the line of David, the shepherd king, and born in a village of sheep and shepherds. Revealed by a star on Passover, the day lamb's blood on the doorposts protected Israel in Egypt. They had still more reason to rejoice.

How did a star help them find Jesus? Matthew reveals it went before them and waited over where the child was. How could it stop over a house? The argument for an angel is that stars don't stop; they can't stop. Only an angel or supernatural light could move and stop. Note unlit travel hazards made it hard to follow any light at night (John 11:9).

The shepherds promptly followed the angel's instructions to find Jesus. They would quickly investigate an angelic sighting to repair their reputations. The angel didn't guide the shepherds but told them where to go. Any star-like angel the wise men saw would get the shepherds' attention.

The wise men saw Venus rise in the east before dawn; they tracked it in the sky throughout the day. Venus was the only⁸⁸ star they could easily follow because it was visible during the day. Stars move east to west. It could only lead west.

Led by a star?

Many propose Jupiter entering retrograde was how the star stopped. Since stars always move, theorists cling to Jupiter reversing direction as a plausible explanation. Jupiter reverses direction twice annually. Why this reversal? Jupiter's stopping among the stars can't be detected with eyes alone. The process takes weeks. Jupiter stops among the stars but continues to move and doesn't correspond to a spot on the ground. See Figure 56, p. 160.

Jupiter moves throughout nearly every night, rising in the east or appearing in the sky at dusk and setting in the west. It doesn't guide south. Even if one could tell when it stopped, one

must follow it when travel is hazardous. In the two-hour trip from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, it would move thirty degrees to the west, so one's path constantly veered from south to west. Why wait in Jerusalem after Herod sent them to Bethlehem?

The wise men twice saw the star as it rose heliacally; on this occasion, it went before them, moving with the sun across the entire sky. On the previous heliacal rise of Venus, it set in the west before the sun. After sundown, it was low, above the ridge to the west. The star had gone before them.

The star came to rest over where the child was (Matthew 2:9). It didn't lead; it stood over their destination. Stars move continually. They watched it move from east to west with the sun. At sunset, it arrived low over the ridge. It went before them. Could it wait?

If the wise men followed Jupiter, a comet, or any other star west, it moved together with the host of stars. It would never wait. The greater the sign, the more it was recorded. There is no ancient record of anything spectacular at this time.

Nineteen months earlier, the star led them west. It rose in the east, was visible throughout the day, and set in Judea's direction fifty minutes before sundown. So the star pointed to a sign of a new Jewish king and moved in Jerusalem's direction, and they followed.

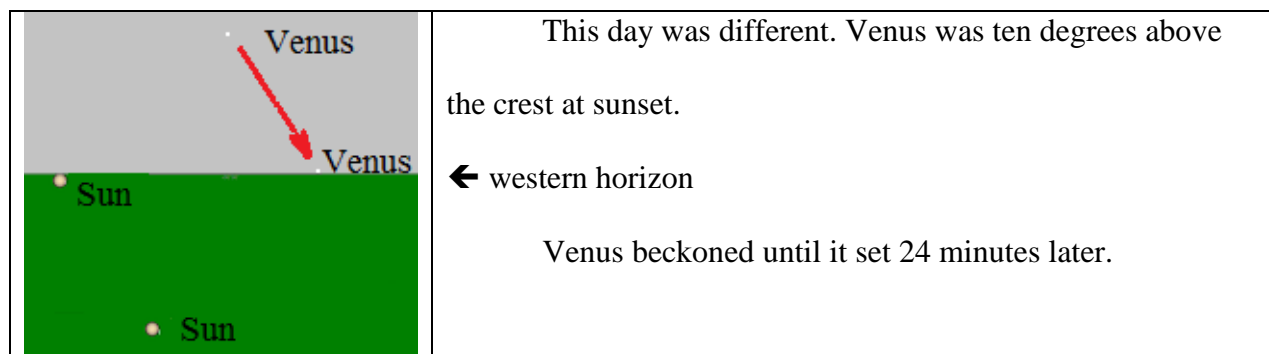


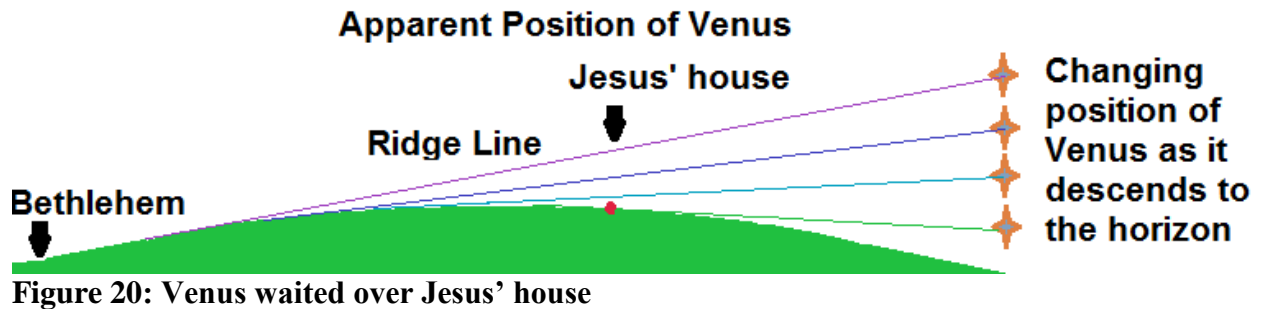
Figure 19: Venus' descent after sunset

Since the star pointed to another sign, would it again lead? Let's listen.

One said, "Is it saying, 'Follow me' again? Does anyone live up there?"

Another said, "Let's see."

With their resources exhausted, God provided a star.



When they went after the star, it stopped descending and waited while they climbed. Did God cancel a physics law? Venus alone in the western sky waited above the ridgeline. See Figure 20. Their motion canceled Venus' *apparent* movement! The star wouldn't set for twenty-four minutes. They had plenty of time to reach the house. We have another big clue—how a star waited.

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>1 500 meters away</p> <p>2 300 meters away</p> | <p>Four scenes depict the view as they walked. The top one is first.</p> <p>The star went before them until it stopped over where the child was (Matthew 2:9). Can it indicate a particular house?</p> <p>Usually, it's too high in the sky. Critics cite this problem.</p> |
|---|---|

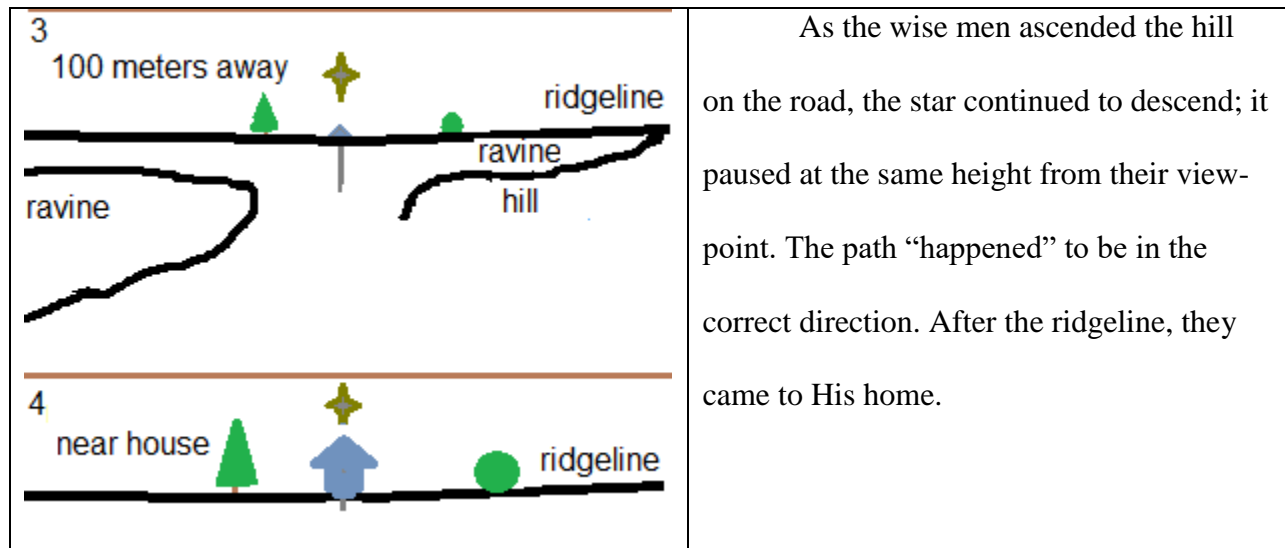


Figure 21: The view as they followed the star

They had ravines on both sides. Only by staying on the road could they see the star. As the star declined, it led to a point on the crest. No turns, just straight up the road. One star did the job.

The sun set due west. They came to the north-south road, which followed the ridge from Jerusalem to Hebron. No other star was visible in the west to reveal Venus hadn't stopped, another clue. The full moon and Jupiter rose on the opposite horizon and moved typically.

No one in town knew of a hidden baby. Mary and Jesus hid on their hereditary property. A house abandoned, perhaps because it was far from water. Beyond the ridge, it was unseen and forgotten.

How does a star stop waiting?

They saw the star descend into an isolated house. When they looked behind the house, it was gone. Its disappearance has hallmarks of a subtle glory cloud over Jesus.

Humidity dramatically reduces stellar visibility. Two thousand years later, we can retrace the wise men's steps to locate where their house stood.⁸⁹ It was beyond the ridgeline, about five hundred meters up the ridge. They walked for about seven minutes. The house was in Bethlehem

but not visible from town. A concealed house they hadn't checked.

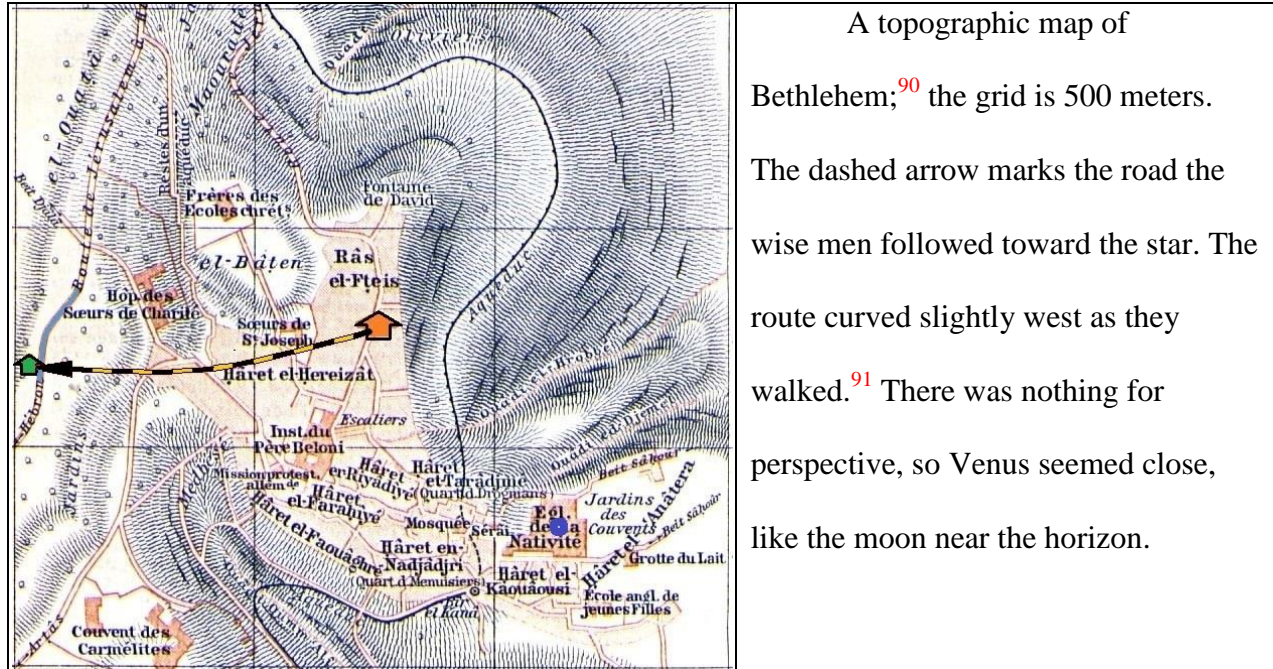


Figure 22: The wise men's route to Jesus' home

They started near the inn on the east-west road. Otherwise, they would lose the star as they traversed the ravines. The Jerusalem-Hebron road at the west (left) followed the ridge. Jesus lived in the little house. The blue dot marks where He was born. The larger house marks the inn's proposed location.

That evening as Passover started, the wise men visited Jesus and Mary. Joseph was in Jerusalem. Why didn't Mary and Jesus go? Jesus was young but old enough to flee to Egypt so he could travel. They weren't required to go, and Herod lived. At the feast, they avoided questions like, where was He born? Where do you live? And why didn't you return to Nazareth?

The people of Bethlehem recognized Joseph. He inquired at the inn⁹² and registered for the census; He rebuilt his house, fetched water, and bought food. Joseph was alone, and no one connected him to the shepherds' story. Joseph may well have celebrated Passover with a Bethlehem family. Jesus' life depended on Joseph appearing to be alone. Most couldn't afford

Joseph's skills in Bethlehem, so he sought employment in Jerusalem and avoided questions in Bethlehem.

Wouldn't the shepherds have brought their flocks near Joseph's house? Not if the better pasture was at hand, and it was spring, grass was plentiful.

Why didn't the soldiers search up the road? They did but found only Joseph. They weren't suspicious because they "knew" he was alone.

In his Canticle, six months earlier, Zechariah prophesied the Dayspring shall guide our feet on the road of peace (Luke 1:78–79). Venus is Dayspring (*ANATOLE*).⁹³

“Because of the tender mercy of our God,
whereby the sunrise [*Dayspring*] shall visit us from on high
to give light to those who sit in darkness
and in the shadow of death,
to *guide our feet into the road of peace*.” (Luke 1:78–79 (emphasis added))

This star rises with the sun but is a great light in the darkness. The Dayspring was Venus, and it can guide our feet. All features necessary to escort the wise men to Jesus. Rarely it can endure from dawn to dusk. *ANATOLE* [Dayspring] is the word earlier translated as heliacal rise. They lived in a town that annoyed Herod; they were in the shadow of death.

Luke subtly references the star of Bethlehem as the Dayspring. We have found Jesus' star in two gospel accounts, but there is yet another.

When the wise men visited, Jesus lived there by divine coincidence. He was the correct age, and like Esther, His mother was beautiful. He was a direct descendant of King David. The wise men didn't cause commotion in the deserted town; Jesus was still safe from King Herod. They found a young mother with her only child. No need to ask, is He the king? They prostrated themselves in worship and gave their gifts. The wise men explained how the daystar had unexpectedly led them. After a long day and their deep sorrow turned into jubilation, the wise

men slept soon after leaving Jesus and Mary.

The daystar is hard to find. One needs to know where and how to look for it. The shepherds wouldn't see it casually. To watch Venus close to the sun, the wise men used a tree or building to screen the sun while watching it. The shepherds were in open fields. At sunset, Venus appeared as the bright evening star. The few shepherds remaining in Bethlehem had no reason to follow it. There were only familiar stars.



Figure 23: Ancient magi depiction

The wise men visited when Jesus turned three months old. Like Moses' mother Jochebed, Mary hid him for three months until she could no longer hide him.⁹⁴ Jochebed placed Moses in an ark of reeds, and he went from living in Goshen to living in Pharaoh's palace (Exodus 2:1–10). A wicked king sentenced Moses to death. There are many links between Moses and Jesus, the prophet like Moses (Deuteronomy 18:15–19). Both crossed into Egypt to survive an evil king's plan to kill them.



The road the wise men used may have looked like this. The supposed location the angel appeared to the shepherds in Bethlehem.⁹⁵ There are three people; one stands on a Roman-like road.

Figure 24: Roman-era road in Bethlehem

Where did Jesus live?

There is indirect Biblical support, Jesus' house was on this ridge. It was outside the town proper, so a baby would be easier to hide.

When Joshua divided the Promised Land, every family (except Levites) by lot received a particular parcel of land. The LORD controlled every die throw, so He selected this plot for Joseph's ancestors. In Israel, a father passed his property to his son. Joseph and Mary were of David's house (Luke 1:27). Jesus was King David's direct descendant (Matthew 1:1–16).

Further, David was Boaz's direct descendant (Ruth 4:20–21), so Joseph inherited Boaz's property. Boaz was Salmon's son, the husband Rahab, the harlot of Jericho (Matthew 1:5). He received this property under Joshua (Joshua 15:1–64).

Boaz slept at a threshing floor to guard his barley harvest (Ruth 2:3–8). So his inheritance had a threshing area. They used the wind to separate chaff from grain after threshing on the floor. The windiest places are typically ridges, particularly at a saddle, because it channels the wind. Since Judah's prevailing wind is from the west, this was ideal for separating the chaff. A threshing floor was a flat rocky area in a windy location. It was a secure house foundation.⁹⁶

The wise men's gifts

The wise men brought Jesus gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Scripture links these treasures to Venus. Why these gifts? The frankincense and myrrh were more valuable in Judea

because it was further from their source. Jews imported these for Temple service. Much of the wise men's tradition comes from the following passage, e.g., gentiles, camels, and kings.⁹⁷

Arise, shine, for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.
For behold, darkness shall cover the earth,
and thick darkness the peoples;
but the LORD will arise upon you,
and his glory will be seen upon you.
And nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your rising.
Because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you,
the wealth of the nations shall come to you.
A multitude of camels shall cover you,
the young camels of Midian and Ephah;
all those from Sheba shall come.
They shall bring gold and frankincense,
and shall bring good news, the praises of the LORD. (Isaiah 60:1–3, 5–6)

What else did the wise men know? Isaiah says a group from the east brings wealth, including gold and frankincense. The passage starts with the coming of a bright light that rises. It shines in the darkness (so it isn't the sun) but is associated with the dawn, e.g., the bright morning star.

Isaiah says, "Kings come to the brightness of your dawn." The dawn that brought the wise men to Jesus was the brightest. The sign on August 28 had the six brightest heavenly lights clustered together, a most brilliant dawn. So a confirming clue, sunrise with all the brightest lights together. There were seven lights, including the comet that impaled Haman. See Figure 8, page 21.

Frankincense and myrrh were treasures of the sea because the sea was the better way to transport goods when available. Trade ships brought them to Ctesiphon, where they launched their quest. The gold was immediately helpful. The Holy Family had money to travel to Egypt and quickly escape harm's way. As Parthian nobility, the wise men rode horses but arrived in

Jerusalem with a caravan composed primarily of camels. Kings came with herds of camels.

Isaiah doesn't mention myrrh, so why did they bring it? Myrrh was the chief sacred anointing oil ingredient (Exodus 30:23). Persia's wise men chose and crowned the king, so I speculate they anointed Jesus king. Much like Samuel anointed David king at this location years earlier (1 Samuel 16:1–13). Esther used myrrh for beauty treatments, so they also brought it to beautify the queen.

The sequence of signs that brought the wise men to Jesus' house is a testament to God's design. It's a beautiful story only He could arrange. We marvel at His truth portrayed in the sky. Even if we discovered these signs without help, we'd still miss many things. The scepter was golden, the dawn's brightness, and the connection to Esther. There is much more to the story. God used Jesus' star to bring the wise men to Jesus, and He'd use it again to reveal Jesus!

Isaiah tells us the magi brought gold, frankincense, and good news. The news of the signs was the praises of the Lord! The gentile magi told Mary the good news, and we can be confident they returned and told the Parthian royal court. They knew the Almighty was responsible for the signs in the sky. Now we understand the good news of Jesus' heavenly signs.

The flight to Egypt

The wise men on Passover evening worshipped Jesus and gave their gifts. Afterward, warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they returned to their own country by another way.

Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt I called my son." Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: "A voice was heard in Ramah,⁹⁸ weeping and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted, because they are no more." (Matthew 2:12–18)

An angel warned Joseph in a dream that night during the watch; a vigil of prayer and waiting (Exodus 12:42). Joseph rushed to Bethlehem. He learned of the wise men's visit and told Mary they must flee to Egypt.

Jesus' flight to Egypt and His time in the tomb thirty-two years later were on the same day of the year. Israel fled slavery in Egypt on Passover night for the Promised Land. At night on Passover, the Holy Family fled death in the Promised Land for Egypt. The official Passover was always a full moon, so Israel and the Holy Family had enough light to travel safely. A full moon rises at sunset and sets at dawn.

The wise men departed another way

They were warned not to return to Herod. They could return to Herod in an hour. So around midnight, they departed by another way. The Dead Sea blocked any direct route east. They likely came to Jerusalem via Palmyra. It was at the Parthian Empire's western edge a hundred miles northeast of Damascus. Their dress and mounts made them conspicuous. For the wise men to depart differently, they needed to go south and east. They returned via Petra (in modern Jordan, see Figure 25, p. 63). Thus, they avoided Herod as they returned to the east. Petra was outside of King Herod's territory. Mounted with a head start, no one overtook them.

How do we know they were warned in a dream and returned a different way? There was only one main road passing Bethlehem; they could go north or south. The route north would put them in Herod's hands almost immediately. So they went south. They again passed the Holy Family's home taking the road south toward Hebron. They returned to Mary, explained their dream, and asked for directions because they were wise. So they visited again that night.

Mary likely cautioned care as they passed Herod's primary fortress Herodium three miles (5 km) to the south. Herod's soldiers likely observed them pass in the night but had no reason yet

to question them. Soon Herod would learn they fled. Herod undoubtedly assumed the Bethlehemites hid Christ. They must have discovered his spy.

The wise men rode south, turned east, and passed south of the Dead Sea to Petra in Nabataea. They joined a caravan and carried the good news home, disappearing from our story.

Getting to Egypt

The Holy Family's fled to Egypt about midnight on Tuesday, March 28, A.D. 1. Their journey reversed Israel's flight from Egypt on Passover over fourteen hundred years earlier. Unlike most provinces, Herod's troops couldn't search into Egypt. The emperor would interpret troops moving there as an attempt to usurp him. It was a prudent place to flee.

The emperor ruled Egypt directly as Pharaoh's successor. It was the empire's breadbasket and bypassed Parthia for trade with India. Egypt was by far Rome's wealthiest province outside Italy.⁹⁹ Its capital, Alexandria, was the largest port and the second-largest city in the empire.

Which direction did the Holy Family go? If they went south, they would pass near Herod's fortress in the wee hours of the night. The full moon meant they would likely be observed, a risky prospect since Herod had searched for baby Jesus. They could get to Egypt by land or sea. Every reviewed account of the flight had them go by land, usually on a donkey. They wouldn't be able to hide easily. The hundred and fifty-mile (240 km) overland route through the desert to Pelusium in northeastern Egypt (sand choked its port) would be a far more arduous and exposed route to travel. This trip would take a week. Jesus would be at risk from every passing chariot or horseman in Herod's army. They'd have traveled by night and slept by day, and getting supplies, especially water, would be challenging.



Figure 25: Map of Judea

The winds and currents governed the Mediterranean's sailing routes. The dominant winds and the currents moved southeastward throughout that part of the Mediterranean. "The Alexandrian grain ships normally sailed together as a fleet and left Egypt first thing in April

when the sailing season began.”¹⁰¹ When the Holy Family fled, ships were sailing to Egypt. The wind and the currents cooperated to make it a quick and easy trip.

Forty miles (64 km) downhill west of Bethlehem was the seaport city of Ascalon. It was the closest place outside Herod’s control. From Ascalon, they could travel by ship to Alexandria. Ships sailed about a hundred miles (160 km) per day with good wind and current conditions, so once they departed, they were safe and arrived in Egypt on the third day.

The Holy Family hiked to Ascalon during two full moon nights. If they had a donkey, they’d be much easier to track. Herod’s soldiers were more likely to catch them. They avoided main roads to conceal their presence. Wednesday morning, they departed by ship and arrived in Egypt before the Sabbath. The sea route to Alexandria was about 250 miles (400 km). The timing was perfect for a quick sail to Egypt.

Jacob’s son Joseph links to Mary’s husband, Joseph. They had the same name and father’s name; dreams led both. Both were chaste, over the house of God’s family, and rescued their family. Joseph provided bread to the world. Joseph protected the Bread of Life. Jesus arrived in Egypt as bread was shipped to the Roman Empire.



Figure 26: Map of Egypt

The land and sea route would be hazardous if the wise men visited in the winter. Weather

endangered the sea and Herod's army the land.

How long did the Holy Family stay in Egypt? At least forty days and maybe six months, so they returned to Judea before winter. Alexandria was a vast Greek-speaking city with a large Jewish population. God wanted them fluent in Greek but still with their own people.

King Herod killed the boys of Bethlehem

That morning, Herod's spy reported the wise men had fled. The king surmised the people of Bethlehem lied about the Christ. Therefore, he killed all boys under two, rounding the 1.6-year synodic period of Venus. It's the longest of any planet, less than two years; see Figure 27. Bethlehem's men were gone for Passover, so unavailable to resist. The wise men knew the time referred to the King's earliest conception, but Herod assumed his birth. The wise men sought a child less than eleven months old. Because Rachel wept, the slaughter extended into Benjamin's territory near Jerusalem's southern border, a five-mile radius around Bethlehem.

| Planet | synodic period | Venus has the more reasonable period between heliacal rises to match Herod killing all boys under two. |
|---------|----------------|--|
| Mercury | .317 years | |
| Venus | 1.599 years | |
| Mars | 2.135 years | |
| Jupiter | 1.092 years | |
| Saturn | 1.035 years | |

Figure 27: Planets heliacal rising periods

The Holy Family returned to Israel

After Herod died, Caesar included his kingdom more fully in the Roman Empire and allowed Herod's children to rule it. He placed Judea, half the kingdom, under Archelaus. Philip and Antipas each ruled a quarter. Some cities in Gaza went to Herod's sister Salome I. Quirinius tutored Gaius, the governor of Syria. He administered the census before Herod's death, so he exercised oversight while Herod lived. When the Holy Family returned to Judea, Archelaus ruled.

Archelaus spent a week for Herod's funeral and about a week settling affairs. He spent at

least two weeks each way sailing to and from Rome. He and his brothers also argued their kingship cases to Augustus. Herod died at least six weeks before Joseph returned. There were riots, much destruction, and thousands of men killed in the kingdom during this period. Galilee's capital Sepphoris (near Nazareth), was destroyed.

But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead." And he rose and took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. And he went and lived in a city called Nazareth, so that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, that he would be called a Nazarene. (Matthew 2:19–23)

The Holy Family returned to Judea, and because Archelaus was dangerous, they continued to Nazareth. Some believe the Holy Family returned to Nazareth before fleeing to Egypt; some even believe the wise men found Jesus in Nazareth.

The Scripture says the Holy Family returned after doing all the law required. The law required circumcision and naming on the eighth day and presentation in the Temple on or after day forty. Jesus was the prophet like Moses. He had to fulfill types in the law to match Moses. An evil king threatened to kill him for three months. He went to and departed from Egypt and returned from exile after all who sought his life died, etc. I discuss this further on p. 162.

Because shepherds announced the Savior's birth in Bethlehem, even Jesus' birthplace remained confidential.

We need Jesus' exact timeline to find more signs in His life. Let's determine the dates of His birth and death.

Chapter 6

Dating Jesus

We can't find Jesus' signs if we don't know exactly when He lived. Scholars authoritatively date Jesus and disagree with each other. God placed many signs in the heavens we discover when we accurately date Jesus. Peter said the prophets guided by the Spirit searched to know His time and circumstances. "Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, *searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and circumstances* to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow." (1 Peter 1:10–11 (emphasis added))

I specified Jesus was born at midnight on the traditional date, December 25, 1 B.C. It's later than most modern scholarship supports. It led to finding the star of Bethlehem. Many debate Jesus' birth date. It was unrelated to the rising of Venus, except it followed the Lion of Judah receiving His scepter and preceded the following heliacal rise of Venus by at least nine months. Esther going in privately with the king depicted His earliest conception.

Census records date Jesus' birth

In August A.D. 70, Caesar's son, General Titus (later Caesar), conquered Jerusalem. Near the Roman Coliseum, Titus' Arch commemorates his victory.



Titus brought Temple treasures like a golden menorah to Rome. He brought the census records now lost, which allowed checking Jesus' birthday over the following centuries. God wanted us to know Jesus' birth date.

Figure 28: Titus' Arch menorah relief

We have precise details of three census record searches to investigate Jesus' birth. Justin Martyr (c. 100–165 A.D.), addressing Emperor Marcus Aurelius—stated Jesus was born in Bethlehem, “as you can ascertain also from the registers of the taxing.” After that, they celebrated Jesus' birthday on December 25. Tertullian (c. 160–250 A.D.) wrote, “the census of Augustus—that most faithful witness of the Lord's nativity, kept in Rome's archives.” When Cyril of Jerusalem asked Pope Julius (c. 337–352 A.D.) to assign the correct day of Christ's birth “from the census documents brought by Titus to Rome,” Julius assigned December 25.¹⁰² Christianity was persecuted until Emperor Constantine issued the Edict of Milan in February A.D. 313. Jesus was born on December 25, but what year?

Two December twenty-fifths occur between the signs the wise men saw. So was Jesus born in 2 B.C. or 1 B.C.? December 25, 2 B.C., would be too early if conception was in August 2 B.C., so 1 B.C. becomes our preferred solution. Shortly I'll provide additional astronomical and Biblical evidence to support December 25, 1 B.C.

History dates Jesus' birth

No ancient historian recorded Jesus' birth earlier than 3 B.C. Most placed it in 3 or 2 B.C.

Two foremost historians Eusebius of Caesarea and Dionysius Exiguus put it in 1 B.C.

Dionysius Exiguus, a prominent scholar, lived in Rome with access to state and church archives. Most archives are lost. The council of Nicaea in A.D. 325 specified when to celebrate Easter. The Julian calendar had too many leap days, so it drifted by nearly a day per century.

The pope assigned Dionysius to determine the upcoming dates of Easter. In A.D. 525, he prepared a table of 95 future Easter dates. Dionysius didn't want to date using the standard Diocletian Era because he persecuted Christians. Rome retained the census records, now lost, for the day and the year of Jesus' birth.

Dionysius carefully set the date on December 25, 1 B.C. (753 A.U.C.), for Christ's birth. He commenced the Christian era Sunday, January 1, A.D. 1 (754 A.U.C.), seven days later to agree with the Roman year's start.¹⁰³ Our year and epoch start when Jesus was circumcised and named (Luke 2:21). Christmas was eight days (inclusive) before the Kalends of January.¹⁰⁴

God had the Church establish the worldwide standard dating system (Anno Domini, Gregorian calendar). The Church accurately selected our Lord's birth date. Jesus was thirty when His public ministry began in A.D. 31 and died in A.D. 33 at age thirty-two on the eve of the lunar-solar Passover. Jesus lived thirty-three years to the day from conception to death.

Known chronological details of Jesus' life

Most assert the lunar eclipse before King Herod died occurred on March 13, 4 B.C. Josephus recorded only this eclipse. It was a minor partial eclipse only visible from 2 to 4 AM. Josephus recorded it because it was a sign. Few noticed this eclipse, and Josephus would be unlikely to record it. This eclipse likely leaves insufficient time before Passover for the events Josephus recorded to occur after Herod's death and before Passover.

On December 29, 1 B.C., the moon rose partially eclipsed, obscuring more than half the orb. The eclipse was visible for two hours after sunset. Herod died after this. Some weeks before

Passover, this eclipse more closely fits the data regarding the time of Jesus' birth.¹⁰⁵ Lunar eclipses visible in Jerusalem near this time were September 15, 5 B.C.; March 13, 4 B.C.; January 10, 1 B.C.; and December 29, 1 B.C.¹⁰⁶ The reconciling assumption is that King Herod the Great died four years later than typically assumed. "Of the candidates to be Herod's eclipse, the December 29, 1 B.C. eclipse was the most likely to be widely observed."¹⁰⁷

The star of Bethlehem dates determines the relevance of the conflicting data. It answers the question, did the Jews note an obscure partial lunar eclipse in the morning's wee hours as a meaningful sign? No.

King Herod made his sons coregents in 4 B.C. His sons' coins date from at least their reigns' fourth year. They minted their own coins after Herod died. They counted their reigns from when they shared their father's rule.

Dating John the Baptist's conception and birth

The priestly courses specified when Zechariah served and the potential dates of John the Baptist and Jesus' conception and birth. See Appendix D: p. 170. John the Baptist's conception date c. November 30, 2 B.C. was established from the times Zechariah served in Abijah's course (Luke 1:5). John's due date was c. August 12, 1 B.C.¹⁰⁸

Elizabeth hid her pregnancy for five months (Luke 1:28). In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel told Mary of Elizabeth's pregnancy and that she too would conceive (Luke 1:36). April was the sixth month from a November conception. Mary was due 38 weeks after Gabriel's visit.

A son promised in a year

The Baptist's August birth date makes the King's conception sign the anniversary *before* John's birth. God repeatedly promised an only son in a year. The LORD told Abraham. "I will establish my covenant with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this time next year" (Genesis 17:21). At the appointed time, I will return to you, about this time next year. Sarah shall have a

son” (Genesis 18:10, 14). Elisha promised the Shunammite woman a son. He said, “At this season, about this time next year, you shall embrace a son” (2 Kings 4:16).

Dating Jesus’ conception

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin’s name was Mary. And he came to her and said, “Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!” But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”

And Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I am a virgin?”

And the angel answered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.” And Mary said, “Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her. (Luke 1:26–38)

Mary conceived Jesus at midnight on Passover Wednesday, April 7, 1 B.C.

When their first born was destroyed,
 they acknowledged your people to be God’s son.
 For while gentle silence enveloped all things,
 and night in its swift course was now half gone,
 the all-powerful word leaped from heaven, from the royal throne,
 into the midst of the land that was doomed. (Wisdom 18:13b–14 emphasis added)

The preceding verses link this event with Passover. Passover’s date varies depending on the lunar cycle from late March to late April. The elapsed time from a Passover conception to a Christmas birth doesn’t always work out. In 1 B.C., a Passover to Christmas, pregnancy is four days short of 38 weeks, but 90% of deliveries are within ten days of the due date, so this is well within tolerance. His actual due date was December 29, 1 B.C.

Midnight means Gabriel came while Mary kept the Passover watch. Before dawn, Venus and Mercury were high, bright, and together. The full moon shone all night long. Mary

conceived, so Jesus had come, while His star was still the morning star before it departed, as Genesis 49:9–10 predicted. The scepter shall not depart until he comes to whom it belongs.

In haste, Mary left that night for Elizabeth's home. Mary had a three-day (about seventy miles (113km)) journey from Nazareth to a city in Judah's hill country.¹⁰⁹ Joseph was in Jerusalem for Passover as required. Venus directed the wise men to Jesus on the first anniversary of His incarnation.

John leaped in the womb (quickening with a first child occurs at 18–20 weeks). Elizabeth had just entered her eighteenth week, so Mary arrived at Elizabeth's home Friday afternoon, coinciding with her first feelings of life.

Elizabeth revealed her pregnancy when she didn't go to Jerusalem for Passover. God sent Gabriel to Nazareth early in Elizabeth's sixth month. Jesus was born four and a half months after John the Baptist.¹¹⁰

Venus rose on the Jewish calendar's first anniversary of Jesus' conception. He was conceived on Passover, and the star revealed Him on Passover. The sign of the earliest conception of Esther's child occurred one year before John's birth. A sign timed to herald the birth of the one who would prepare the way for our Lord Jesus Christ.



Eclipse like December 29, 1 B.C. & Friday, April 3, A.D. 33.

Figure 29: Jesus' birth and death blood moon

On December 29, 1 B.C.,¹¹¹ an omen, a deep red half-eclipsed moon, rose twenty minutes after sunset. Herod slew Bethlehem's babes on Passover, so he died after Passover

A.D. 1.

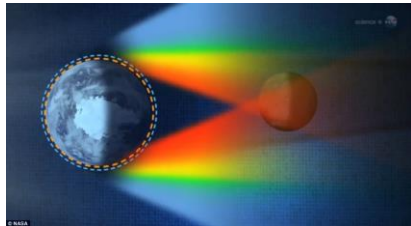
Dating Jesus' crucifixion

Jesus' crucifixion date is the most straightforward point in Jesus' life to date specifically.

The date is controversial. Only Friday before Passover in A.D. 30 and 33 are astronomically viable because Passover could only be on a Friday in those years. Alternate days of the week for Jesus' crucifixion are without serious merit.¹¹² All four gospels place Jesus' death on the day of preparation, the Jewish name for Friday.¹¹³

Many argue Passover is a Sabbath, but that's not necessarily true. Israel left Egypt on Passover. They'd have waited until the following day if Passover were a Sabbath. They walked carrying their kneading troughs (Exodus 12:34, 37, 51). John calls it a high Sabbath because that year it was also Passover (John 19:31). God didn't require them to do what He would later forbid.¹¹⁴

The sun and moon witnessed to Jesus' life



A moon eclipsed near the horizon appears deep red. Earth's atmosphere bends the red sunlight component and illuminates the moon while dispersing the blue.

Figure 30: How the moon reddens

“The reddening becomes more pronounced and deeper when the moon is viewed from those longitudes of the earth where it is just after sunset or just before sunrise. In these cases, the light returning to the earth again travels horizontally through the earth's atmosphere and undergoes further reddening, taking on a dark red color.”¹¹⁵

As Passover started in A.D. 33, a lunar eclipse confirms it was the year Jesus died. At noon on Friday, April 3, A.D. 33, Julian, the sun darkened for three hours. The full moon from Jerusalem rose over the Mount of Olives eclipsed just after sundown. Whatever darkened the sun may have further reddened the moon; see Figure 29 p. 72.

On Pentecost, Saint Peter recalled the blood moon; *his audience had witnessed* strongly confirming this date (Acts 2:22). He could have abbreviated his quote to only those signs if there

were fewer signs. He quoted Joel 2:30–31:

And I will show wonders in the heavens above
and signs on the earth below,
blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke;
the sun shall be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood,
before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day. (Acts 2:19–20)

Jesus was born on Sunday, December 25, 1 B.C., the winter solstice and the year's longest night. Four days later, on His due date, December 29, 1 B.C., the moon rose after sundown partially eclipsed. A blood moon rose, an ominous sign. A moonless winter solstice midnight can't be closer to a lunar eclipse. Josephus recorded they saw this eclipse near Jesus' birth.¹¹⁶ Jesus' birth and death were days of the LORD, and the sun and the moon witnessed to them, events we can check two thousand years later. These signs bookend Jesus' birth and death to the hour.

Three gospels mention the darkness from noon until 3 PM. Three references in Roman history note unusual darkness near this time.¹¹⁷

When Jesus rose from the dead, the full moon was low in the west. It was under Virgo, a circumstance similar to Revelation 12:1–2. Virgo was head down in worship.

Throughout Jesus' lifetime, His birthday was the year's longest night. Jesus said, "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12). Jesus was the light that came into the world of deep darkness. God prepared the Roman world to celebrate this day. The sun dawned on the day the Son dawned. The sun played a part in each of these signs. The sun 'clothes' (Revelation 12:5) these events because they occur immediately before sunrise or after sunset. So when the sun colors the sky. Also, the moon and planets shine by reflected sunlight. Since the heavenly lights are for signs and Jesus is one, we now understand why John calls His miracles signs. They occurred at precise times, told stories, and revealed God's glory. John's gospel starts "in the beginning," so

we can connect Jesus' signs and heavenly signs.

The sun, moon, and brightest stars as signs witnessed the great Light's birth, ministry, death, and resurrection (Matthew 4:16).¹¹⁸

The clouds witness to Jesus' life

Humidity caused Venus' disappearance over Jesus' house. A cloud hid Venus. Joel 2:31 not only associates the sun darkening and the moon turning to blood, but clouds, and Saint Peter notes this (Acts 2:20–21). Clouds choreograph Esther's movie. The night of Jesus' birth was overcast (like the afternoon He died) and fits with winter weather. After the angel announced to the shepherds, Luke tells us a multitude of the heavenly host (referring to the stars and angels) suddenly appeared. The clouds cleared, and starlight lit the shepherd's way to Jesus. Jesus, the light was born on a cloudy, moonless midnight winter solstice in a cave! It symbolizes His role as the light coming into a dark world. The sun is the earth's primary light source—no sun, no life; no Jesus, no life.

Clouds participated in the signs at Jesus' birth, transfiguration, death, and more. The first Christmas was very dark because clouds closed the view of heaven.

Morning stars sang together

During each Venus heliacal rising noted, Mercury accompanied Venus. The morning stars 'sang together' while laying the earth's foundation (Job 38:4–7). They 'sang together' to announce Jesus' conception and resurrection. In God's plan, the Lamb was slain *before the foundation of the world* (Revelation 13:8). God put the planets in motion before He formed the earth's foundations. God set these for signs (Genesis 1:14), so He forms signs with heaven's lights, the sun, moon, and stars.

As discussed later, the morning star in Isaiah 14:12 is Mercury, which refers to (*HALAL* or Lucifer) and can refer to Satan. It links well as wicked Haman was Mercury. Satan disguises

himself as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14). Scientists have discovered the planets sing.¹¹⁹

The heavens worship Jesus

God said, “Beware lest you lift up your eyes to heaven. When you see the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of heaven, you be drawn away and worship them and serve them, things which the LORD your God has allotted to all the peoples under the whole heaven” (Deuteronomy 4:19). God allotted the heavenly bodies to the peoples as lights, and daily glorifying God, they worship their creator.

God gave dreams and interpretations, so we learn heaven’s lights, can worship. The Patriarch Joseph dreamed the sun, moon, and eleven stars bowed down to worship him. His father, Israel, interpreted his dream to mean his father, mother, and brothers bowed down to the earth before him (Genesis 37:9–10). The LORD told Abraham that his descendants would be as the stars of heaven (Genesis 15:5). The brightest star represents Jesus, the most important Son.

How do the sun, moon, and stars bow before Joseph or Jesus? If the sun were visible, eleven stars wouldn’t be. Hence, the sun bowed, hiding below the horizon but coloring the sky.¹²⁰ On August 24 and 28, 2 B.C., and on December 25 and December 29, 1 B.C., the sun, moon, and stars bowed before Jesus hiding their light while revealing their presence. A second way they bow is going low near the horizon. A third way they worship is to be at the feet of the one they adore. Leo portrayed the Lion of Judah, and the sun, moon, and stars bowed in worship at His feet. The wise men understood and came to *worship* Christ!

Looking at these signs, the planets, the sun, or the moon is low and hiding their light, so God used them to reveal and point to Jesus and had the heavens worship Him. Worship is for God alone! Though we aren’t to worship the heavens, they worshiped Jesus!

On August 24 and 28, 2 B.C., the sky’s brightest objects bowed as low as possible and still be visible. All but Saturn were at the horizon, and it was straight overhead.

When planets or a constellation form a sign in this book, the stars were often as low in the sky as they could be seen. They were only briefly visible. When they formed a scepter in Leo, the planets were as low as they could go and were barely visible. Extinction dimmed their light.

The sun participated in each sign but hid most of its light (or Venus was a competitor). Jesus' birth was on the winter solstice at midnight, so the minimum sun hid its glory for the maximum length of time. At Jesus' death, God darkened the sun at noon when it was at its strongest.

The earth only eclipses the full moon. The moon bowed to worship at His birth and death. So the sun and moon bowed in their strength. In both cases, clouds would hide the moon only briefly visible on the horizon. In both cases, the earth partially eclipsed the moon. At Christ's death (3 PM), the moon was fully eclipsed but hidden below the horizon. When the moon revealed itself, it was at the horizon after sundown.

God ordered the signs; the sun darkened, then the moon turned to blood. At His birth and death, heaven's lights didn't shine. They revealed their presence after He was born and died, as Joel prophesied.

In the Bible, the color red or scarlet pictures sin or uncleanness.

Come now, let us reason together, says the LORD:
though your sins are like scarlet,
they shall be as white as snow;
though they are red like crimson,
they shall become like wool. (Isaiah 1:18)

When a woman gave birth, she was unclean (Leviticus 12:2). The moon looked unclean after Jesus' birth. When a couple consummated their marriage, both were unclean until evening (Leviticus 15:18), so the moon's redness after His death indicated consummation.

The sun and the moon's apparent size are nearly equal, so the moon can barely eclipse the sun. This "feature" led to discovering spectral lines in the sun and greatly aided our discovery and understanding of our universe.¹²¹ God made our atmosphere transparent; so we can view the heavens to discover His glory and that of creation.

We haven't exhausted the signs during Jesus' life. What comes next?

Chapter 7

Jesus' star announced His mission

Zealous teenagers¹²² went to John to be baptized and discipled. John had moved north; it was only a two-day hike. Their incredible adventure would last a lifetime.

Imagine you're God; how does the sky announce and describe Jesus' mission? Who saw it and when? Who didn't see it and why? How do you help us find it today? Hint, John proclaimed, prepare a straight highway for our God. All flesh shall see the salvation of our God.

God inaugurated Jesus' ministry with a heavenly sign, alluded to in John 1:51. Jesus told His first followers, "Amen, Amen I say you all will [soon] see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man." What did they see?

Jesus returned to John at the Jordan River three days earlier, after a forty-day fast. John the Baptist pointed out Jesus as the Lamb of God to two who men would become Jesus' first disciples. Here's an abbreviated account.

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of

God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.’ I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel.”

The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples, and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God!” The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, “What are you seeking?” And they said to him, “Rabbi” (which means Teacher), “where are you staying?” He said to them, “Come and you will see.” So they came and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour.

The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, “Follow me.” Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.” Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!” Nathanael said to him, “How do you know me?” Jesus answered him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.” Nathanael answered him, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!” Jesus answered him, “Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ do you believe? You will see greater things than these.” And he said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.” (John 1:29-31, 35-39, 43–51)

Jesus said, “Amen, Amen, all of you will [soon [APO ARTI]]¹²³ see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man” (John 1:51). He swore they would immediately see a promised sign in heaven. The next day Jesus and six disciples hiked from the Jordan¹²⁴ into the hill country, heading to a wedding in Cana in Galilee. Jesus’ fulfilled His oath early that evening, Sunday, March 4, A.D. 31.¹²⁵

The first heaven is the atmosphere occupied by birds, clouds, rain, etc. The universe, including the sun, moon, and stars, is the second heaven. The third is God’s abode.

A ladder to heaven

The clouds parted to reveal all the planets formed a ladder, evenly spaced in a straight line, reaching from the earth to the sky’s center, with Venus marking the lamb. John called Jesus the Lamb of God, and to make straight the way of the Lord, Jesus is the straight way to heaven. The vertical ladder rested on the earth and leaned against a cloud, making it look like a cross.¹²⁶

God hung the constellations of Aries [male lamb] and Taurus [bull] on the cross. His forty-day fast just ended; thirty years old, Jesus was at the age a man took priestly or kingly office. John quoted Isaiah 40:3; the Hebrew word highway can be translated as a ladder, stairs, raised way, or star course.¹²⁷

The landscape wasn't a plain, but the highway was smooth. The mountains were cut down, the valleys filled in, and the way straight. The highway to heaven did those things without transforming the land. They climbed from the Jordan valley to see the sign; therefore, they took the direct route to Cana. We'll find a similar sign at Jesus' ascension bookended this sign.

The ladder works well with only the four lower planets and no cloud, but it reached heaven, and the nations saw it.

God orchestrated another precisely timed sign in the heavens to dramatize the unfolding story. It was brief and dynamic—as promised, the disciples saw greater things. This sign announced Jesus was the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world and the stairway to heaven. A heavenly sign announced Jesus' purpose and ministry before His first miracle and public teaching. Jesus and his first disciples saw it the evening they left the Jordan Valley. They couldn't see it forming because the mountains blocked the western view.

Jesus' conversation with Nathanael¹²⁸ links to Jacob's dream. Jacob dreamed of a ladder to heaven. Jesus contrasted Nathanael, a man without deceit, with Jacob, a liar. Although Esau sold Jacob his blessing, Jacob lied to take it (Genesis 27:35–36). Afterward, to prevent his murder, his father Isaac sent him far away to his kin to find a wife (Genesis 27:41–47).¹²⁹ On the way, Jacob dreamed of angels ascending and descending on a ladder to heaven. Nathanael and the other disciples saw angels ascending and descending on the son of man. Here is an excerpt from Jacob's ladder dream passage:

When he [Jacob] reached a certain place, he stopped for the night because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones there, he put it under his head and lay down to sleep. He had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. (Genesis 28:11–12)

The clouds parted, revealing the stars.¹³⁰ The opening focused their attention on that part of the starry sky. Clouds representing God's glory (Exodus 40:35) framed the scene. All the wandering stars formed a ladder marked by Venus. A rung was missing near the top. A cloud filled the gap on which the ladder to heaven rested.

These men¹³¹ fished at night;¹³² they knew the stars. Both John and Peter link Jesus and the bright morning star. Peter said you would do well to pay attention to the prophets until the day star rises in your hearts (2 Peter 1:19 KJV). John recorded Jesus saying I am the bright morning star (Revelation 22:16) and the sign we're studying.

Jacob saw a ladder resting on earth and its top in the heavens. After sunset, Jesus' disciples saw Jacob's ladder. Mercury was the first rung near the horizon, one step up from the sun. Saturn at the top rested at the center of the sky; the top rung to heaven. Venus and Jupiter were at the same elevation in the center of Aries (the Lamb) constellation. Mars (in Taurus) rounded out the ladder above Venus.

The ecliptic (the line or belt the planets follow) isn't vertical most of the year. God evenly spaced the sun and planets as steps of a ladder when the wandering stars went straight up from the horizon to heaven. The sign doesn't work a day earlier or later because Venus raced along; only that day, a ladder was visible. The dating would be less precise if the five planets were evenly spaced in the sky because the picture would only slowly change each day. God's sign was date-specific. John's day-by-day account allows us to date it precisely.

Can we surmise Jesus was west of the group, and the ladder originated at Him? Maybe the silhouetted ridgeline appeared to be a reclined man with a stone pillow.

Go through, go through the gates;
prepare the way for the people;
build up, build up the highway;
clear it of stones;
lift up a signal over the peoples.
Behold, the LORD has proclaimed to the end of the earth:
Say to the daughter of Zion,
“Behold, your salvation comes;
behold, his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.” (Isaiah 62:10–11)

Isaiah speaks of a *highway* with a *signal or sign*, one more witness to this sign.

The Lamb of God

John bore witness to the light (John 1:7). It was why he came to testify (John 1:31). He made known Jesus’ connection to this sign. John the Baptist twice identified Jesus as the Lamb of God (John 1:29, 36). God’s sign and John’s statements declared Jesus was the way to heaven and the Lamb of God. He would open the way to heaven. Jesus promised His disciples they would see a sign, and it confirmed Jesus. John used light for the star, the same word in Genesis (Genesis 1:14).

Only Sunday evening, March 4, A.D. 31, Venus completed rather than broke the ladder to heaven. Jesus’ star strikes again. The ladder of planets briefly appeared at twilight until Mercury set a half-hour later. No moonlight faded the image. The sky grew dark, and the multitude of stars obscured the scene. Venus marked Aries, the slain Lamb. I dated the start of Jesus’ ministry a decade before discovering this sign.



The Jews mounted their Passover lambs on a cross-like structure to skin and roast them.¹³³

Figure 31: Lamb on a cross structure

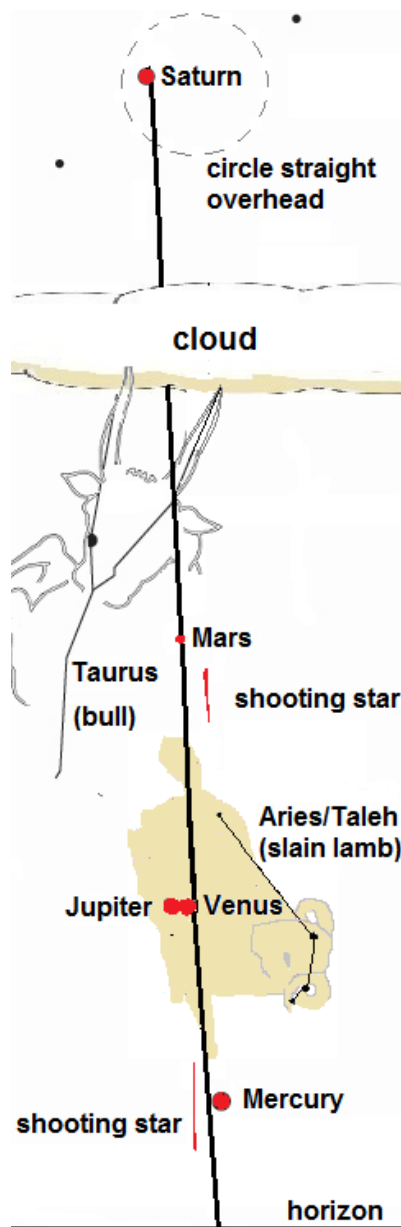
John the Baptist sent John and Andrew to Jesus, then immediately left to minister in the Temple.¹³⁴ It was 10 AM Thursday, March 1, A.D. 31. John left for his priestly duty at the last hour, probably to know the one he announced. The full moon allowed night travel. Priests twice-daily offered lambs as whole burnt offerings in the Temple. He needed to be in Jerusalem by sunset the next day when the Sabbath started and had a sixty-mile (96 km) hike. His priestly service began at noon Saturday.

Angels ascending and descending

Jesus promised angels ascending and descending on Him (John 1:51). John saw the sign and recorded Jesus' oath. Meteorites pictured angels [messengers] streaking up and down, bringing God's message to the disciples. It's a dynamic picture and linked to Jacob's ladder dream.

Meteorites often originate from a point called a radiant. The radiant was on the ladder, some went up, and others went down. Pharisees requested a heavenly sign but wouldn't get one (Mark 8:11). They were evil and adulterous (Matthew 12:39), refusing John's baptism. Jesus' disciples saw a memorable heavenly sign.

In Jacob's dream, the angels ascend and descend a ladder. Jesus said the angels would ascend and descend on Him. So Jesus is the ladder to heaven. Jacob said, "this is the gate to heaven." Jesus is the door [gate], and God controls sand-grain-sized shooting stars.



March 4, A.D. 31 16:30

The sky overhead represents heaven's entrance

A glory cloud with
sunglow or comet, the ladder
leaned against the cloud,
forming a cross. It was a
Sirius cloud.

The cross is the
ladder to heaven. A crucified
lamb and bull hang on it.

Venus marked the

constellation of Aries, the
slain Lamb. Twice the Baptist
called Jesus the Lamb of God.
The sky proclaimed the same
message. The two brightest
planets, Venus and Jupiter
together, marked Aries.

Story Elements

1. Clouds parted-sky opened
 2. Ladder of wandering stars
 3. A near-vertical ladder
 4. Venus as a marker
 5. Angels go up and down
 6. Lamb on cross
 7. Bull on cross
 8. A glory cloud to rest on
 9. Jesus crucified
 10. It matches Jacob's ladder dream.
 11. A straight wilderness highway with no roughness, bends, or ups and downs
- The sun is the next ladder rung below Mercury.

Figure 32: A highway or ladder to heaven

The planets formed a dynamic picture on God's canvas. The planets passed through essential constellations. These men spent most nights under the stars; they recognized the unusual. There was probably a cloud between Mars and Saturn, but maybe a comet. Mercury set thirty minutes later. Perhaps clouds again obscured the scene.

A highway in the wilderness

John testified, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make *straight the way*

of the Lord,' as the prophet Isaiah said" (John 1:23). Luke adds,

As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet,
 "The voice of one crying in the wilderness:
 'Prepare the way of the Lord,
 make his paths straight.
 Every valley shall be filled,
 and every mountain and hill shall be made low,
 and the crooked shall become straight,
 and the rough places shall become level ways,
 and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'" (Luke 3:4–6)

Here's Isaiah's fuller quote.

Comfort, comfort¹³⁵ my people, says your God.
 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
 and cry to her
 that her warfare is ended,
 that her iniquity is pardoned,¹³⁶
 that she has received from the LORD'S hand
 double for all her sins.¹³⁷
 A voice cries:
 "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;¹³⁸
 make *straight* in the *desert* a *highway* for our God.
 Every valley shall be lifted up,
 and every mountain and hill be made low;
 the uneven ground shall become level,
 and the rough places a plain.
 And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
 and *all flesh shall see it together*,
 for the mouth of the LORD has spoken." (Isaiah 40:1–5 (emphasis added))

The light shines in the *darkness*, and the darkness has not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. *He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light*, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. (John 1:5–9 (emphasis added))

The gospel according to John, is the third witness to Jesus' star. John the Baptist called Jesus' star a light that shines in the darkness; this links us back to Genesis 1:14; the lights are to be for signs, and this was a notable sign. John the Baptist came to announce this sign and to testify to Jesus.

Jesus' first disciples' first question was—"Where do you dwell?" Jesus said, "Come and see" (John 1:38–39).¹³⁹ Why did He say 'see' rather than I sleep under that tree, or I'm from Nazareth? He dwelled in heaven, this sign showed the way, and they watched Him return at His ascension. "The word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14) (His temporary dwelling).

Two days later, Jesus turned water into wine at a wedding in Cana, His first sign/miracle. Six disciples witnessed the highway to heaven, but only John recorded it. John was martyred. They plunged him into a cauldron of boiling oil and made him drink venom. When he survived, they exiled him to Patmos.¹⁴⁰ With no opportunity to minister, he wrote. All the apostles were martyred; John survived his martyrdoms to tell this story. Jesus promised he would drink His cup and be baptized with His baptism. John got a bath and a drink.

Nathanael conversed with Thomas after Jesus said, "And you know the way to where I am going." Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" (John 14:4–5) Nathanael shared with Thomas this sign of the highway to His heavenly dwelling. "A voice cries: 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God'" (Isaiah 40:3). Isaiah said the highway was for the LORD [YHWH] and God, a convincing argument that Jesus is the LORD. That's why Thomas called Jesus, My Lord, and my God (John 20:28) when he finally believed in the resurrection.

Jacob's father sent him far away to find a bride from his kin. He was on his way when he dreamed of the ladder. Jesus' Father sent Him to earth to find a wife from His kin. He was on His way to a wedding.

Who could see this sign? "All flesh shall see the salvation of God" (Luke 3:6). Luke quoted Isaiah 40:5. This sign was seen worldwide. God wanted all (including us) to see and understand His message. God put a sign in the sky for the world to see. A lamb slain on the

highway to heaven opened the only way to the Lord's dwelling.

In Bethlehem, His star revealed Jesus' dwelling, and the wise men found Him in His mother's arms. Here God revealed Jesus' residence before He came and when He returned. It pointed out how to open the way—the lamb crucified. He came from far away to His kin to find His bride. Jesus' first sign was timed to show He was sent to His kin for a bride.

Three verses later, He's the herald of good news [the gospel]. Further, the good news is your God comes, and He will tend His flock like a shepherd. Again He's *YHWH*.

Go on up to a high mountain,
 O Zion, herald of *good news*;
 lift up your voice with strength,
 O Jerusalem, herald of *good news*;
 lift it up, fear not;
 say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!"
 Behold, the Lord *GOD* [*YHWH*] comes with might,
 and his arm rules for him;
 behold, his reward is with him,
 and his recompense before him.
He will tend his flock like a shepherd;
 he will gather the lambs in his arms;
 he will carry them in his bosom,
 and gently lead those that are with young. (Isaiah 40:9–11 (emphasis added))

A highway to heaven

Forty days after His resurrection, God painted another highway to heaven for Jesus' ascension. It was similar to the one inaugurating His ministry. Jesus returned home Thursday evening, May 14, A.D. 33.

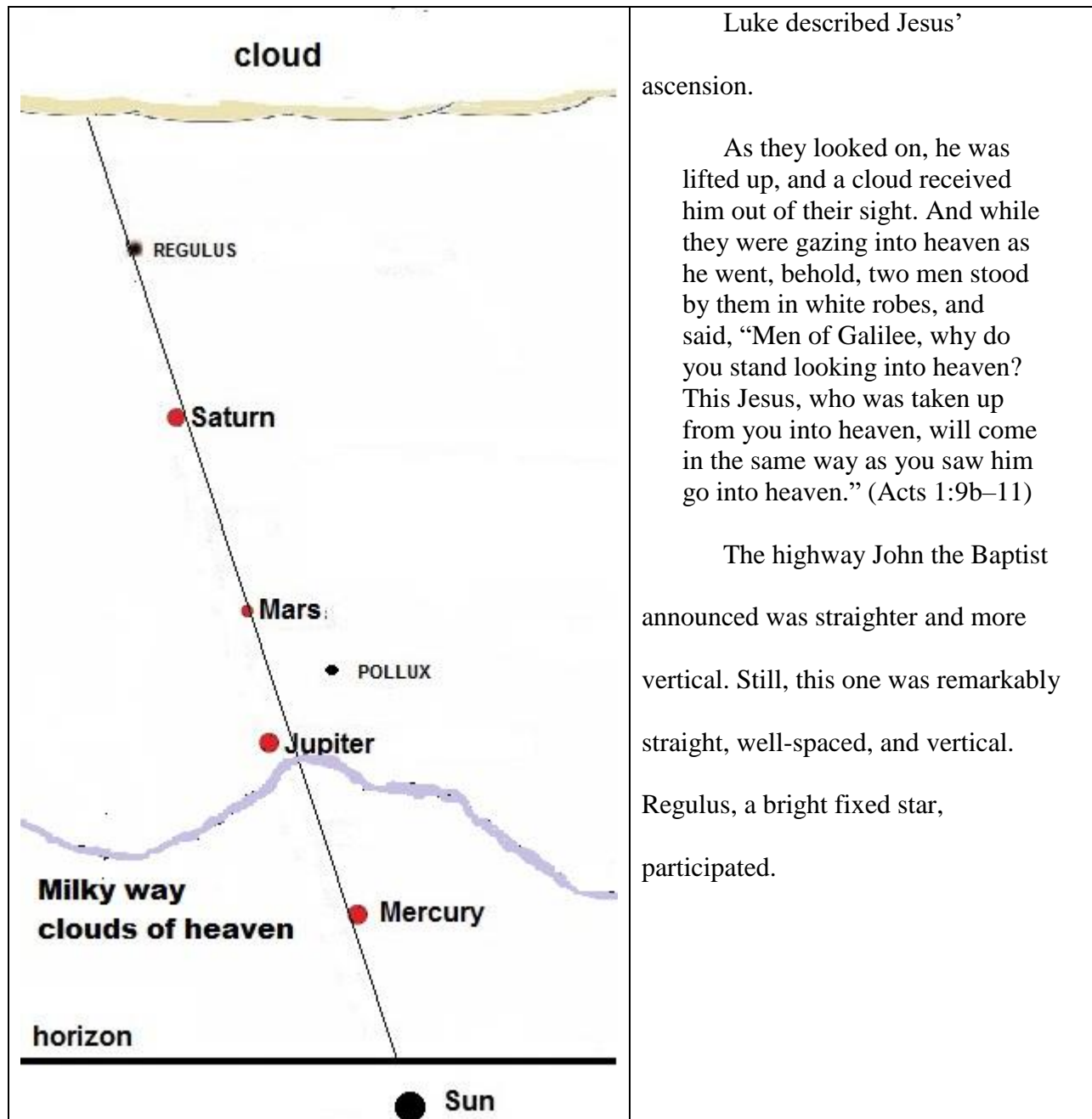


Figure 33: Jesus' ascension highway

Paired signs bookend Jesus

God paired several heavenly signs. The sun darkened, and the moon turned to blood at Jesus' birth and death. Men saw a highway from earth to heaven at the start and end of His ministry. Jesus, not Venus, His star, marked this highway. Jesus ascended into the glory cloud.

Heaven opened; they saw the stars. This time Jesus used the highway to return to heaven.

Two angels, having descended, stood there and gave the disciples heaven's message on the Mount of Olives. We recall Isaiah's words; prepare a highway for the LORD. YHWH returned home.

The matched signs testify to Jesus' authenticity and God's handiwork. Are these alignments common?

Roughly every half century or so the brightest planets take up positions in the night sky creating the impression of being in more or less a straight line. The last decent display was in April 2002, when Jupiter, Saturn, Mars, Venus and Mercury were strung above the western horizon like a celestial necklace, with a crescent moon as its central jewel. A similar alignment will take place 30 years from now, on 8 September 2040.¹⁴¹

"In the past 2,200 years, just four other observable massive planetary gatherings (the five naked-eye planets within 10 degrees of each other)."¹⁴²

Daniel tells of the second half of Jesus' ascension. Clouds of heaven occurs only once in the Old Testament and three times in the New Testament.

I saw in the night visions,
and behold, with the clouds of heaven
there came one like a son of man,
and he came to the Ancient of Days
and was presented before him. (Daniel 7:14)

Jesus came back to heaven with the clouds of heaven. Jesus' ascension included both clouds and the clouds of heaven. The clouds of heaven are the Milky Way. After the sky sufficiently darkened, the clouds of heaven could be seen on the horizon. Jesus ascended above the clouds of heaven. When Jesus returns, it will be with the clouds of heaven. Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory (Matthew 24:30). Jesus said to him, "You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven." (Matthew 26:64)

The Spirit descended and remained on Jesus

Five days before the highway to heaven sign, Jesus returned¹⁴³ from the wilderness of Judah to John the Baptist at Bethany beyond the Jordan.

The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.’ I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel.” And John bore witness: “I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and *it remained on him*. I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and *remain*, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.” (John 1:29–34 (emphasis added))

After sunset, Jesus approached John from the west, across the Jordan River. He came down to the river, maybe fifty yards away. He could be recognized, but it was inconvenient to go to Him. Venus twinkled on Jesus’ head. At Pentecost, the Spirit descended as tongues of fire. A lamp flame is a tongue of fire. A flame appears as a point of light from further away, like Venus. It was February 27, A.D. 31, the feast of Purim. Haman’s die roll chose this day for the slaying of the Jews; Jesus was revealed to be slain.

How long was Jesus’ ministry? From February 27, A.D. 31 to May 14, A.D. 33 was two years, two months, two weeks, and two days. This was from Jesus’ return to John from fasting until the evening Jesus returned to His Father in heaven. A witness to the length of His public ministry.

John the Baptist added to the story of the Holy Spirit’s descent at Jesus’ baptism (Matthew 3:16–17). He tells us the Spirit *remained* on Jesus, so He is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit and is the Son of God. John called Jesus the Lamb of God, and Jesus was silhouetted against the sky where Aries would soon appear.

Nathaniel, under a fig tree, watched this scene. Jesus saw Nathaniel under a fig tree see

something that later caused him to believe. Jesus said you will see greater things than this. His ‘this’ means Nathaniel saw something (maybe great), and Jesus saw him see it. He saw Venus’ glow on Jesus.

Jesus, seeing Nathaniel under the fig tree, links to Jesus seeking fruit on a fig tree during His last week (Mark 11:12–14). Sycamore fig trees were common in the lower elevations of Israel—Zacchaeus in Jericho climbed one (Luke 19:4). Nathaniel was ripe (ready for harvest), but Philip picked him before Jesus. This tree links to the tree of Knowledge. Nathaniel asked Jesus, how do you *know* me? Nathaniel realized as he had watched Jesus approach with the glow of Venus on His head that Jesus saw him. Jesus and the glow disappeared in the trees as Jesus approached the river. John the Baptist never saw Jesus in the dark again. The light on Jesus prompted Nathaniel to say, “you are the Son of God” (John had said this sign revealed the King of Israel, which was the Christ because the other disciples said they had found the Christ).

When darkness reigned

Here we skip two years ahead to the night of Jesus’ arrest.

Jesus and His disciples left His Last Supper, a solar Passover meal, at midnight Wednesday, April 1, A.D. 33, the earliest legal time (Exodus 12:22, 24, 29–32). They sang a psalm and spent twenty minutes crossing the Kidron Valley and climbing the Mount of Olives. Jesus then kept watch for three hours. On that night, the 90% full moon shined from sunset until it set about 3:20 AM.

At moonset, the darkness intensified, and soldiers moved to arrest Jesus. At His arrest, Jesus said, “*This is your hour—when darkness reigns*” (Luke 22:53). Since the sun rules the day and the moon rules the night (Genesis 1:16), when the sun, moon, and Venus hide, darkness reigned.

Jesus repeatedly escaped those attempting to arrest or kill Him. Therefore, they chose to

apprehend Him by stealth (Matthew 26:4). They approached with a cohort (about 450 men). They waited for deep darkness after the moonset to catch Jesus by surprise.

Connecting this darkness to the darkness at Jesus' birth, Jesus entered our world when Satan's power was at a maximum.

Was there a sign for His crucifixion before the sun was darkened for three hours at His death? Yes, the menorah's seventh lamp. Huh?

Jesus' lamp

The Scripture describes the Tabernacle menorah:

And you shall make a lampstand of pure gold. The base and the shaft of the lampstand shall be made of hammered work; its cups, its capitals, and its flowers shall be of one piece with it; and there shall be six branches going out of its sides, three branches of the lampstand out of one side of it and three branches of the lampstand out of the other side of it; three cups made like almonds, each with capital and flower And you shall make the seven lamps for it; and the lamps shall be set up so as to give light upon the space in front of it. (Exodus 25:31–32, 37)

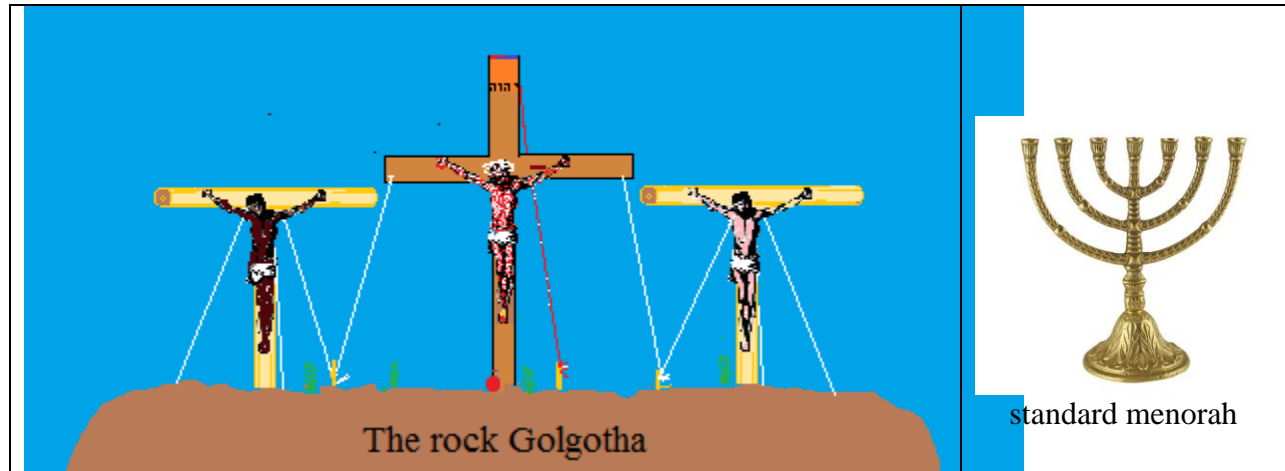


Figure 34: Golgotha's menorah

The drawing above depicts Jesus and the thieves crucified, viewed looking west. Jesus' cross was three-branched or ⚡-shaped, made from two doorposts and a lintel from the Temple.¹⁴⁴ The two thieves' crosses were T-shaped, with two branches. Golgotha's top was the lampstand.

Like Jesus' cross, the menorah had six branches, three on each side (Exodus 25:32).

Lamp is the same word as lights in the heavens (Genesis 1:14–16, Exodus 35:14, etc.). Our eyes are the lamps of our body (Matthew 6:22 cf. Daniel 10:6), so Jesus and two thieves had six eyes or six lamps. The side branches' lights were almond-shaped cups like our eyes.

Jesus' death and resurrection occurred in a temple and was a sacrifice (1 Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 9:12). This sign had an earthly and heavenly component. The daystar was the seventh lamp and completed the menorah formed by the three crosses. The word for light in heaven in Genesis 1:14 is the same word used for the menorah's lights. Jesus' menorah was His Temple's lamp. They lifted Jesus' lamp on a stand, the rock Golgotha and God lit the daystar.

The lamp was pure gold, but the word pure also means clean, and gold can mean a golden color (Zechariah 4:12). So Jesus' cross covered with oil was pure gold. The thieves' crosses were of sycamore-fig branches with golden bark, so again pure gold.

Scripture doesn't describe the menorah's central branch's light. The daystar was overhead until the sun was darkened at noon. Where it was clear, the daystar could be seen worldwide. It lit the world. Nails made Jesus' cross hammered work. The knobs on the lampstand are another word for capital and can mean wreath work.

Golgotha was a high location in Jerusalem. God put Jesus, the Light of the World, on the lampstand for the entire world to see His good works and give glory to His Father in heaven. Jesus on His cross was thirty meters above the Temple mount. The daystar was a great light that shone in the dark and the day. The earth was full of His glory.

Many of Jesus' words cryptically elucidate what happened. One couldn't easily discern the connections until Jesus expounded the Old Testament story on the Emmaus road.

Men do not light a lamp and put it under a bushel or under a bed, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. The eye is the light of the body. The lamp is the light of the city. You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill

cannot be hid.¹⁴⁵

All Jerusalem saw Jesus on His cross, light the city and the world. The basket on His head (a thorn crown) didn't hide His light. His cross was also a bed, under which He didn't hide.

What was His heavenly resurrection sign?

Jesus' resurrection

Pratt suggests Venus' heliacal rise occurred Sunday, April 3, A.D. 33, and corresponded to Jesus' resurrection.¹⁴⁶ Astronomers assume planets and stars are invisible until ten degrees above the horizon. Venus rose sixty-eight minutes before sunrise on Easter morning. It rose heliacally sixteen days earlier, but no magi were in Jerusalem to spot it. A few days after Venus' heliacal rise, everyone could see it rise, but not from Jesus' tomb because the Mount of Olives blocked it.

About forty-five minutes before dawn, Venus rose over that hill, and those at the tomb could see the bright morning star. Venus' first visibility above the Mount of Olives before sunrise likely marked Jesus' resurrection. Mark 16:9 indicates Jesus rose early on the first day of the week. It was Sunday morning toward dawn, but it was still dark. Mary Magdalene and other women came to Jesus' tomb (Matthew 28:1, John 20:1).

“And brightness like that of the noonday, shall arise to thee at evening: and when thou shalt think thyself consumed, thou shalt rise as the day star.” (Job 11:17 Douay) This verse points to when the magi arrived and when He lay dead for three days at the moment of His resurrection.

The sun was a sign to reveal the seasons. Spring is the first season; its first harvest is barley. It occurred on the day following the Sabbath after or coincident with the Passover. Jesus' resurrection occurred before dawn on the first day any harvest was allowed.

The Sabbath and Jubilee years enhanced this because planting and harvest weren't

allowed during those years. A Jubilee year happens every forty-nine years. Jesus in Nazareth launched His ministry, announcing a year of the Lord's favor. He announced a Sabbath and Jubilee year pair when no sowing or reaping was permitted.¹⁴⁷

Did signs in heaven continue after Jesus' ascension? Yes, there was a sign at Pentecost, tongues of fire from heaven, but can we study it? Again, Steven, before his martyrdom, said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God" (Acts 7:56). I don't know the date. Maybe you can find this sign.

God directed a politician with a sign in the sky that changed history. We have sworn eyewitness testimony of a precisely timed sign witnessed by forty thousand soldiers. It shaped the Church and clarified fundamental doctrines still believed by today's faithful. What, when, why, and to whom did God give that sign?

Chapter 8

God's signature

A pagan asked God for help

Have you ever thought, God, if you're listening, write your name in the sky? This was even more true in polytheistic Rome. Who should a pagan in need seek? Was Catholicism invented or divinely ordained?

For much of its first three centuries, Rome persecuted the Church. Diocletian initiated Rome's last and most severe Christian persecution from 303 to 313 A.D. The persecution was universal except in the western realms controlled by Emperor Constantius until he died in 306 A.D. Constantine, his son and successor, ruled that quarter empire (Brittan, Gaul, and Spain). Constantius and his wife Helena were Christian, but Constantine was a pagan. After ruling in the west for six years, he marched toward Rome with a quarter of his legions. His foe unexpectedly defended with four to ten times as many legions. Constantine reasoned that his forty thousand soldiers weren't enough to win the battle. Pagan gods didn't protect their worshippers. He

“therefore felt it incumbent on him to honor his father’s God alone.” He planned to rule the empire, but suddenly things turned grim.

Eusebius of Caesarea tells Constantine’s sworn story.

28 Accordingly he called on him with earnest prayer and supplications that he would reveal to him who he was, and stretch forth his right hand to help him in his present difficulties. And while he was thus praying with fervent entreaty, a most marvelous sign appeared to him from heaven, the account of which it might have been hard to believe had it been related by any other person. But since the victorious emperor himself long afterwards declared it to the writer of this history, when he was honored with his acquaintance and society, and *confirmed his statement by an oath*, who could hesitate to accredit the relation, especially since the testimony of after-time has established its truth? *He said that about noon [evening],*¹⁴⁸ *when the day was already beginning to decline, he saw with his own eyes the trophy of a cross of light in the heavens, above the sun, and bearing the inscription, CONQUER BY THIS.* At this sight he himself was struck with amazement, *and his whole army also*, which followed him on this expedition, *and witnessed the miracle.*

29 He said, moreover, that he doubted within himself what the import of this apparition could be. And while he continued to ponder and reason on its meaning, *night suddenly came on*; then in his sleep the Christ of God appeared to him with the same sign which he had seen in the heavens, and commanded him to make a likeness of that sign which he had seen in the heavens, and to use it as a safeguard in all engagements with his enemies.

30 At dawn of day he arose, and communicated the marvel to his friends: and then, calling together the workers in gold and precious stones, he sat in the midst of them, and described to them the figure of the sign he had seen, bidding them represent it in gold and precious stones. And this representation I myself have had an opportunity of seeing.

31 Now it was made in the following manner. A long spear, overlaid with gold, formed the figure of the cross by means of a transverse bar laid over it. On the top of the whole was fixed a wreath of gold and precious stones; and within this, the symbol of the Saviour’s name, two letters indicating the name of Christ by means of its initial characters, the letter P being intersected by X in its center: and these letters the emperor was in the habit of wearing on his helmet at a later period. From the cross-bar of the spear was suspended a cloth, a royal piece, covered with a profuse embroidery of most brilliant precious stones; and which, being also richly interlaced with gold, presented an indescribable degree of beauty to the beholder. This banner was of a square form, and the upright staff, whose lower section was of great length, bore a golden half-length portrait of the pious emperor and his children on its upper part, beneath the trophy of the cross, and immediately above the embroidered banner.

The emperor constantly made use of this sign of salvation as a safeguard against every adverse and hostile power, and commanded that others similar to it should be carried at the head of all his armies.

32 These things were done shortly afterwards. But at the time above specified, being struck with amazement at the extraordinary vision, and resolving to worship no other God

save Him who had appeared to him, he sent for those who were acquainted with the mysteries of His doctrines, and enquired who that God was, and what was intended by the sign of the vision he had seen. They affirmed that He was God, the only begotten Son of the one and only God: that the sign which had appeared was the symbol of immortality, and the trophy of that victory over death which He had gained in time past when sojourning on earth. They taught him also the causes of His advent, and explained to him the true account of His incarnation. Thus he was instructed in these matters, and was impressed with wonder at the divine manifestation which had been presented to his sight. Comparing, therefore, the heavenly vision with the interpretation given, he found his judgment confirmed; and, in the persuasion that the knowledge of these things had been imparted to him by Divine teaching, he determined thenceforth to devote himself to the reading of the Inspired writings.

33 Moreover, he made the priests of God his counselors, and deemed it incumbent on him to honor the God who had appeared to him with all devotion. And after this, being fortified by well-grounded hopes in Him, he hastened to quench the threatening fire of tyranny.¹⁴⁹ (emphasis added)

Sometimes God needs a nuke

Roman Emperors Constantine I and Maxentius battled at the Milvian Bridge on October 28, 312 A.D. The evening before, Constantine and his army saw the sign in the sky. Christ appeared in his sleep and said to use the XP sign he saw in all engagements. His vastly outnumbered legions prevailed. Constantine, an accomplished general who only had a quarter of his legions, drove his opponent's forces into the River Tiber about nine miles from Rome. Before the month's end, Constantine marched into Rome and was declared ruler of the empire's western half.

The white line crossing the line of planets is a sun-illuminated asteroid trail. The asteroid trail combined with four aligned planets looked like a giant Chi, the X-shaped letter pronounced Ch. The XP is pronounced Chr [chi-rho], the first letters of Christ. The standard is called a labarum. "The Labarum was already in widespread use by Christians in the third century C.E."¹⁵⁰

Jens Ormo, a Swedish geologist, and colleagues working in Italy believe Constantine witnessed a meteoroid impact.

The research team believes it has identified what remains of the impactor's crater. It is the small, circular Cratere del Sirente in central Italy. It is clearly an impact crater, Ormo says, because its shape fits and it is also surrounded by numerous smaller, secondary craters, gouged out by ejected debris, as expected from impact models.

Radiocarbon dating puts the crater's formation at about the right time to have been witnessed by Constantine and there are magnetic anomalies detected around the secondary craters - possibly due to magnetic fragments from the meteorite. According to Ormo, it would have struck the Earth with the force of a small nuclear bomb, perhaps a kiloton in yield. It would have looked like a nuclear blast, with a mushroom cloud and shockwaves.

It would have been quite an impressive sight and, if it really was what Constantine saw, could have turned the tide of the conflict. But what would have happened if this chance event - perhaps as rare as once every few thousand years - had not occurred in Italy at that time?

Had Maxentius won the battle, Roman history would have been different. The struggling Christians might not have received state patronage. Christianity's history and the establishment of the popes in Rome might have been very different.¹⁵¹

Four aligned planets are low in the southwestern sky, crossed by a sunlit asteroid trail. A sunlit mushroom cloud looked like a P with its shaft crossing the X. Christ, with light, signed His initials XP in the sky!

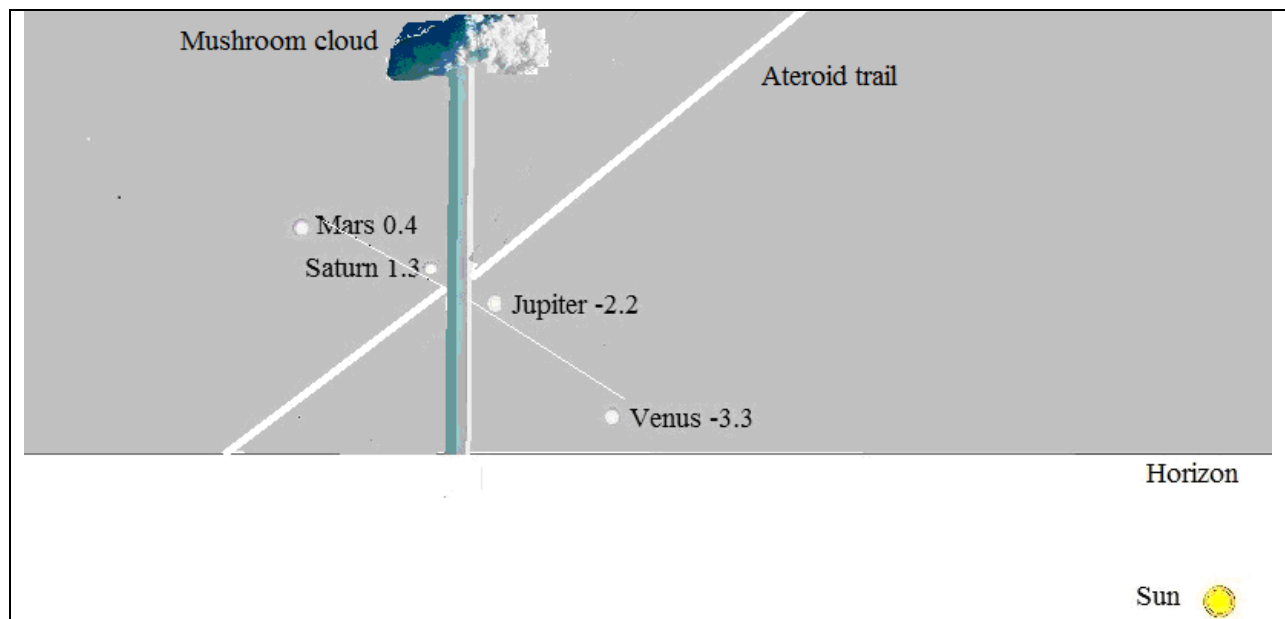


Figure 35: Evening sky near Rome October 27, 312 A.D.



Figure 36: Constantine's XP standard

Chi Rho or Labarum

A sign transforms an empire

Constantine reached Rome and was declared Augustus of the western half empire. The persecution briefly paused in 311 but continued. In February 313, he met with the Augustus of the empire's eastern half. They issued the Edict of Milan [or Toleration]. All could follow the form of religion which seemed best to them. Named specifically, Christianity was legalized. All Church property was restored, and if it had been destroyed, it was rebuilt. Constantine outlawed killing infants, abuse of slaves and peasants, crucifixion, and made Sunday a day of rest.¹⁵²

The sign prompted Constantine to acknowledge the Christian God as his source of victory, tolerate Christianity, and promote unity in Christian doctrine. Constantine didn't create or establish the Church and was baptized only on his deathbed. He didn't establish a state religion but tolerated all except some Christian heresies. Communication was slow and laborious; within the widely scattered Church, conflicting doctrines arose. He facilitated the Church codifying its doctrines and rooting out heresy. His mother, Helena, went to the Holy Land and discovered and preserved holy sites and relics.

Religious choice became legal throughout the Roman Empire. The bishops came out of hiding. Some bishops asked for, and Constantine convened the council of Nicea in 325 to come to doctrinal unity. Constantine invited all 1800 bishops, but only about three hundred attended. The Emperor arranged the council along the lines of the Roman Senate. They settled the nature of Jesus Christ (true God and true man) and His relationship to God the Father. They agreed and

established Easter's date. The council developed and promulgated the Nicene Creed to the entire Church and declared Arianism and Docetism heretical. The council was the Church's first chance to deal with heretical doctrines collectively since the Council of Jerusalem in Acts 15 three hundred years earlier. God's heavenly sign prompted and enabled its occurrence.

The Christian Church grew at 40% per decade for centuries.¹⁵³ "During the reign of Constantine Christianity transitioned to the dominant religion."¹⁵⁴ Scholars wonder why Constantine converted, not recognizing God gave a heavenly sign at a critical point in his career.

This sign's timing counters many arguments regarding Constantine's role. God's sign affirmed the Church. It didn't apostatize but unified, and the council of Nicea promoted correct doctrine. It also promoted cooperation and separation between Church and State.

Numerous modern astronomical and astrological theories defend Eusebius' account as possible. In 1948, Fritz Heiland, of the Zeiss planetarium at Jena, published his astronomical interpretation of Constantine's vision, that the fall of the year 312 C.E. was attended by an unusual spectacle: the syzygy or close alignment of three bright planets—Mars, Saturn and Jupiter [actually 4 with Venus]—in the evening sky above the southwest horizon, positioned along a line within about 20 degrees of each other on the border of Capricorn and Sagittarius. Heiland suggests that Constantine overcame the psychological impact on his army, of the ill pagan content of the astrological omen that associated syzygies with bad outcomes, by appropriating it to fashion a Christian token of victory in the form of the labarum.

The Swedish geologist Jens Ormo and co-authors suggest that the account may have had its origins in Constantine's witnessing the daylight effects of a meteorite's descent through earth's atmosphere, of which the impact he believes resulted in the Sirente crater situated in Sirente-Velino Regional Park, Abruzzo, Italy.¹⁵⁵

Jesus' star in the next sign marked the end of one civilization and the start of another.

Chapter 9

The nations watched Venus

Records show many nations, at least the Babylonian, Aztec, and Mayan, carefully watched and recorded years of Venus phases. These nations recorded its invisibility at the inferior conjunction lasting seven or eight days. They were particularly interested in Venus, just visible at the sun's rising and setting. The Aztecs associated the beginning and end of their civilization with Venus; they monitored it carefully. The Babylonian Ammisaduqa Tablets record Venus' first and last visibility on the horizon before or after sunrise or sunset. These are Venus' heliacal risings and settings. These were used for omen interpreting celestial phenomena.¹⁵⁶ We've archaeological records of men like the wise men who watched these signs.

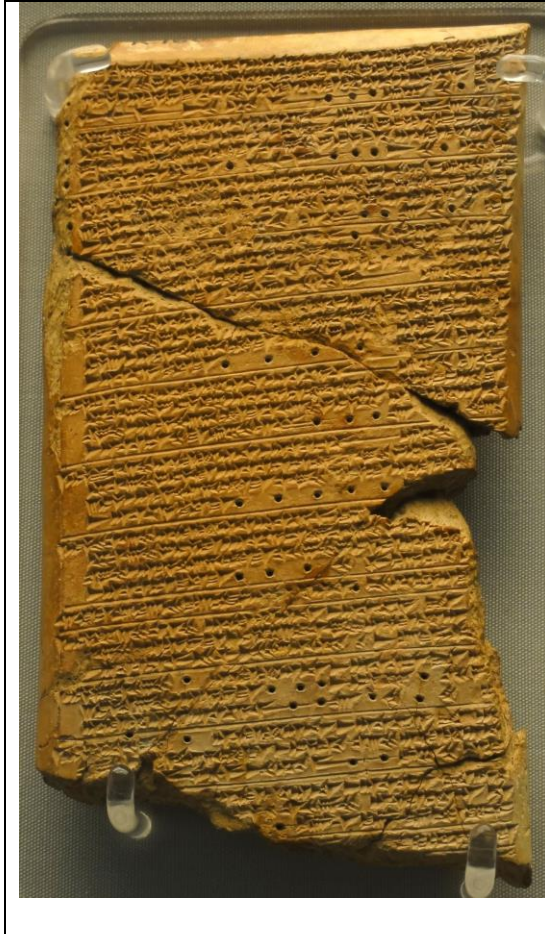


Figure 37: Babylonian Venus Ammisaduqa tablets¹⁵⁷



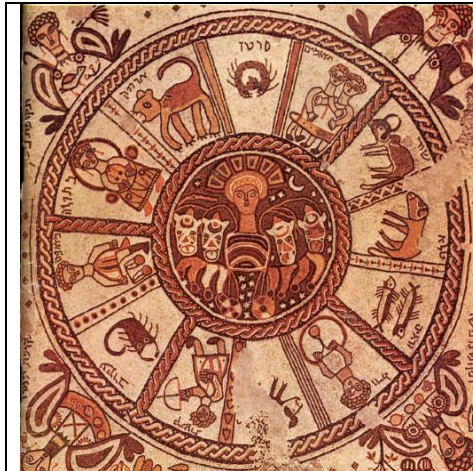
Figure 38: Dresden Codex Mayan Venus table¹⁵⁸



Courtesy Tony Freeth, 2013

Figure 39: Greek Antikythera mechanism

Found on a shipwreck and recreated. Greek mechanism (c. 87 B.C.) displays the sun, moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn's position. Accurately told the moon's phase and predicted lunar and solar eclipses.



Mazzaroth [Zodiac] (Job 38:32) or Mazzaloth [constellations] (2 Kings 23:5) we've looked at: *ARI* Lion; *SHOWR* Bull; *BETHULAH* Maiden/Virgin (*Septuagint* *PARTHENOS*) (Judges 19:24; 2 Samuel 13:2); *TALEH* male lamb (1 Samuel 7:9; Isaiah 40:11)

Twelve signs surround the sun.

Figure 40: Synagogue Zodiac mural¹⁵⁹



This Aztec stone calendar is nearly 12 feet (3.6m) in diameter and weighs nearly 25 tons.

The calendar era or "Sun" was 52 years. It could repeat for multiples of this period; it ended when the sun, moon, and Venus all set together. Their civilization might end at that time, and a new one might start.

Figure 41: Aztec solar, lunar, and Venus calendar

On December 12, 1531 A.D., the Aztec civilization ended on the winter solstice. It started 208 (4 * 52) years earlier when they searched for and founded their capital, Tenochtitlán, later called Mexico City.

The New World prepared

These events led to their rejecting aspects of the Aztec culture and adopting Catholic culture. The Aztec civilization used a calendar with a 52-year cycle called a Sun. An Aztec oracle prophesied their civilization would end with the fifth sun.¹⁶⁰ Each Sun ended when the sun, moon, and Venus set on the same day. The Aztecs established Tenochtitlán/Mexico City in 1324. The fourth sun ended on December 12, 1531 A.D.



The Mexicas (Aztecs) founded Tenochtitlán in 1324 A.D., fulfilling an ancient prophecy. Their god showed them where to build a great city by providing a sign, an eagle perched atop a cactus eating a snake. This sign is on the Mexican flag.

Figure 42: Eagle atop cactus eats snake

Venus and Mexico: Our Lady of Guadalupe

When the Mexicas saw the sign on an island in Lake Texcoco, they built the proto Mexico City. Their previous civilization ended when they exhausted their resources and wandered as a nation for two years.

Our Lady of Guadalupe last appeared as Venus heliacally rose and set on the winter solstice. A scepter extended to the virgin. Revelation 12:1–2, 5 is closely linked to this sign. A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, the moon under her feet, and a crown of twelve stars on her head. She was pregnant and cried out in the agony of giving birth. She gave birth to a male child, one who is to rule all nations with a rod of iron, but her child was caught up to God and to his throne, The woman in heaven is giving birth, and Jesus is her Son.

Jesus sent His queen mother, Mary, as a sign to the New World's people on a precise day. Mary's appearance called our attention to another sign in the heavens linked to Jesus' birth on the winter solstice and Venus' heliacal rise. Since our Lady left her image on a Mexican peasant's clothing, we can make this connection.

The nations watched Venus; it marked significant events, and God used that to convert Mexico. Venus' heliacal set on the winter solstice spoke to the Aztecs. The picture shows a virgin queen pregnant with God, a sign that changed their culture. This one presents Mary as the bright morning star evangelizing the nations even more than Esther's story.

Our Lady appeared to Juan Diego

Mary appeared to Juan Diego, a 57-year-old widower peasant near Tepeyac hill north of Mexico City, over four days starting Saturday, December 9, 1531 A.D. In his native language Nahuatl, she asked him to go to Tenochtitlán and ask the bishop-elect Fray Juan de Zumárraga (hereafter bishop) to build her a little house [*CASA/ITA*] on that hill. He dutifully went and, after much waiting, asked the bishop to erect a small house; he was mildly rebuffed and sent away.

Juan returned to Tepeyac, told Mary of his failure, and asked her to send someone more important. She said no, he was her choice, and she sent him to ask again. The bishop said, “Ask the Lady for a sign demonstrating the Blessed Virgin Mary made the request.

Juan’s uncle became seriously ill. Juan spent the day caring for him and missed his appointment with Mary. His uncle sent him to find a priest to hear his dying confession long before dawn.

As Juan raced to town to avoid being delayed by the Lady, he went to Tepeyac’s opposite (or east) side. Nevertheless, Mary met Juan and assured him that his uncle had recovered. She sent him to the top of Tepeyac to collect Castilian roses for the requested sign. She arranged them in his tilma and instructed him to take these to the bishop without revealing them.

Juan opened his tilma before the bishop, and the roses fell out. Our Lady of Guadalupe’s image appeared in front of a group of people. Mary appeared as she had at Tepeyac. The bishop promptly built the house. Juan’s tilma was displayed there.

Before dawn on the winter solstice, Tuesday, December 12, A.D. 1531, Venus rose heliacally before sunrise. With Mercury and Jupiter, it formed a line of planets low in the eastern sky, a sign of kingly authority or rule. Virgo (Virgin) was in the center of heaven. This sign marked our Lady’s last appearance to Juan.

The wise men climbed a hill west and found Mary and Jesus in a little house. Juan Diego

climbed Tepeyac hill west and found Mary pregnant with Jesus. She asked him to ask the bishop to build her a little house on that hill. With His cross, Jesus climbed Golgotha west with the daystar overhead. There He met His mother, Mary. His cross was the doorway to heaven, and His tomb a little house.

Four astronomical signs that marked Jesus' birth marked Our Lady of Guadalupe's appearance. They are 1) the winter solstice, 2) the heliacal rising of Venus,¹⁶¹ 3) Mercury, and 4) A scepter of planets extended to Mary at dawn. The star pattern on Mary's clothing dates the sign to that winter morning.

The resurrection was critical in evangelizing the Old World. Mary's appearance was crucial in evangelizing the New World. When the Aztecs saw and understood this sign, they turned to the living God. Mary's hands are folded in prayer, and her words point to Jesus. Juan's tilma is Mary's only tangible relic. The group's image to whom St. Juan Diego presented the roses can be seen in Mary's eyes with magnification.¹⁶²

At creation, God made signs linking Jesus' birth with Mary's visit to Mexico City. God had the sun, moon, and stars honor Mary as Our Lady of Guadalupe. She eclipsed the sun, was over the moon, and crowned with stars.

Mary's evangelistic visit caused Mexico's conversion. Church membership grew even as she lost members in the Protestant revolt. Three thousand converts were baptized daily for nine years—incredible!

Today's most visited pilgrimage site is the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe near Mexico City.

The film *1531: A Story that is Not Finished Yet*,¹⁶³ reveals the day Mary left her image on Juan Diego's tilma was the start of the fifth Sun. Her appearance marked the end of the fourth

fifty-two-year Aztec era when the sun, moon, and Venus reached their low point. The Aztec people anticipated a new civilization. Mary appeared as a mestizo (of mixed Latin and indigenous blood). It helped them understand by joining Spain, they could join God's family.

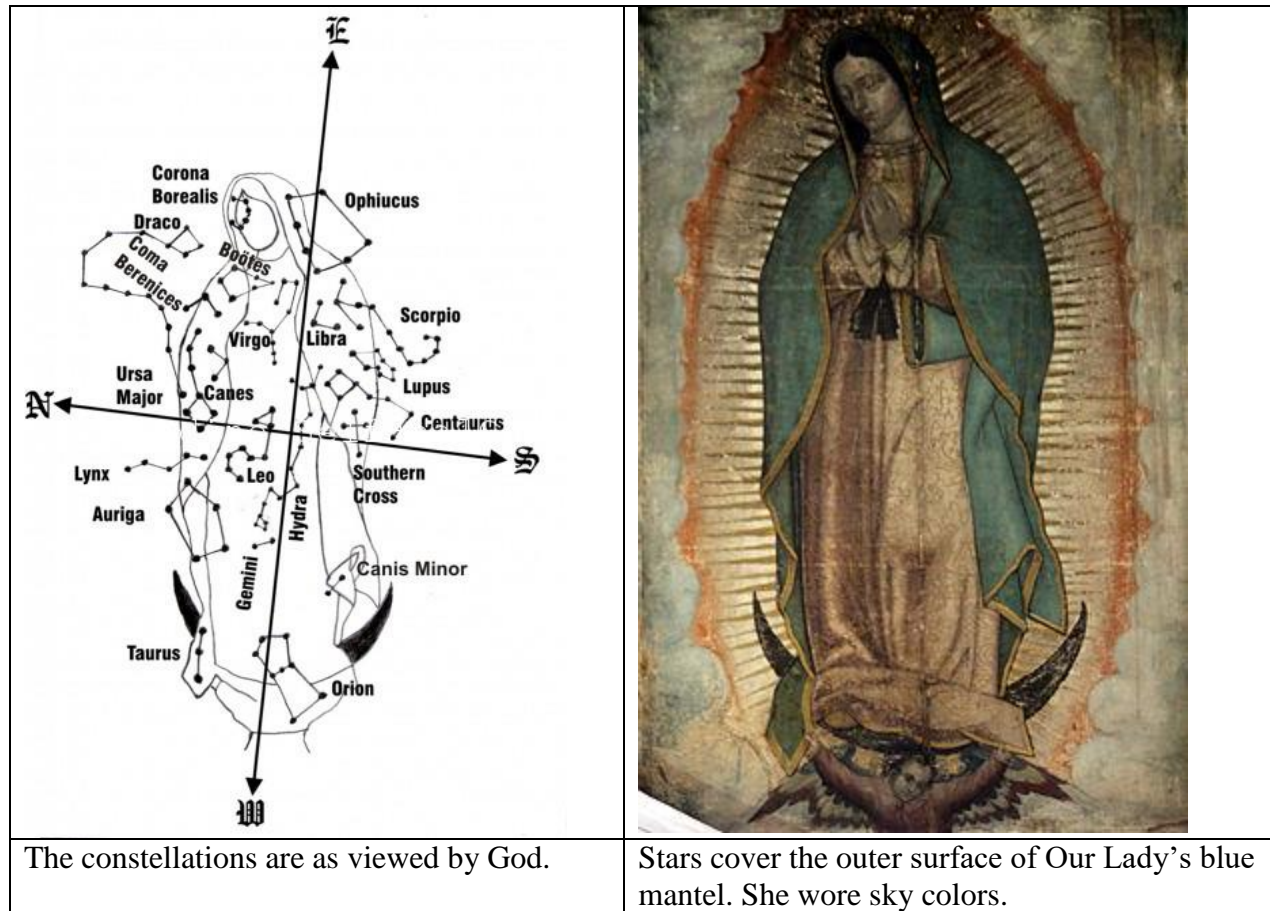


Figure 43: Our Lady of Guadalupe

The sign-picture of Mary told a story that motivated the natives to convert. Straight hair indicated she was a virgin. The black sash at her waist indicated she was pregnant. The four-petaled flower over her womb testified to her child's divinity, and the color of her clothes indicated she was royalty. Her appearance combined Spanish and native features. She blocked the sun and stood on the moon, showing her dominion over two important native gods. The cross at her throat matched what Christopher Columbus and Hernando Cortez carried. She left her image on the day one civilization ended and another began.

The papoose at her feet and a child angel with an adult face show we must become as little children. The image has two heartbeats, the mother and her child. Her picture has repeatedly been preserved from damage when attacked, including bombing and fire. The image remains on an inferior material and has been exposed to the elements for over a century. The image floats above the fabric, and we don't know how she made it.¹⁶⁴ Other miracles were the Castilian roses in the desert in the winter, the healing of Juan Diego's uncle, and the man struck with an arrow. All are signs attesting to its authenticity.

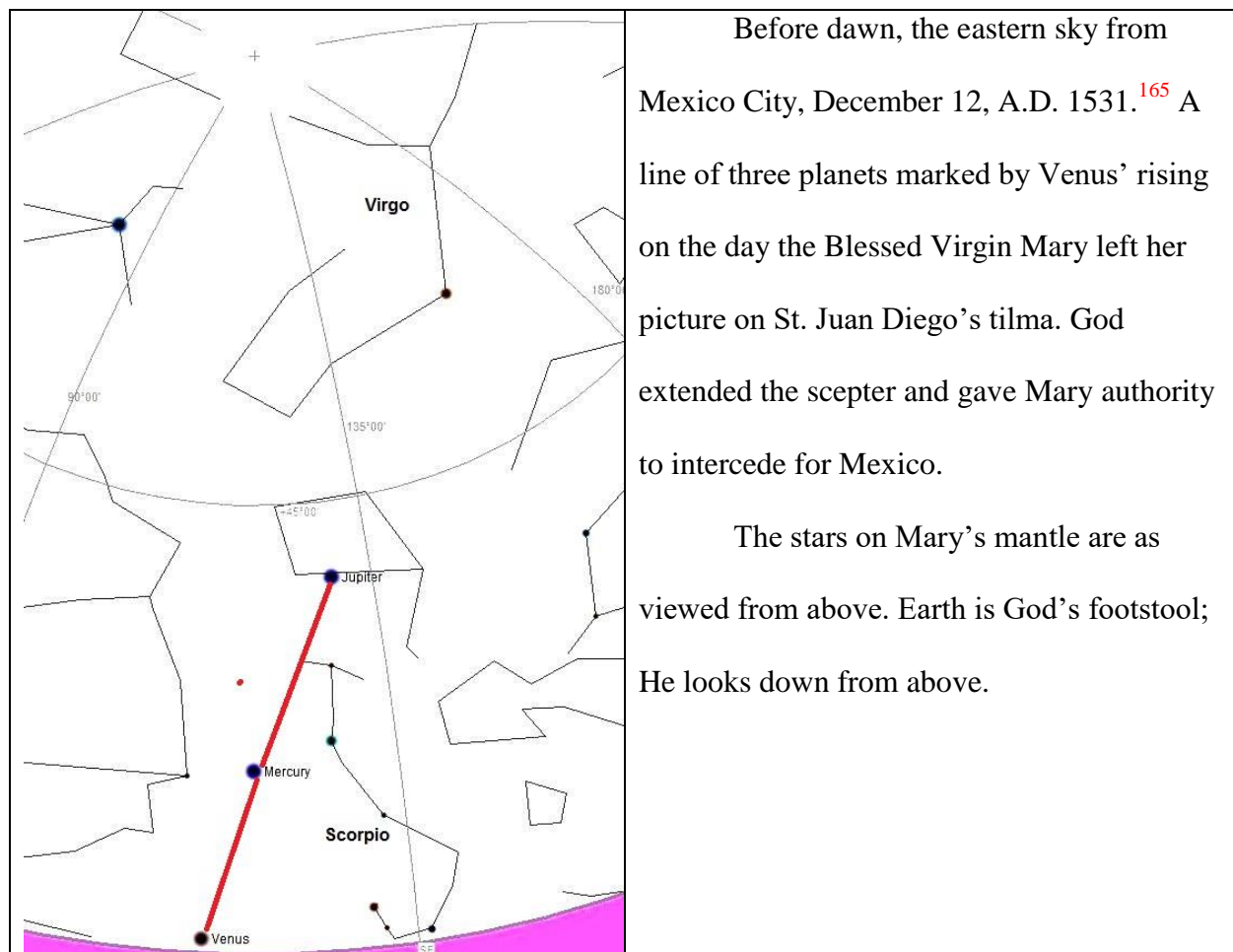


Figure 44: Sign at dawn December 12, 1531 A.D.

Heaven's three brightest objects bowed to Mary, pregnant with Jesus. Virgo was centered overhead and Scorpio underfoot. A great light overcame the Aztec culture's darkness.

Note the days of the year chosen for Christmas and Our Lady of Guadalupe's feast. The date of Christmas is always 12/25, twelve is the number of rule,¹⁶⁶ and five is the number of grace,¹⁶⁷ so 12/25 is "rule by intensified grace." 12/12 is "government." Mary rules as the Queen of Heaven. Virgo's head is near the top of the sky, symbolizing she dwells in heaven.

- Mary's picture celebrated the Christian age. The Aztec gods and religion were defeated.
- Annually the Aztecs sacrificed tens of thousands of humans. Their religion included cannibalism.

Timeline

- 1492, Columbus discovered the New World.
- 1518–1521, Cortez conquered the Aztecs. A prophecy led them to expect and join him. Cortez had five hundred soldiers, and half a million natives joined him. Tenochtitlán's four hundred thousand population doubled London's size and was the largest New World city.
- 1524, 12 missionary Franciscans arrived in the New World and soon made a few converts, including Juan Diego, his wife, and uncle. Then disease arrived. Half the New World's population died of smallpox and other diseases, including Juan's wife. Mexico was less ravaged than other areas.
- Most natives clung to human sacrifice and cannibalism and refused Christianity.
- The culture clash prevented the Spanish from effectively evangelizing.
- Disease and the Spanish conquest convinced the Aztecs their civilization had ended.
- Fray Juan de Zumárraga arrived c. 1528. He became the bishop of Mexico.
- Before dawn Tuesday, December 12, 1531, Our Lady appeared for the last time to Juan Diego. Venus' heliacal rise marked a line of three stars. It was the winter solstice, and the sun, moon, and Venus all set.
- Mary's mestizo appearance joined the two cultures.

- Mary's image evangelized the New World to the Catholic faith. They interpreted the picture and asked for baptism.
- In 1532, four hundred thousand natives were baptized.
- For nine years, the story picture of Our Lady converted three thousand people per day.
- By 1540, there were over nine million converts. By 1580, the whole population was Catholic.
- In 1584, Pope Gregory revised the calendar, adding 11 days to the Gregorian calendar. The winter solstice moved to about December 22. Today that calendar is used worldwide.
- God made the lights in the sky for *signs*, seasons, days, and years. Jesus, the light of the world, fulfills these.

Other Notes

- The angel supporting Mary has red, white, and blue eagle wings.¹⁶⁸ This angel's wings are different from nearly every other angelic depiction.
- America's patroness is Our Lady of Guadalupe.
- Five million souls went to Protestantism in the Old World, and nine million joined God's family in the New World.
- This story reveals how God used Jesus' star to evangelize the nations.
- Like Esther, Mary was the bright morning star, God's sign to convert the New World.

This sign's timing sends a profound signal. It took place after the Protestant reformation started in c. 1520. God could have sent Orthodox or Protestant missionaries to the New World. He sent Our Lady of Guadalupe to a humble Roman Catholic Aztec peasant. In mass, the natives converted. Why? I propose God's sign indicated the Catholic Church was the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. Mary was essential to His plan to wrest mankind from Satan's grip.

We'll now study signs so big they'll seem unbelievable. You may have to suspend your

scientific fact-checking for a time. I'll explain much that seems strange in the Bible, like moving mountains.

Chapter 10

The sundial's shadow returned

Visualize Zeus throwing a million lightning bolts from Mt. Olympus. Bigger yet, God hurled two spears toward the earth. He produced two heavenly signs: Joshua's long day and Hezekiah's return of the sun's shadow. The LORD cast great stones (meteor streaks) and appeared as spears and arrows to win battles. Let's study God's works.

Assyria conquered and deported all of Israel in their apostasy, scattering them among the nations (2 Kings 18:10, c. 712 B.C.). They never returned. Then Assyria attacked King Hezekiah in Judah, conquering all his walled cities except Jerusalem, and its sack neared. God gave faithful Hezekiah several signs at that dark time, and Judah survived.

Isaiah told Hezekiah, God will give you a sign. He'll make the sun's shadow return by ten steps to show you'll recover from your fatal illness. God gave him another sign you won't sow or reap for two years, but eat what grows by itself. Assyria will retreat and not attack Jerusalem. Here are the accounts:

And Hezekiah said to Isaiah, “What shall be the sign that the LORD will heal me, and that I shall go up to the house of the LORD on the third day?” And Isaiah said, “This shall be the sign to you from the LORD, that the LORD will do the thing that he has promised: shall the shadow go forward ten steps, or go back ten steps?” And Hezekiah answered, “It is an easy thing for the shadow to lengthen ten steps. Rather let the shadow go back ten steps.” And Isaiah the prophet called to the LORD, and he brought the shadow back ten steps, by which it had gone down on the steps of Ahaz. (2 Kings 20:8–11)

The other sign:

“And this shall be the sign for you: this year eat what grows of itself, and in the second year what springs of the same. Then in the third year sow and reap and plant vineyards, and eat their fruit. And the surviving remnant of the house of Judah shall again take root downward and bear fruit upward. For out of Jerusalem shall go a remnant, and out of Mount Zion a band of survivors. The zeal of the LORD will do this.

“Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the king of Assyria: He shall not come into this city or shoot an arrow there, or come before it with a shield or cast up a siege mound against it. By the way that he came, by the same he shall return, and he shall not come into this city, declares the LORD. For I will defend this city to save it, for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David.”¹⁶⁹ (2 Kings 19:29-34)

Ahaz’s steps was an early sundial.¹⁷⁰ Commentators interpret the shadow going back as some strange sunlight refraction. Others interpret it as a weird solar eclipse shadow. The actual cause was far more earth-changing. The sun’s position returned due to a pole shift. Significant heavenly signs involved a pole shift—the North and South poles moved thousands of miles to a new location in less than a day.

The great blast destroying the Assyrian army was probably a meteor shower. God threw a huge meteor; its streak appeared as a spear. This daytime pole shift means the meteor shower was less visible. The LORD’S angel [meteor] killed 185,000 Assyrians. When they arose in the morning, behold, these were all dead bodies. (Isaiah 37:36) The shadow lengthened. It doesn’t say the time, but likely late afternoon. That night, trailing fragments of the asteroid struck the Assyrian army.

The pole shifted quickly, at most a few hours. Any longer, the shadow wouldn’t have reversed. The Bible hints at climate change. Israel was in a very arid climate. Before Hezekiah’s

day, No rain or dew fell for three and a half years in Elijah's days and for seven years in Elisha's.

A second effect was the calendar changed. The days per year changed from 360¹⁷¹ to 365.242, and the days per lunar month from 30 to 29.6. Velikovsky documents twelve civilizations, India, Persia, Babylon, Assyria, Israel, Egypt, Greece, Rome, Maya, Mexicans, and China, which had a 360-day year and twelve—thirty-day lunar months. About the seventh century before the present era, all added five or 5¼ days to the year.¹⁷² The year's length remained the same, but the earth rotated faster, so the day's length was shorter. Daniel recalled this event, saying God changes the times and the seasons (Daniel 2:21). Changing the times refers to changing the year. Changing the number of days per year was a significant event.

Satan's ascent

This sign at night depicted Satan's rise and fall. Here's Isaiah's message:

How you are fallen from heaven,
 O Day Star, son of Dawn!¹⁷³
 How you are cut down to the ground,
 you who laid the nations low!
 You said in your heart,
 'I will ascend to heaven;
 above the stars of God
 I will set my throne on high;
 I will sit on the mount of assembly
 in the far reaches of the north;
 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;
 I will make myself like the Most High.'
 But you are brought down to Sheol,
 to the far reaches of the pit.
 Those who see you will stare at you
 and ponder over you:
 'Is this the man who made the earth tremble,
 who shook kingdoms,'
 That made the world as a wilderness,
 and destroyed the cities thereof (Isaiah 14:12–17)

The far reaches of the north is the traditional name for God's earthly abode.¹⁷⁴

Does Satan rise or fall? Can a heavenly sign do that? Lucifer, represented by Mercury,

fell,¹⁷⁵ and the constellation Draco (dragon) rose. Satan desires to ascend and to be like God.

“It was believed by the ancient star-gazers that the north was the center of the universe, the throne from which the gods governed man and his little world. ... to see the northern stars various minor divinities powerful in their own right yet circling reverently round the throne of the supreme ruler.”¹⁷⁶ Thus, the North Star is God’s throne, and the nearby stars (probably the Little Dipper) would be the stars of God.

Israel moved higher in latitude, so more northern sky was visible. Satan’s sign rose in the sky, as Isaiah predicted. He was now positioned like the Most High. This passage is key to understanding Satan’s fall from God’s favor.

Isaiah documents Draco’s ascent; it was always visible in clear weather at night. The North Pole moved from west of the Hudson Bay in Canada to its current position in the Arctic Sea. The pole remained there from Joshua’s long day until Hezekiah’s day. Much of North America was buried under a polar ice sheet. At the pole shift start, Jerusalem was 5 degrees north of the equator.

When did this sign occur?

Satan’s sign ascended into heaven when King Hezekiah answered Isaiah that the sun’s shadow should go back ten steps on Ahaz’s stairway.¹⁷⁷ We can date the year because God gave Hezekiah a second sign. For two years, they weren’t to sow or reap. “Then in the third year sow and reap and plant vineyards, and eat their fruit” (2 Kings 19:29 & Isaiah 37:30). Israel wasn’t to sow or reap for two years, during a Sabbath year and Jubilee year pair (Leviticus 25:11–12). This event occurred every 49 years. It was 704 B.C.¹⁷⁸

From studying abundant historical records, Immanuel Velikovsky convincingly showed pole shifts occurred. He proposed two rapid pole shifts, one c. 700 B.C. and another c. 1400 B.C.¹⁷⁹ Hapgood showed how pole shifts shaped the world and the most recent pole locations.

He was incorrect on their cause and the shift's speed.

Any eclipse determined date before this pole shift is inaccurate. Early chronology depends on Egyptian chronology, which depends on two solar eclipse dates. See article on the Bible and Archaeology.¹⁸⁰ Thiele linked Hebrew chronology to Assyrian chronology, which used a dateable eclipse. He dates Assyria's conquest of Israel (c. 722 B.C.) ten years too early.

In Hezekiah's sixth year, 712 B.C. Assyria conquered Israel in his fourteenth year, c. 704 B.C. The poles shifted to their current position (2 Kings 14:18). See Figure 45, page 119.

Babylon princes saw and investigated this sign. "And so in the matter of the envoys of the princes of Babylon, who had been sent to him to inquire about *the sign that had been done in the land*, God left him to himself, in order to test him and to know all that was in his heart." (2 Chronicles 32:31 (emphasis added))

What happens when the poles shift?

The earth spun on its axis while the poles shifted, and the North Pole continued to point at the North Star. The earth's orbit and tilt axis were unchanged. The crust didn't slip over the interior of the earth. An asteroid, God's spear, hit earth obliquely, causing the gyroscope earth to wobble for a few hours. This shift resulted in a new point on the earth's surface pointing at the North Star. After the poles shift, the magnetic poles gradually realign with the actual poles over a few thousand years. Currently, the magnetic poles are moving toward the North Pole at 36 miles (58 km) per year. Earth's rotation permanently slowed.

Isaiah hints at the pole shift's destruction. Terms like 'earth tremble,' 'make the world a wilderness,' and 'destroyed its cities' (Isaiah 14:16–17). Civilizations collapsed. Cities were abandoned, water sources failed, kingdoms went on the move, the Bronze Age collapsed, etc.

Where were the poles?

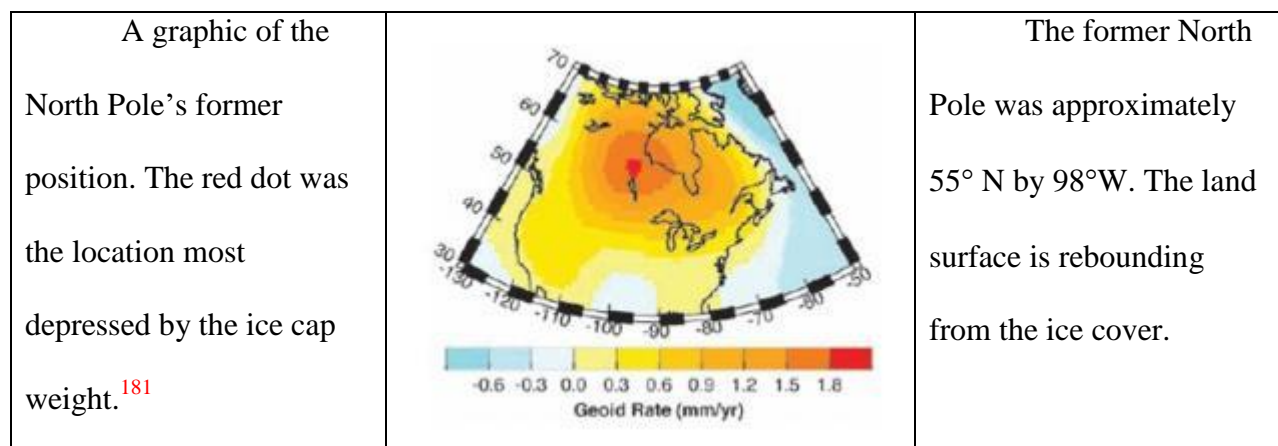


Figure 45: The North Pole's previous position

This figure shows the ground surface level rebounding when the ice cap melted. The poles moved quickly, with no depression in their paths as they moved. When it happened, Israel moved about 24 degrees north in latitude.

Solomon's Temple orientation witnesses to the shift. "Wilson mapped a series of ancient cisterns below the present Temple mount platform. One, Patrich says, preserves a vestige of the Temple that stood until Rome destroyed it in A.D. 70. He thinks he's dating Herod's Temple, but the subsurface features date from Solomon's Temple.

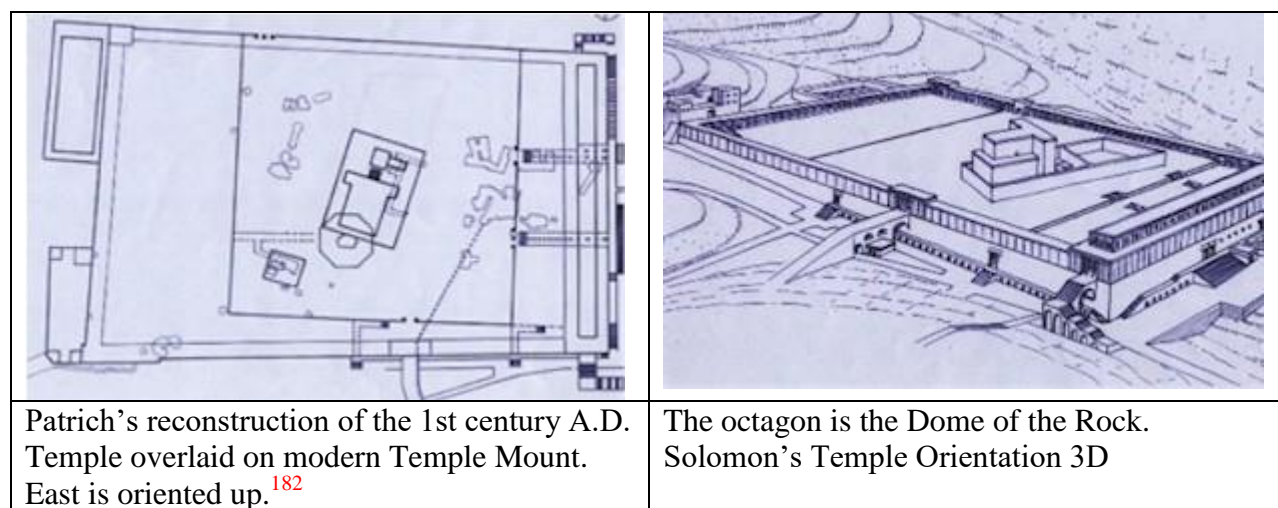


Figure 46: Solomon's Temple orientation

We can determine the angle of change with the subsurface Temple water system. The

Tabernacle faced east (Exodus 27:13–16). Solomon's Temple faced east. But the east changed. The reorientation of east shows the Temple was constructed before Hezekiah. Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the Temple in c. 586 B.C. Zerubbabel reconstructed the Temple, c. 516 B.C. Naturally, he oriented it to face east unless he used Solomon's foundations. East is the direction the sun rises on the equinox, so it takes time and effort to determine east.

The Temple was oriented 16.4 degrees south of east. The angle from the current position of Jerusalem to the spot where one experiences the maximum rebound from the polar ice cap near the Hudson Bay is about 17 degrees north of west from Jerusalem. The Temple faced due east until the pole shift. In *The Path of the Poles*, Charles Hapgood documents what happened to the earth when the poles shifted.¹⁸³

The earth is an oblate spheroid. The centrifugal force from the earth spinning bulges the equator and flattens the poles.¹⁸⁴ This bulge keeps the poles in place. A gyroscope resists change in its motion. Suppose something dramatic happens; a half-kilometer-diameter rock hits the earth obliquely at a sufficient velocity. In that case, it can briefly overcome this stabilizing force.¹⁸⁵ I document this more fully in <http://www.scripturescholar.com/JoshuasLongDay.htm>.¹⁸⁶

The earth's surface moving from the equator is compressed and raised in elevation during the shift. Where it moves toward the equator, it's stretched and split. The crust is strong in compression but weak in tension. The breaks and deformations occur where the crust is weak, particularly plate boundaries. Stretching produces rifts, lower elevations, etc. Compression raises elevations, moves, builds mountains as the crust buckles, etc. Near the equator, the effects are most pronounced. Mountains rise, valleys are created, rifts, ridges, escarpments, etc., result.

Features cited to prove glaciers didn't produce the great lakes, etc., prove the pole shifted immediately after the glaciers. For instance, the Niagara escarpment and the raising or lowering

of land in various places. They show there were continental glaciers *and* then a rapid change in the position of the ice cap. Many lakes, including the Great Lakes, formed near the ice cap edge.

The North Pole moved from near Hudson Bay to its current position. Siberia's climate rapidly cooled, so the mammoths there died. The earth entered a two-year-long winter, and centuries of weather change began. Ice caps melted, causing super floods, creating features like the Grand Canyon, the Grand Coulee riverbed, etc.

How do the poles shift?

God shifted the poles making epic events happen. Velikovsky proposed near encounters with Venus and Mars caused the shifts. Most modern scholars only see slow plate tectonics, and most attribute the cause to mantle plumes.¹⁸⁷ To read how the pole might change position if a meteor hits, see "On the Possibility of Very Rapid Shifts of the Poles" by Flavio Barbiero.¹⁸⁸



Figure 47: Map ice age America

Observe no ice cover in northern or western Canada, Alaska, or Greenland.

The sun's shadow moved back on Ahaz's steps in c. spring 704 B.C., and the

constellation of Draco rose in the sky. From Jerusalem, it was continuously visible in the nighttime sky. Satan planned to be like God in heaven. This cataclysm preserved Judah but greatly disturbed the nations and broke most early archaeological dating.

We'll investigate one more pole shift before we study the great signs of Revelation 12.

Chapter 11

Joshua's long day

Joshua's long day is another heavenly sign caused by a pole shift. Many mock it because this sign seems impossible. God did this sign, and we can understand how.

In c. November 1398 B.C. Joshua's long day:

The men of Gibeon sent to Joshua at the camp in Gilgal, saying, "Do not relax your hand from your servants. Come up to us quickly and save us and help us, for all the kings of the Amorites who dwell in the hill country are gathered against us." So Joshua went up from Gilgal, he and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valor. ... So Joshua came upon them suddenly, having marched up all night from Gilgal. And the LORD threw them into a panic before Israel, who struck them with a great blow at Gibeon and chased them by the way of the ascent of Beth-horon and struck them as far as Azekah and Makkedah. And as they fled before Israel, while they were going down the ascent of Beth-horon, the LORD threw down large stones from heaven on them as far as Azekah, and they died. There were more who died because of the hailstones than the sons of Israel killed with the sword.

At that time Joshua spoke to the LORD in the day when the LORD gave the Amorites over to the sons of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, "Sun, stand still at Gibeon, and moon, in the Valley of Aijalon." And the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, until the nation took vengeance on their enemies. Is this not written in the Book of Jashar? The sun stopped in the midst of heaven and did not hurry to set for about a whole day. There has been no day like it before or since, when the LORD heeded the voice of a man, for the

LORD fought for Israel. (Joshua 10:6–7, 9–14)

The North Pole was located in the Atlantic Ocean near Norway. The ice cap cut Norway's fjords and covered much of Northwestern Europe. The glaciation evidence is widespread. Africa being further north, had more rainfall. Old and Middle Kingdom tomb pictures record a wetter climate in Egypt. North Africa was a savannah, not a desert.¹⁹⁰

Joshua and his army marched twenty miles at night. At dawn, they surprised, attacked, and chased the Amorites. Joshua's army pursued them for eighty miles.

Joshua 10:11 says many stones (Hebrew, *EBEN*; Greek, *LITHOS*) from the sky killed the Canaanites. God stoned the Amorites with meteors, but translations make this giant hail. But the word is the common word for stone. Large hail forms in a dark sky, not when the sun and moon are visible. It is unlikely giant hailstones formed, enough stones to kill hundreds of thousands of Amorites. Velikovsky (*Ages in Chaos*, and others) proposed these were meteors.

The position of the North and South Poles changed. The shift happened over one day (about 10 hours), and the day was lengthened. To understand the long day, imagine Israel flew from Europe to California. Joshua didn't have a 767, but the ground he stood on moved as if he flew west. The day was far longer than usual. Jerusalem started at a latitude equivalent to London today. It was November or December; the daylight hours were few. But that day, the daylight hours doubled.

The earth didn't stop rotating, but Joshua's day was longer because the position of the North Pole changed. The pole moved from Norway to Hudson Bay (see Charles Hapgood, *The Path of the Pole*).

Joshua's long day was late in the year. Joshua read the law, finishing in late October (Joshua 8:34–35). He read to Israel near Mt. Ebal during the feast of Tabernacles. Nehemiah said

Tabernacles hadn't been celebrated properly since Joshua's day (Nehemiah 8:13–18).

Israel returned to Gilgal, where they made a covenant with Gibeon. When the news of that pact spread, the kings of southern Canaan allied together to punish Gibeon for making a treaty with Israel. So it occurred late in the year when the daylight hours were few. Israel also moved toward the equator, where there were more daylight hours naturally in the winter months. These two actions combined approximately doubled the daylight hours in Israel during that one day. After Joshua's pole shift, Jerusalem ended up at approximately a latitude of 24 degrees. God moved them to a warmer latitude for their first winter in the Promised Land.

On Joshua's long day, the earth revolved on its axis and orbited the sun. The moon orbited the earth. An additional spin was temporarily placed on the earth as the poles moved from their place. This movement lengthened the daylight hours in Israel.

Some doubt that Joshua 10 is accurate because there are few supporting references. We studied a similar incident, the return of the sun's shadow.

Other Scriptures preserve Joshua's long day. "The sun and moon stood still in their place at the light of your arrows as they sped, at the flash of your glittering spear" (Habakkuk 3:11). The stones striking the Amorites were visible as streaks in the sky as arrows or spears. Hail doesn't look like a glittering spear. The memory of the sun and moon stopping is preserved (Psalms 18:12–14).

These passages bear witness to the change in the sun's relative position without destroying the continuity of day and night, seasons, etc. The sun didn't progress as usual on two different days.

The United Kingdom's ground surface is still rebounding from the removal of the Ice Cap at the end of Europe's Ice age.¹⁹¹ Melting this ice cap created a super flood that cut the

straights of Dover.

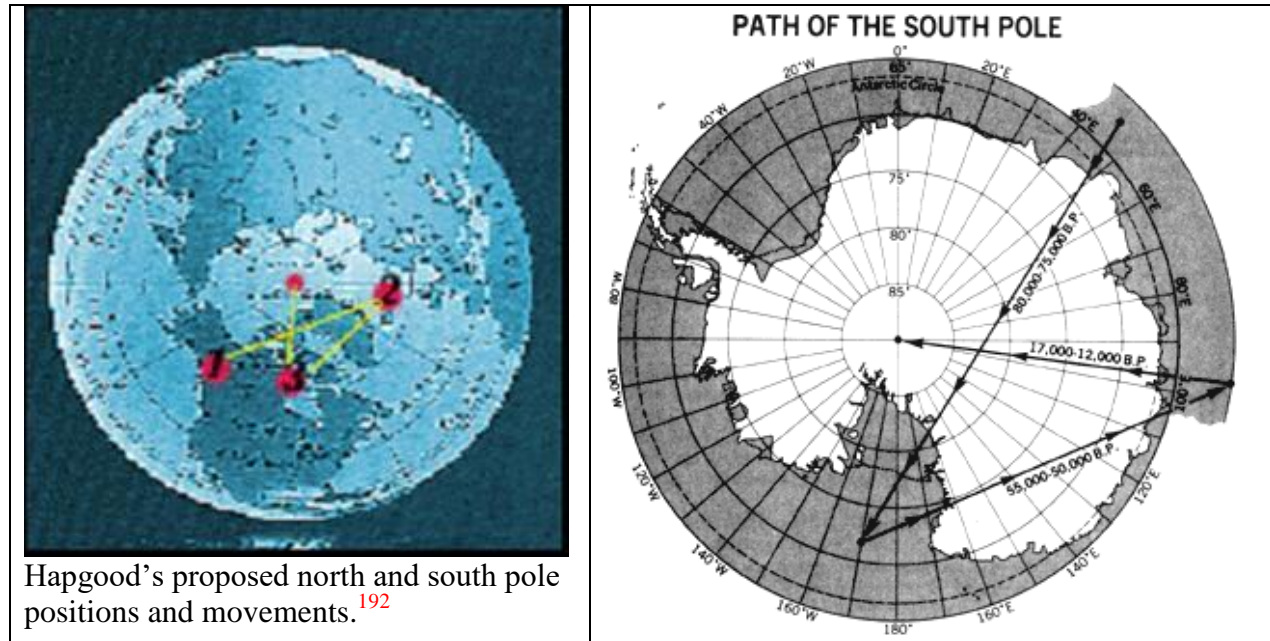


Figure 48: Map of the four most recent pole locations

This pole movement ended the Ice Age [Pleistocene] in Europe and started the Ice Age [Pleistocene] in North America. Scientists call it the 'Ice Age,' but it was local to North America. The polar ice cap didn't expand; it moved. They date the event using radiocarbon. Radiocarbon dating depends on atmospheric C14 content being relatively constant. The pole shift destabilized C14 production and absorption.

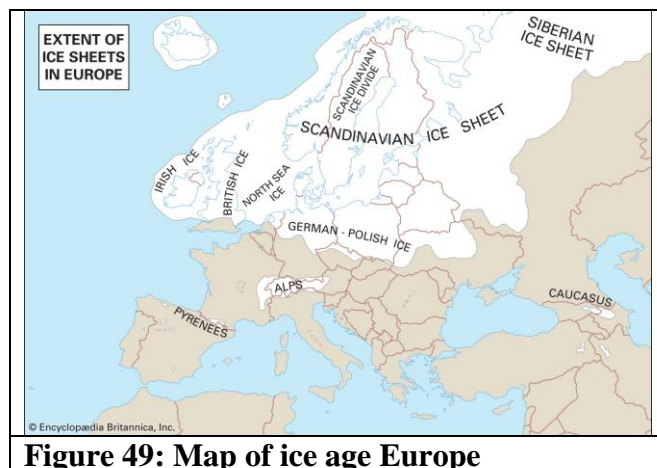


Figure 49: Map of ice age Europe


Six literal-day creationists generally believe the aftermath of Noah's flood caused the Ice

Ages. The Bible reveals cataclysmic events after the flood. They incorrectly believe the ice age in Europe coincided with the ice age in North America rather than sequential events.

The Bible hints at climate change. While Israel was in the wilderness for forty years, their vast flocks and herds (Exodus 12:38) had sufficient grazing land. Today the Negev is a very arid desert. When Israel crossed the Jordan River at flood stage, it had to stop for them, but in Jesus' day, many from Galilee forded it. An example of the level of terrain changing, Moses saw all of the Promised Land from the top of Mt. Nebo. Today there is no such location.

Pole shifts formed the continents

Imagine God forming the earth from various elements and compounds; the denser ones will tend toward the core of the planet and the lighter ones toward the surface. Gases would be on top, then liquids, then low-density solids we'll call granite. Below, we'll call basalt a medium-density layer and then a high-density iron core. The granite floats on the basalt and the basalt on the iron. The continents are mainly composed of granite.

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>The earth's circumference is 25 miles (40 km) larger around the equator than the poles. Each shift can open rifts revealing up to 25 miles of new ocean floor.</p> |
| <p>Figure 50: Atlantic seafloor</p> | |

The earth's poles take time to change position. Joshua's *long* day describes one pole shift. For continents to gather and rise from a water-covered earth, the poles moved hundreds of times to gather the continents and spread the seafloor. The third day of creation (Genesis 1:9–10) lasted years when the land rose from the sea. The sun, moon, and stars made on the fourth day controlled the day's length. The smoke released by the volcanoes in repeated pole shifts would mean night lasted years during this process.

Repeated pole shifts pushed the granite together, and denser basalt filled the gap. Gravity would even things out. Basalt tends to settle at a lower elevation than granite. Water, seeking the lowest level, would cover the basalt because it is at the lowest level. After many orderly pole shifts, enough granite gathered to poke out of the water, like an iceberg floating on the basalt. Water floats on both granite and basalt.

Pole shifts caused Noah's flood, and much of that flood was tsunamis rather than rising water. Otherwise, freshwater fish would perish, and saltwater would kill most plants.

Now we have sufficient background to unlock the great signs of Revelation 12.

Chapter 12

Revelation's great signs

Revelation 12 presents a movie like Esther, describing future great heavenly signs. It's an action-packed, terrifying family rescue war movie. The cast is constellations except for the sun, moon, and Venus. The Bible helps us understand and date these signs.¹⁹³ They are central to Revelation: a woman in labor clothed with the sun and a great red dragon poised to consume her son. Virgo portrays the woman and Draco, the dragon's tail. Venus marks the signs and portrays Jesus' birth. Here's the Scripture.

Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple. There were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and heavy hail.

And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. She was pregnant and was crying out in birth pains and the agony of giving birth. And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems. His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she bore her child he might devour it. She gave birth to a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, but her child was caught up to God and to his throne, and the

woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which she is to be nourished for 1,260 days.

Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. (Revelation 11:19–12:9)

God changes the earth again. He makes new heavens and a new earth. New [*KAINOS*], in quality, not new [*NEOS*], in time.

Many Revelation 12 signs are constellations. Some are easy to identify. The names and meanings of many constellations were fixed four thousand years ago.¹⁹⁴

These signs' features timestamp them like calendar and clock,¹⁹⁵ unveiling the timing of the end of the age. They are in the future, so my understanding is darkened. My dates are an educated guess. If a task is worth doing, it is worth doing badly.¹⁹⁶ Each person should search Scripture to confirm this message's truth. Our time is brief; reconcile with God and produce the fruit of a holy life. God gives these insights by grace; no one gets them unless He wants them known.

Timing the signs

Various parts of these great signs allow them to be dated.

| Clock Hand | Object | Sign | |
|-------------------|---------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Day and Hour | Sun | Clothed with the sun | Every evening & dawn |
| Month | Moon | Moon under her feet | One day per month |
| Year | Virgo | Woman | Every November |
| eight Years | Venus | About to give birth | One day / eight years |
| 33 Years | Leonids | Great battle | 1hr/yr—5 of 33 years |

A great sign is a woman about to give birth. Virgo, the only female zodiac constellation, represents Mary. She is about to give birth to the Lord Jesus Christ. Why—because He will rule the earth with an iron scepter (Revelation 12:5).¹⁹⁷ She is pregnant with Venus, His star. Only heavenly wanderers: the planets, the moon, and comets, can pass through the background

constellations.

The previous day, Venus was at Virgo's hips. Venus is Jesus passing through the hips in childbirth. Venus passes through Virgo in these months about every three years. Every eight years, Venus arrives in almost the exact location at the same time of year.

For the sun to *cloth* Virgo, Virgo must be just above the horizon before sunrise or after sunset. Sunlight brightens and colors the sky.

Virgo rises in the evening in September or early October. These signs are unlikely in the evening because Draco must fall more degrees to reach earth.¹⁹⁸ The more significant fall requires a more significant pole shift and would move Jerusalem further south.

Other clues reveal it is just before dawn. Why morning? Sunlight clothes Virgo before dawn every November or early December.

The moon is under Virgo's feet—preferably almost touching them. The moon near the sun is crescent-shaped. The moon follows the ecliptic path that takes it near Virgo's feet monthly. Virgo is in the east before dawn, and the moon is visible under her feet; it's a waning crescent. The sun and the moon are essential for identifying this sign's time.

When will this occur? It could happen in any year in about November or December as a crescent moon rises under the feet of Virgo in the east. This event doesn't mark the end of the age or the time of the return of Christ. It is a significant event in the series of events leading to His return.

When Virgo is near the eastern horizon before dawn, she is upright. The dragon's head is poised below the North Star and must fall the minimum distance to the earth.

The woman in childbirth appears then another sign appears.

Understanding how God casts Satan's sign to the earth reveals the key to sequencing the events in the book of Revelation. "For the Lord GOD does nothing without revealing his secret to

his servants the prophets. The lion has roared; who will not fear? The Lord GOD has spoken; who can but prophesy?" (Amos 3:7) These signs don't surprise the Christian world.¹⁹⁹ Here's the pre-dawn sky of November 17, 2036, from Jerusalem at 5 AM.

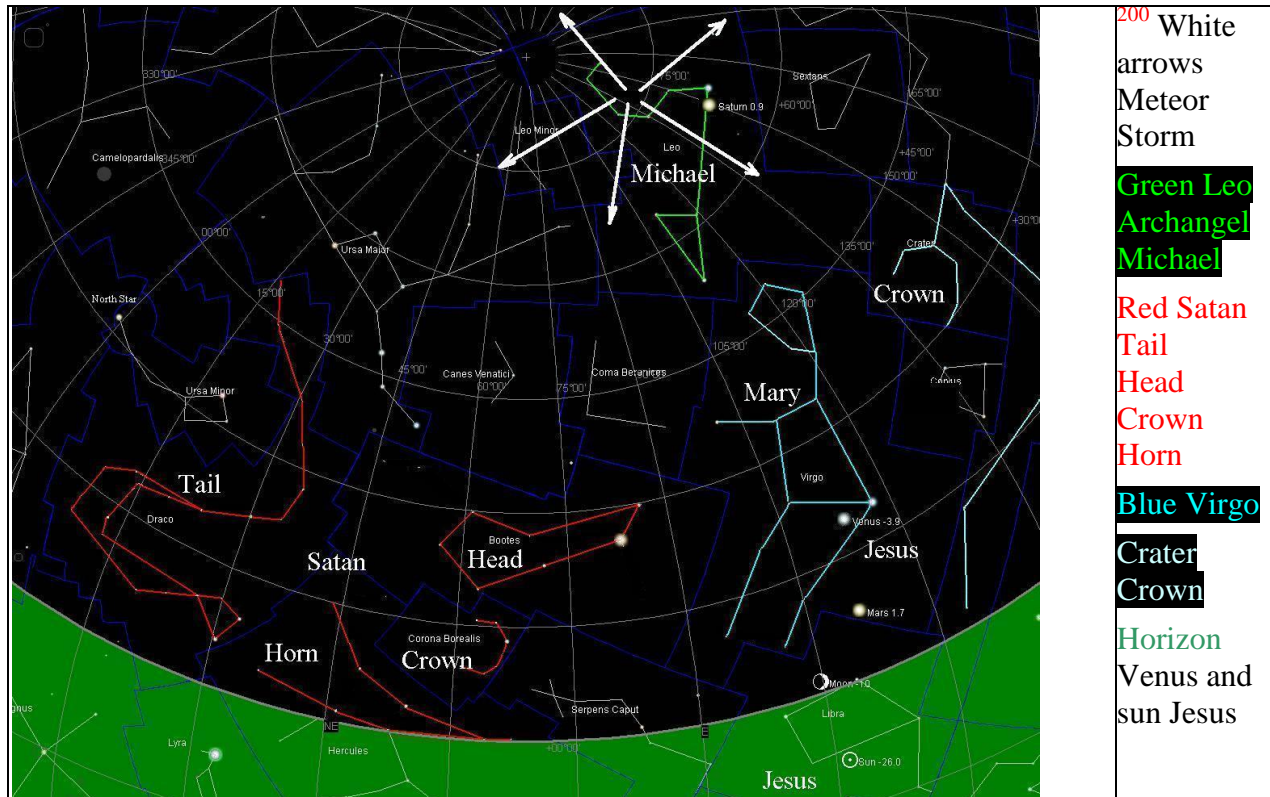


Figure 51: Sign dragon ready to eat Jesus at birth Before the signs

Before the signs, two witnesses are killed after prophesying for 1260 days (Revelation 11:3–13). After they lie unburied for 3.5 days, this sign occurs. John introduces the sign with “God’s temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple. There were flashes of lightning [light],²⁰¹ rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and heavy hail.” (Revelation 11:19)

We see light flashes from meteorites. The worldwide earthquake shakes for hours (the aftershocks for months). The quake wakes everyone and scares them outdoors, where they watch. The meteor storm is incorrectly translated as a hailstorm. Clouds hide the stars during

hailstorms, and they aren't worldwide. People in the northern hemisphere night will see thousands of meteor flashes.

In Israel, dawn approaches, and night has fallen on United States' west coast. Electrical power fails worldwide, ending light pollution and enhancing the spectacle. Much of the *Christian* world will see the signs the apostle John predicted. A thief in the night asteroid will hit, probably the Atlantic Ocean, triggering this event. The North Pole will race toward Alaska. The world will witness this sign, and billions of people will die. Tsunamis strike coastal regions, and elevation changes may sink them into the sea. Tectonic plate boundaries will shake and may generate volcanoes.

The great red dragon sign

The great red dragon sign was challenging to identify because there are four snake-like constellations. The constellation Serpens is close to Virgo, and two identify it as probably the sign.²⁰² Draco, a second one, partially encircles the North Pole. On clear nights, it's always visible from Israel. Draco in Greek is *DRAKON* meaning serpent or dragon. The archangel Michael may be the constellation of Leo. Identifying the male child as Jesus points to Venus and the sun.²⁰³

The red dragon's tail is Draco. Draco is the most important of the four serpent-like constellations because it's located near the North Star. One hint about its location; the sign falls from the sky. Most stars rise in the east and set in the west. They daily rise and fall. This sign is cast from heaven and falls to earth. Only a sign near the North Star could appear to fall to earth from Israel, and they would only fall during a pole shift. The dragon's head, horns, and crowns are constellations between Draco and Virgo. The dragon has a tail, seven heads, ten horns, and seven crowns. In the pre-dawn sky, we can view four symbols.

The great red dragon is Satan, poised to devour Jesus but cast down to earth after a battle

instead. This results in cataclysmic global destruction. The Draco (*DRAGON*) surrounds much of the little dipper [Ursa Minor], the constellation containing Polaris, the North Star. Draco is always visible when clear from any location north of latitude 31 degrees north with no light pollution. It rotates daily around the North Star.

Interpreting the signs

Each passage has at least two meanings—one, what the sign signifies. The second, physical heavenly sign and is the primary discovery revealed. Many interpret this as allegory. This sign doesn't necessarily mark when God cast Satan to earth or the birth of Christ.

Then God's Temple in heaven was opened. The sky clears, it's dark, and humanity can see the stars. The ancients considered the North Star to be God's throne.²⁰⁴ If the North Star is God's throne, the nearby sky is God's Temple.

And the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple—Before Nebuchadnezzar took Judah into captivity (c. 587 B.C.), Jeremiah hid the Ark of the Covenant on Mt. Nebo (2 Maccabees 2:4–5).²⁰⁵ It would be forgotten and never remade (Jeremiah 3:16). Moses died on this mountain, symbolizing heaven.

It wasn't a gold-covered acacia wood chest holding two stone Ten Commandments tablets. The Ark was a type of Jesus' mother, Mary. Mary's womb held God's Word made flesh. Virgo represents Mary and the Ark of the Covenant.²⁰⁶ On the Day of Atonement, Virgo was low in the dawn sky when the High Priest annually visited the Ark in the Holy of Holies. The precession of the equinox has moved Virgo's rising from September to November.

There were flashes of light²⁰⁷—meteor streaks. God's arrows or spear flash (Habakkuk 3:9, 11) and angels. If lightning flashes, the sky would be cloudy, and the stars hidden.

Rumblings, peals of thunder—earthquakes, volcanoes, tsunamis, and meteors thunder; thunder is God's voice or presence.²⁰⁸

An earthquake is intense worldwide, particularly in Alaska, Saudi Arabia, Israel, and near plate boundaries. The greater the latitude change, the more significant the earthquakes, and these will be the worst man will ever experience (Revelations 16:18).

And a great meteor storm—A frightening Leonid meteor storm occurred on November 13, 1833. “The skies were lit up by thousands of shooting stars every minute.” “All the stars are falling!”²⁰⁹ Shooting stars can be God’s messengers [angels].

^{12:1}**A great sign appeared in heaven**—A great and wondrous sign in the sky—more than Venus moving through Virgo’s hips. Virgo suddenly gives birth to the sun, as discussed below. This sign surprises many.

A woman—Virgo represents Mary and its brightest star, Spica, her hips. She is upright in the east, facing north, above the horizon in the morning twilight. Why Virgo? “All the traditions, names, and mythologies connected with this sign recognize and emphasize the virginity of the woman.”²¹⁰ She is about to give birth to a son. This woman represents Mary as the “Ark of the Covenant,”²¹¹ “Mother of Jesus,” and “Mother of the Church.” She was revealed in heaven (Revelation 11:19).

Mary the Mother of Jesus because she gave birth to the one who will rule the nations with a scepter of iron (Revelation 12:5).²¹² The child is Jesus (Revelation 19:11–16). Mary is the Mother of the Church because the rest of her offspring are those who obey God’s commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus (Revelation 12:17). Later, we’ll study Mary in more detail.

Clothed with the sun—We discussed this earlier. For the sun to *cloth* any star group, it must be near the horizon before sunrise or after sunset. Sunlight brightens and colors the sky near the horizon. They view dawn from Jerusalem, where the two witnesses prophesized.²¹³ The

pre-dawn light hides the dimmer stars, particularly near the eastern horizon, and dust gives a rosy color to the eastern sky. The visible stars are those of fourth magnitude or brighter.

Many propose this sign is the sun in the sky in Virgo. Everything else disappears when the sun is visible—no woman, clothing, dragon, or crown.

With the moon under her feet—We discussed this under dating this sign. The scene looks like the image of our Lady of Guadalupe. The crescent moon is under and almost touching Virgo's feet.

And on her head a crown of twelve stars—the victor's crown [*STEPANOS*] is a cluster of twelve stars near Virgo's head.²¹⁴ The constellation Crater and half of the constellation Hydra make up this sign. This sign was difficult to identify because the crown unexpectedly looks like a mantle or hooded cloak. Our Lady of Guadalupe wore a mantle of stars, not a crown. Twelve is the number of rule, authority, or government; she's the queen mother. Crater, the crown proper of this sign, has a shape identical to Corona—the dragon's crown.

²**She was pregnant**—Venus is near Virgo's womb area below the hips. It moves lower each day. The previous day, Venus was at Virgo's hips.

And was crying out in birth pains—heavenly signs are usually silent. The noise is due to meteors, volcanoes, earthquakes, etc. Many heard Krakatoa erupt 3000 miles (4800 km) away. Worldwide many volcanoes will erupt.

The pregnant woman cried out in pain as she was about to give birth. It is logical to assume the woman is crying out because of childbirth pangs. If the woman is Mary, she didn't experience birth pangs since she is without original sin. She experiences the pain of birthing the Church. Mary is in anguish and sorrow due to her concern over what will happen. We must die to be harvested.

And the agony of giving birth—Venus representing Jesus has passed the hips; at dawn, she gives birth. Birth is slow until the baby's head passes the hips, then it's sudden.

³**And another sign appeared in heaven: behold a great red dragon.** The Greek for another is *ALLOS*, another of the same type or character, another *great* sign. This sign is lower; it becomes visible just before dawn. The sign is enormous. The dragon includes four constellations, Draco (tail), Bootes (seven heads), Hercules (ten horns), and Corona (seven crowns).

The dawn's light fades faint stars. God drew a picture with stars and then hid it with stars. The dragon is red because sunrise colors the sky, and the stars are near the horizon. Red depicts sin and a coming storm warning, red dawn.²¹⁵

With seven heads—Bootes,²¹⁶ a seven stars cluster outlines the dragon's head. It lies between Draco and Virgo. The sign has one head of seven stars—seven stars represent the seven heads or seven political entities acting as one.

And ten horns—the ten horns are a ten-star cluster picturing a giant horn. The constellation Hercules' ten brightest stars above the horizon form the horn. Horns symbolize power. The great horn indicates Satan's power. Though powerful, Michael casts Satan from heaven. The ten horns may indicate ten armies.

On his heads seven diadems—a seven stars cluster near Draco's head is the ruler's crown. The constellation Corona²¹⁷ means crown, and it's on the dragon's head. The seven crowns mean the seven heads rule.

⁴**His tail swept down a third of the stars out of heaven**—the tail is Draco. Draco wraps one-third of the way around the North Star.

One-third of the angels fall with Satan, and one-third of the stars disappear. After the pole shift, the night is 2/3 the length that it was before. In November, the night length is about

fourteen hours after the shift; it's about ten hours. The stars are visible two-thirds of the time they were before the shift. One-third of the angels fell with Satan. Only two-thirds of the stars are visible because smoke makes the faint stars less visible.

And cast them to the earth—Satan's angelic host cast to earth makes life miserable for the inhabitants. The fall is by the pole shift.

The dragon stood before the woman—Bootes, the dragon's head, connects Draco and Virgo. Bootes is positioned to devour Virgo's child. Arcturus, its brightest star, represents the most important head and the dragon's mouth.

Who was about to give birth—Venus and the sun are positioned for birth. Venus has passed the hips, so birth is imminent. See Figure 51, page 132.

So that when she bore her child he might devour it. A Serpent constellation was associated with the belief that it consumed the sun during a solar eclipse.²¹⁸ A giant serpent is poised to consume whatever comes from the woman.

⁵**She gave birth to a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron**—Pregnant with Venus; she gives birth to the sun (representing the Son of God). The pole shift moves Jerusalem to and beyond the equator. The day's length change shows the sun is born. The ancients considered the sun to be born on the winter solstice because the days started to lengthen. Jerusalem's move to the equator causes the length of its day and night to become equal.²¹⁹ The sun is born. The sun presents Jesus' birth because His face shined like the sun in all its brilliance (Revelation 1:16).²²⁰ The baby's head comes out first.

But her child was caught up to God—as the pole shifts, the sun suddenly rises into the sky, untypically fast. The sun, representing Jesus, is snatched into the sky.

And to his throne—the sky is God's throne and the earth His footstool (Acts 7:49), and

the sun is now in the sky. Satan is cast to the earth, but Jesus doesn't come to the earth. ⁶**And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which she is to be nourished 1,260 days.**—Virgo disappears with the dawn. When we compare this with Revelation 12:14, the woman is given an eagle's wings to flee. The language is similar to Exodus 19:4, where God gave Israel the wings of an eagle to cross the Red Sea. Perhaps the woman flees either across where the Sea of Galilee was or where the Dead Sea was.

Mary is already in heaven. The woman, now the bride, represents her offspring, the Church. They escape much as Israel escaped from Egypt by crossing the Red Sea. The angel carrying our Lady of Guadalupe has an eagle's wings.

⁷**Now war arose in heaven**—War starts when the dragon appears. Many meteors come from two locations, perhaps surpassing the 1833 Leonid meteor storm. The Leonid meteor storm is a part of this sign. The Leonid meteor storm peak lasts less than one hour. In 1833, there were thousands of meteors at a time. "So many meteors in the sky at a time that many people were woken from their beds and stared at the sky in panic, believing the sky to be on fire. Many feared the world's end and dreaded what they would see at daybreak."²²¹

Michael and his angels—A meteor storm originates from Leo representing Michael and his angels. This Leonid meteor shower is a spectacular meteor storm. Cherubim have four faces, one like a lion. Could Michael be a cherub? Michael, the angelic host's head, is the guardian of Israel (Daniel 10:13, 21; 12:1; Jude 9). Michael contended with Satan over Moses' body.²²² This battle occurs when Moses dies and is about to be taken into heaven in a cloud (Revelation 11:12). One of the two witnesses prophesying for 1260 days was Moses because of his miracles. He turned water into blood (Exodus 7:14–21) and afflicted Egypt with many plagues.



Figure 52: Leonid meteor storm of November 13, 1833

Fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back ⁸**But he was defeated**—Satan and his angels battle maybe with their meteor storm but lose. Maybe the object causing the pole shift breaks up, making many light streaks, and it appears to be Satan's attack.

And there was no longer any place for them in heaven.—Satan and his angels fall from their place in heaven near God's throne. ²²⁴ Bootes—Satan's head falls to earth. Satan no longer rules the sky.⁹

And the great dragon was thrown down—Repeated for emphasis, this constellation moves abnormally. One can also visualize the sky rolling up like a scroll (Revelation 6:14). This isn't the meteor storm, but the stars fall. Bootes falls to the earth.

That ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan—The great sign pictures Satan or the devil.

The deceiver of the whole world—everyone believes some of Satan's lies. Politically,

even the saints who don't believe his lies are carried along by them.

He was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.—this symbolizes Satan and his angels being cast to the earth. Satan's fall and the time of the sign may coincide.

Questions discussed

An asteroid from the north strikes the Atlantic Ocean causing Jerusalem to move south and the North Pole toward southern Alaska (Revelations 8:8). An asteroid to strike the ocean from the north likely hits the Atlantic Ocean. St. Patrick predicted a flood would wash entirely over Ireland and may be related.²²⁵

Jesus saw Satan fall like lightning (meteor flash?) (Luke 10:18). Satan goes down. For the dragon to fall to the earth (without the North Star disappearing), the North Pole must shift at least 31 degrees south toward southern Alaska. The constellation fall to earth represents Satan being cast from heaven.

The first Leonid meteor storm was on November 13, but in recent years, it arrives on November 17–18.

Virgo gives birth

Virgo is in labor with Venus but gives birth to the sun. Virgo can't be pregnant with the sun unless the moon has eclipsed it because the sunlight hides the constellation. If the moon is under her feet and hiding the sun, Virgo is upside down, so it is the evening. The sun typifies Jesus.²²⁶

A stellar object doesn't go from about to give birth to giving birth unless days pass. A pole shift can reduce it to about an hour nearly instantly. Since two objects, Venus and the sun, represent Jesus, the sign shows Venus positioned to give birth—then to the sun at birth. Sunlight closes the heavens, so there is no woman and no dragon.

Virgo gives birth to the sun at dawn. Because the pole moved south, the sun dawns suddenly—it's snatched up. Jerusalem moves beyond the equator, so the sun instantly passes through the winter solstice and the spring equinox. The winter solstice presents the birth of the sun. Here the sun gives birth early (before the solstice) because it goes from a long night to a long day in a few hours.

Jesus' return is almost certainly associated with one of the six annual Passover events. The first and second-month solar and lunar-solar Passovers occur within six weeks of the spring equinox.²²⁷ We're to watch for our Lord's return, but only at Passover must one keep watch. The time is considerably shortened because the season goes from fall to spring, cutting months from the year.

Juan Diego's tilma shows the moon under the Blessed Virgin's feet, clothed with the sun and pregnant. Thus, we have three different pictures of Mary giving birth with the signs of the sun transitioning from a long night, Venus giving birth, etc. The ① star of Bethlehem, ② the great sign of Virgo in labor (Revelation 12:1, 5), and ③ Our Lady of Guadalupe pregnant all have a clear astronomical link. Each occurred before dawn, and Venus depicted birth; in each, the sun is about to be born. All link to the change from a long night to a lengthening day. In all, Jesus is the one being born. Our Lady of Guadalupe doesn't have a noticeable crown. Her mantle appears to be her crown. It has too many stars, but it crowns Mary with stars.

Our Lady of Guadalupe's sign led millions to convert. This great sign also causes many conversions. Many in Islam, knowing Jesus is greater than Mohammad, convert. They believe in Mary and Satan when they understand that Jesus is a prophet and God's Son who died on the cross. He died for the whole world's sins to redeem man from bondage to Satan and sin. Jesus is alive because He's resurrected after death, as we all will be. God didn't take Him before He died.

Since Satan lost most of his power when Jesus defeated him at the resurrection, lies are his weapon.

Job identifies the constellation Dragon. “By his wind the heavens were made fair; his hand pierced the fleeing serpent” (Job 26:13).²²⁸ God placed these stars with the correct brightness and tuned the planets, location of the poles, etc.



Figure 53: Constellation Draco

Dating the great signs

Revelation means to unveil, and this birth sign unveils the book of Revelation. All the lists of signs connect to the birth sign. It times them signs to Monday, November 17, 2036 A.D., about an hour before dawn Jerusalem time. It’s the best matching date for the great heavenly signs.²²⁹

Other dates about mid-November can work when Virgo is in the east at dawn. The crescent moon is below Virgo’s feet, with the concave portion up.

Venus is in almost the same place in the sky at the same time every eight years. Other days that narrowly fit the above picture are in approximately three-year intervals. Upcoming dates where the picture approximately matches the proposed conditions: December 10, 2023;

November 08, 2026; November 15, 2028*; November 14, 2031; December 11, 2031; November 16-17, 2036**; November 26, 2095*, November 28, 2103*. Asterisked dates match the closest.

If this date is correct, the two witnesses' ministry starts on June 2, 2033 (Pentecost Sunday is June 5, 2033). The sudden change in the seasons with the pole shift brings Passover near shortly after they die.

The second date best fit, November 15, 2028, has several minor problems. The Leonid meteor storm peak comes on November 16, 17, and 18. Hence, the November 15 date is early if the Leonid meteor shower plays a part in this sign. The leap day in 2028 partially obviates this, making November 15 equivalent to November 16 the previous year. The Leonid meteor shower peak comes about every 33 or 34 years and spreads over five years. The last one spread from 1998–2002, so 2028 is about four years early for the typical maximum event.

A good match for the Leonid meteor storm return, 2036, is 34 years after 2002. In 2036 the moon is a thin crescent and more “under the feet” of Virgo. Mercury, representing Lucifer, isn't in the sky. Finally, Venus is just beyond the hips of Virgo. When a baby's head passes the hips, its birth proceeds rapidly.

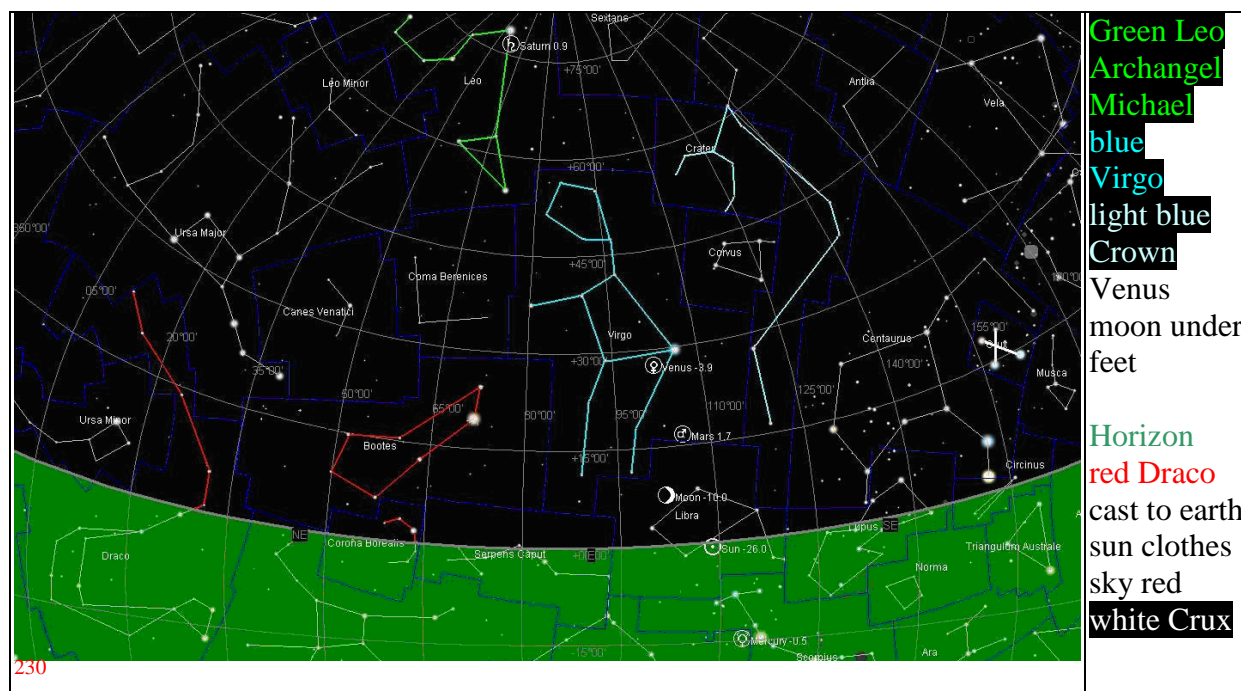


Figure 54: Draco cast down, and Crux rises

The sky on November 17, 2036, just before dawn from Jerusalem, moved almost to the equator. Jerusalem will move beyond the equator. We determine this because the Nile river stops flowing, indicating a rise in the elevation of northern Egypt (Isaiah 19:5; Ezekiel 30:12; Zechariah 10:11). Jerusalem is the highest of the mountains (Isaiah 2:2; Micah 4:1). This occurs when Jerusalem is elevated as it moves south of the equator.²³¹

The picture shows the dragon cast to the earth. Jerusalem has moved 26 degrees south, so it's now five degrees above the equator. The figure is the same as Figure 51 but viewed from further south. The stars disappear into the earth as if a scroll was being rolled up. The stars appear to fall; Satan's tail drags a third of them as he falls to earth.

The sign of the Cross

As Draco drops below the horizon from Jerusalem, the Southern Cross [Crux] rises. A heavenly sign reminding Israel and the world of Jesus' cross. They likely won't see Crux immediately because of the pole shift's smoke and ash. A two-year+ nuclear winter will likely

result. By day, the sun represents Jesus; by night, the constellation Crux represents Him. After Hezekiah's pole shift, they didn't plant crops for two years.

Jesus said:

Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. (Matthew 24:29–30)

Before Jesus, the Son of Man, comes, His cross sign appears in the sky, and all nations will mourn. Crux “consists of four bright stars placed in the form of a cross. It sits in the darkest section of the heavens ... [it's] by far, the most conspicuous star group in the southern heavens.”²³² Four in Scripture means universal, worldwide,²³³ or catholic. Crux is the only four-star constellation. God centered Crux in the Milky Way; it appears in heaven's clouds. The clouds of heaven are the Milky Way, visible from February until October, so Jesus' return may occur during this period. A new moon would maximize visibility.

Revelation links summary

How can one use this *key* to unlock the order of the book of Revelation? There are many lists of events in the Book of Revelation, but it isn't apparent how the lists relate to each other. Revelation lists these events but doesn't link them; it lists the events under different signs. The signs are seals, trumpets, bowls, and thunders. One *seals* official documents—opening a seal reveals what officially takes place. *Trumpets* sound commands, warnings, and the passing of hours. *Bowls* catch and pour sacrificial blood.

The two witnesses preach and inflict signs/plagues on mankind. Then there is a great sign in the heavens. Third, what looks like a blazing mountain strikes the sea. (This blazing mountain breaks apart as it comes in, and the meteorites strike worldwide, causing great havoc). The asteroid strike causes the north and south poles to move.

Great rifts open in the ocean's bed and cause colossal worldwide tsunamis. Mantle flows from the rifts, generating many volcanoes. A third of the ocean dies, destroying a third of the ships (Revelations 8:9).

Dense smoke circulates worldwide, blackening the sky. Asteroids continue to hit the earth. Many hit land (probably the northern hemisphere) as the earth rotates. They probably destroy many satellites. This series of strikes will be much like Comet Shoemaker-Levy comet striking Jupiter. On July 16–22, 1994, twenty-one comet Shoemaker-Levy 9 pieces collided with Jupiter. The pieces ranged up to 2 km in diameter and hit at 60 km/sec (37 miles/sec).

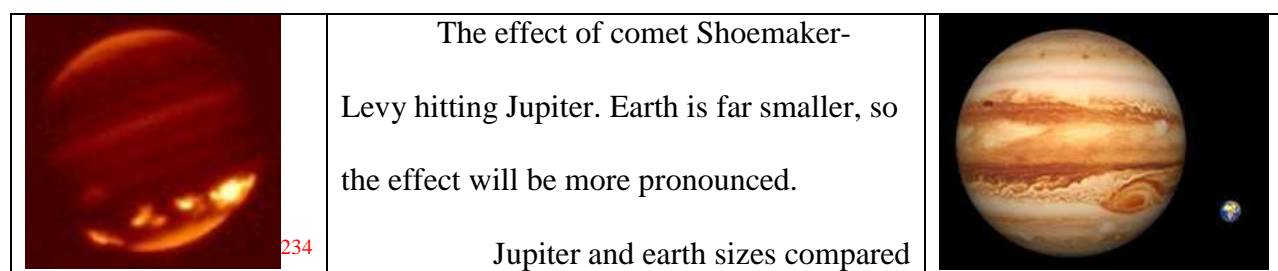


Figure 55: Effect of a comet hitting Jupiter

The effects of the comet strike on Jupiter are as large as or larger than the earth, so we expect a worldwide cataclysm.

The initial effects of the shift happen within a few hours. Though these events are dispersed throughout Revelations, the shift links the different sequences into one continuous sequence. As Jerusalem is stretched, it splits into three sections (Revelation 17:19).

Note: several asteroids hit the earth. The first one is the one described above hits the sea while another strikes the earth. This asteroid may strike and increase the earth's rotational velocity. Increasing the spin rate causes problems similar to the poles shifting.

Opening the seals on a document causes the first set of disastrous events. By opening the seals, God decrees the events. Several decreed events occur directly because of the sign of the fall of Satan. The opening of the seals isn't the events happening but the certainty of the events

happening as decreed. The second set of events is the trumpets—trumpets warn and command.

Timing our Lord's return

Many believe that we can't estimate the time of Jesus' return. Jesus said, "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour" (Matthew 25:13). This sign isn't the return of our Lord, so we may be able to date it. Jesus told His disciples to keep watch for His return. His first return occurred at His resurrection.

Passover organized Jesus' life and ministry, which likely links to His return. Each Passover lasted over a week and could be according to the solar or lunar-solar calendar. The Passover could occur the month before or after the standard Passover. Up to six Passovers could occur per year. Even if you know the year of the Lord's return, the day will still be unknown.²³⁵ Not knowing the day or hour doesn't eliminate knowing the year and season.

For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. *But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief.* (1 Thessalonians 5:2–4 emphasis added)

As it was in Noah's time (Matthew 24:37), Noah knew the flood was coming for a hundred and twenty years. He prepared. "Remember, then, what you received and heard. Keep it, and repent. If you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come against you" (Revelation 3:3).

When these signs were unveiled, Satan could determine the probable date of this event. The Leonid meteor shower has only been around since 1833. The comet generating the Leonids comes back every 33.17 years. The last pass was in February 1998, resulting in significant activity for the following five years.

No rapture snatches the Church from the danger. If the Church is removed during the

tribulation, it is done by persecution, not rapture.

The earthquake in Revelation 11:13 that destroys 10% of Jerusalem and kills 7000 people probably coincides with this pole shift. If so, the period of prophetic witness of these two prophets starts 1260+3.5 days earlier (Revelation 11:3, 11, 13). If correct, they start their witness on June 2, A.D. 2033. This occurs shortly after the Ascension. (Easter is April 17, 2033).

This event precedes the pole shift (Revelation 11:9); because every eye will gaze on their dead bodies. The shift destroys infrastructure. It will take decades to recover, making it difficult for every eye to gaze on their dead bodies, even with cell phones.

Summary

The two prophets afflict the earth with every plague (Revelation 11:6); before the pole shift for 1260 days. The beast from the bottomless pit kills them, and their bodies lie unburied for 3.5 days.

Then two great signs occur. Virgo, pregnant with Venus, gives birth to the sun. Satan's sign [Draco, Bootes, Corona, and Hercules] is cast to earth.

There will be a great sign before dawn in Jerusalem on a November-December morning while the moon wanes in Virgo. An asteroid will strike, likely the ocean. Michael casts Satan from heaven, and he falls to earth. This asteroid causes the North Pole to shift approximately 40 degrees south to the Pacific south of Alaska over the next hour. Cataclysmic devastation and change a 'new' earth.

After the war with Michael (Leo), he casts Satan to the earth. The sun suddenly rises, indicating Jesus Christ's birth. Satan is cast down when the North Pole moves quickly south of Alaska.

The Southern Cross rises, and all will mourn Jesus. The earth's crust will be stretched and compressed in various places. These changes will result in mountains and islands moving

and disappearing and others appearing in various places. Destruction will be Biblical. Hundreds of millions of people will die. Immense suffering follows.

This shift occurs rapidly. The destruction is severe. All will suffer from Satan ruling earth (Revelation 12:12) and controlling the armies. He exercises great power for at least 1260 days.

The pole shift and links many signs. Stars moving like a scroll, worldwide catastrophic earthquakes, tsunamis, islands disappearing, mountains moving, mountains cast into the sea, the sun looking like sackcloth, etc. Everything is disrupted: fuel, food, medicine, etc., from production through delivery. Buildings, bridges, etc., fall, rivers find new routes, and melting poles cause massive floods. The weather likely will be cold and dark for years. When the smoke clears, everyone can observe the nighttime skies.

The persecuted church (the woman's other offspring) will escape. Satan attacks with water, but they escape as Israel did at the Red Sea.

I "guess" the signs happen Monday, November 17, 2036. The number of days per year may change. Unless those days were shortened, no one would be left alive (Matthew 24:21–22).

"The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law" (Deuteronomy 29:29).

For those who believe that the Church can't be linked with Israel, remember that the Church was a mystery in the Old Testament.

For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles— assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you, how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. This mystery is that the *Gentiles are fellow heirs*, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. (Ephesians 3:1-6 emphasis added)

Israel, scattered since c. 712 B.C., has intermarried with the gentiles. Christ gathers all

nations into the kingdom. Christ's worldwide kingdom is the Catholic Church.

Tectonic plate boundaries near Israel will shift, become broader valleys, sink into the sea, become higher mountains, etc. One plate boundary follows the Gulf of Aqaba through the Dead Sea and the Jordan River. Another plate boundary goes through the Red Sea up to the Mediterranean Sea. The Dead Sea and the Jordan Valley will likely connect with the Red Sea and the ocean. The sea will flood these low-lying locations. After this area passes south of the equator, the land will rise from the sea.

Satan issues a flood from his mouth—maybe the Sea of Galilee cascades south, or the Red Sea flows north? Since the woman escapes, this is similar to the Red Sea crossing.

A river will flow from the Temple, emptying into the east and west seas. So the Jordan River and the Dead Sea empty into the sea.

Jerusalem is the highest mountain means two things. Jerusalem on earth will be a high mountain. Heavenly Jerusalem will be in the sky.²³⁶

What happens in the end?

The sun shall be no more
your light by day,
nor for brightness shall the moon
give you light; but the LORD will be your everlasting light,
and your God will be your glory.
Your sun shall no more go down, nor your moon withdraw itself;
for the LORD will be your everlasting light,
and your days of mourning shall be ended. (Isaiah 60:19–20)

In the new heavens, likely the sun and moon don't shine. But they are still there. The LORD is our light.

Chapter 13

Conclusion: the signs' glory

How many times has our LORD surprised you? He's creative and diverse. God made the heavenly lights to mark time and for signs. With them, He tells how Jesus and Mary saved the world. Signs depict God's glory, are precisely timed, and many are ordinary miracles we can witness from afar. He darkened the sun and turned the moon to blood at Jesus' birth and death. The sun and moon worshiped Jesus. Jesus joined God's family and inaugurated our calendar Sunday, January 1, A.D. 1. Every A.D. or B.C. date testifies to Jesus. These signs are God's testimony that He is the Messiah.

Jesus revealed Venus is His star, the bright morning star. The wise men came to worship Christ because they saw a great sign when Venus heliacally rose on August 24, 2 B.C. The Lion of Judah received His golden scepter. The vertical line of planets was low, barely visible, and golden. The stars bowed to worship Jesus. God announced this in Genesis 49:9–10; Numbers 24:9, 17; Psalm 110:1–3; Matthew 2:1–12; Luke 1:78–79; etc.; 19 months later, His star again

rose to mark the sign of the slain lamb and then led west up a road. While the wise men moved toward the star, it waited over His house on Passover evening.

The wise men saw Heaven's great signs Esther prophesized. The king conceived then the lion king extended His golden scepter to Queen Esther. He gave her authority to intercede anytime, revealing Mary's person, work, and mission. Esther, Mordecai, Haman, and the king are planet names, and Ahasuerus (pictured by Leo) means lion king.

The nations beheld these signs. Babylon watched Venus rise and set because God coordinated significant events to those times. The Aztecs knew their calendar and civilization would end. Another would rise when Venus and the moon set on the winter solstice. God hides His signs from the wicked and adulterous (Matthew 16:1–4). When Jesus returned to the Baptist, His star revealed the Holy Spirit remained on Him. Satan hadn't overcome Him in the desert.

As Jesus promised, the evening before His first miracle, God painted a great sign picturing Jesus' ministry. Jesus vowed soon you'll see heaven opened, and angels ascend and descend on the son of man. He recalled Jacob's dream of angels ascending and descending a ladder to heaven. The nations saw the signs the Baptist described but didn't understand them. Jesus, the crucified Lamb of God, would open the highway²³⁷ to heaven. Like Jacob, He came to His kin for a bride.

There were many other heavenly signs associated with Jesus. Finally, He ascended home on another heavenly highway. Like Tobit, He arrived home first.

Jesus signed His initials in the sky, saying I'm the Christ and God, and it's time for the empire to recognize it. God enabled an underground persecuted Church enough peace, unity, and time to purge heretical teachings threatening to undermine its unity. The sign confirms the Church Jesus established didn't apostatize but rather He remained with it.

Twelve centuries later, a sign in heaven linked to Revelation 12:1–2 converted Mexico. On the winter solstice, His star set with the sun and moon. Our Lady of Guadalupe's appearance transformed the Aztec civilization and brought Catholic civilization to all in Mexico. Mary freed the slaves of the god of this world at the appointed time, and by the millions, they joined God's family.

Some signs in heaven transform the earth. Civilizations collapse, wild climate variations, and extinctions result. There were several major earth-shaping events after the flood. Knowing what has happened helps prepare us for the future. If a pole shift is horrible, Satan's rule is worse.

Signs reveal the story, the beauty, clarity, glory, power, simplicity, and creativity of God's work. God made connect-the-dots-pictures in the sky; everyone could see and interpret. If you controlled the planets' motion, could you tell a story with one star? Could you make dynamic, colorful, and beautiful signs? Can you draw pictures with four or five stars that reveal your creativity and glory precisely timed to Jesus' ministry? Can you time many witnessing events?

The signs visible worldwide reveal

Stories—the signs tell stories that reveal Jesus' and Mary's²³⁸ person, work, and mission.

Beauty—dynamic, colorful, informative, intelligible snapshots visible at dawn or sunset.

Clarity—launched an epic quest for the divine eternal Christ king. They convert the nations.

Glory—God's glory is revealed as the heavens bow in worship to Jesus, the brightest dawn.

Simplicity—He told His story compactly with the lights in the sky, primarily with up to five planets. Sometimes, He needed only one star to tell His story.

Changes—sometimes, everyone needs to start over in a new heaven and a new earth.

Creativity—depicts the divine king conceived; Mary authorized to intercede for the nations. The adversary was executed, and the head over the king's house rules. His signs burst with meaning.

Dynamic—guided to Jesus, way to heaven opened, angels up and down, scepter extended, etc.

He paired—a darkened sun and blood moon at the hour of His birth and death. A heavenly highway began and ended His ministry and witnessed God's deliberate plan.

Precisely timed—His conception, birth, ministry, arrest, death, resurrection, and John's birth. Signs support Jesus, confirm His Church and sustain it against the competition.

Connected—Signs link Jesus' life to Scripture, expanding His gospel.

Answers

Who—Christ received a scepter to rule the nations, the sacrificial lamb, the way. Mary could intercede anytime: Esther, Our Lady of Guadalupe. Jesus' highway was for YHWH, and the heavenly lights worshipped Him. These signs reach our age to challenge and convince us.

What—God's signs—His thoughts—Passover lamb—selected, inspected, revealed, to be sacrificed on the cross, open a straight highway in the wilderness to heaven where He dwells.

When—God darkened the sun and turned the moon to blood at the hour of Jesus' birth, Christmas, and death, Good Friday. On Passover, His star led them to the Lamb. Inaugurating and ending Jesus' mission, God revealed it to our world and demonstrated His timing.

Where—in the sky visible to all nations. It led to Jesus' house in Bethlehem and to building a house on Tepeyac. It led to Calvary. God revealed His star in three gospels.

How—the motion of the sun, earth, moon, planets, and stars told His story with beautiful, simple pictures, transcending time, language, and culture. The Bible reveals and interprets them.

Why—to reveal Jesus and Mary, evangelize the nations, and open our way to heaven.

Control—arrogant man assumes he is in control until God gives a sign. We live, giving no thought to God until He makes our every thought about how much we need His help.

The result—God’s signs converted continents; renewed peoples and religions. He removed the corrupt and established order. God’s stories challenge the skeptic. Science witnesses to miraculous signs we can view today from afar. The Catholic Church is still one, true, and holy after Constantine and the Protestant Reformation. God tells us what will happen.

The signs uniquely identified Jesus as God’s selection when the wise men arrived at His house. It has taken two millennia to determine how God led the wise men as only the Creator could. Today we can re-watch these sign pictures on our devices. Why do kings have golden scepters? Why do lions have manes? So God’s signs were intelligible to all nations.

God hides His glory to give us the joy of discovery, so we draw near to know Him.

How could Jesus be called the light if He didn’t glow in the dark? If we remember Genesis 1, lights were also signs. John calls Jesus’ miracles signs. Jesus’ did His works primarily during the day when additional light was unnecessary. His every act was a sign.

Two precisely timed signs in the sky after Jesus’ ascension confirmed the Roman Catholic Church’s primacy. In the first, Christianity came out of hiding, and that persecution ended. After the start of the Protestant Revolt, the second confirmed the truth of the Roman Catholic doctrine. Mary isn’t a distraction but an essential key to His plan.

God’s not finished. New signs and details continue to be discovered. Notice God paints beautiful sunrises, sunsets, clouds, and stars for our enjoyment.

How Great Thou Art! Come, Lord Jesus!

Appendix A: Star of Bethlehem theory problems

The star of Bethlehem is the most famous sign in the heavens, so many seek to explain it. Each theorist has their own biases and markets to a particular audience. Skeptics write for a cynical or astrological view, and the Bible believer to those with a Biblical view. Since many find no clear natural view, a supernatural explanation. These theories don't grow our knowledge or understanding of God. They don't lead us to understand God's signs, and they don't reveal His glory.

Every theory must answer why a star in the east led the wise men to seek a baby king in Jerusalem. They must also explain how a star could wait over baby Jesus. See Appendix F: Thirty questions any star theory should answer, p. 174.

Many conclude we'll never be sure what the star of Bethlehem was. Astronomers haven't found a convincing star. Biblical scholars haven't made a persuasive proposal either. Many contend we can't know when He was born. The information is contradictory and incomplete.

The most popular Bethlehem's star theories identify it with a series of planetary conjunctions²³⁹ with each other or with a star. Every few years, another conjunction occurs, and more broken star of Bethlehem theories appear. All Bible references to the star of Bethlehem refer to a single star. Some recognize this problem and identify it with a single star, often Jupiter or Regulus. So a star in conjunction with or occulting a star. Their risings aren't heliacal.

Many proposed when Jupiter went retrograde, it stopped over Bethlehem, as seen from Jerusalem. They uncritically accept a broken explanation. King Herod sent them to Bethlehem. They didn't need any sign to go there. They needed help in Bethlehem to find the child. Jesus, like Moses, was hidden; both were born during a murderous king's reign.

These theories teach us nothing about God and evoke no awe. God controls the brightness and period of the planets and the fixed stars. He manages terrestrial and solar weather.

Many theories depend on astrology, against which the Bible warns.

Star interpretations frequently include Revelation 12, where a heavenly woman gives birth to a son. It's a logical reference to birth. Many try to link Jesus to Israel's fall festivals. The woman clothed with the sun happens every year, and John couldn't refer to a Rosh Hashanah date (September) because one can't see the woman; it's daytime. This woman's sun clothing refers to a time *before* sunrise, but the glow of dawn colors the constellation. If you can't see the woman, it isn't a woman. John prophesied this sign long after Jesus left; the wise men didn't use it to interpret His birth.

Ernest L. Martin, Ph.D., a meteorologist, wrote *The Star that Astonished the World*,²⁴⁰ Second ed. (1996). He presents a series of nine conjunctions. The most significant was Jupiter and Venus on June 17, 2 B.C. This conjunction is a staple of the star of Bethlehem theories, but it has several problems. The sign was high in the western evening sky, not the morning heliacal rising event. The wise men said we saw his star as it rose in the east. He also notes the triple conjunction of Jupiter with the brightest star in Leo called Regulus.

Michael R. Molnar, an astronomer, wrote *The Star of Bethlehem: Legacy of the Magi*, (1999). He said the magi didn't see Jupiter as it rose but calculated it because the moon occulted it. Matthew says the magi "saw" his star rise. They couldn't see an occulted star.

He proposes the wise men interpreted his Roman astrological sign. The wise men came from the east, outside the Roman Empire. Molnar has a long section on interpreting Roman horoscopes, not something the LORD condones. Jupiter is the largest planet but not the brightest or most important one to the ancients.

Fredrick Larson JD, an attorney, presented the most widely accepted theory. In his excellent video, *The Star of Bethlehem: Unlocking the mystery of the world's most famous*

star,²⁴¹ (2007), he expertly “sells” his theory and omits its problems. It’s a Hollywood version of Martin’s theory. He identifies it as Jupiter, the king star noting it is the largest planet. It is the second brightest, and the ancients considered Venus the most important.

There are phases to his theory. The Jewish king was identified in Jupiter’s months-long shallow loop, near Regulus, the king star in Leo. It doesn’t “crown” Regulus but makes a slow, shallow off-centered oval near it. Jupiter from earth appears to loop like a Spirograph drawing in the sky. See Figure 56, p. 160, and Figure 57, p. 160. The wise men saw His star rise at a point in time, not nearly a yearlong wait (while Jupiter passed reversed, passed reversed, and passed again).

He used Martin’s close conjunction of Venus and Jupiter to indicate Jesus’ conception. He claims it was the brightest star anyone had ever seen. Venus’ daytime visibility near its inferior conjunction is brighter than Venus and Jupiter at that time together. They saw it rise in the east, but this sign was in the west.

He saw a link between the woman in Revelation 12 giving birth. He doesn’t mention this happens each year, and you can’t see it because it was daytime. He could use a similar event a few months later when Virgo was visible in the sky before sunrise. But it doesn’t fit his timeline.

The star guided the wise men to Bethlehem on December 25, two months after meeting King Herod. Why wait, since Jesus was easy to find in Bethlehem? Why did they need the star once they learned where Jesus was born?

Jupiter’s stopping, he mentions, happens twice a year. See Figure 57, p. 160. It happened twice, “crowning Regulus.” If Jupiter was His star, shouldn’t Regulus crown Jupiter not vice versa? If finding Jesus was easy, why kill all the boys? To protect her baby, some mother would point out Jesus. It wasn’t easy because Mary hid Jesus. He left the cave and disappeared.

One can't visually determine when Jupiter in retrograde stops. It didn't wait *over* Bethlehem because the sky always moves. When and how during the night do you follow the star? How far south do you go? Do you stumble in the dark or wait for dawn? Either way, it doesn't wait for the magi.

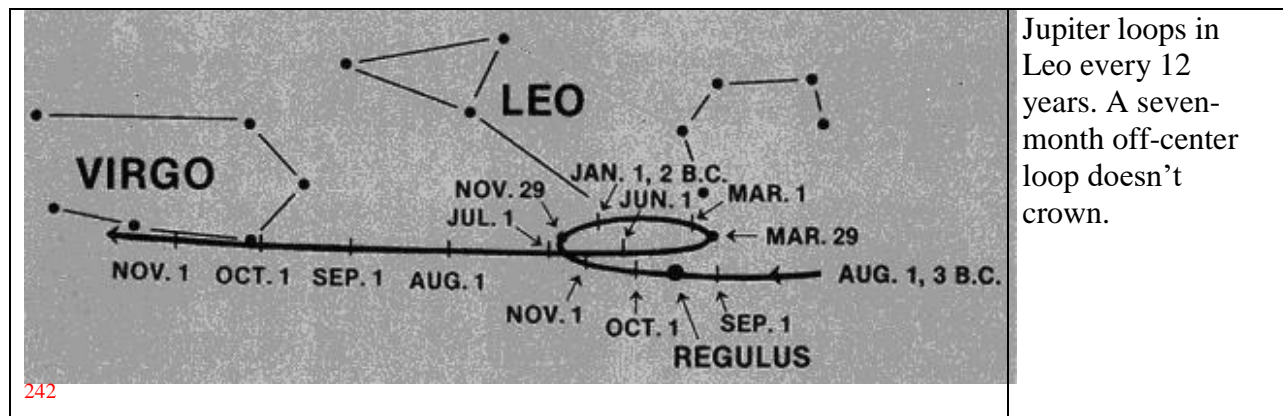


Figure 56: Jupiter “crowns” Regulus

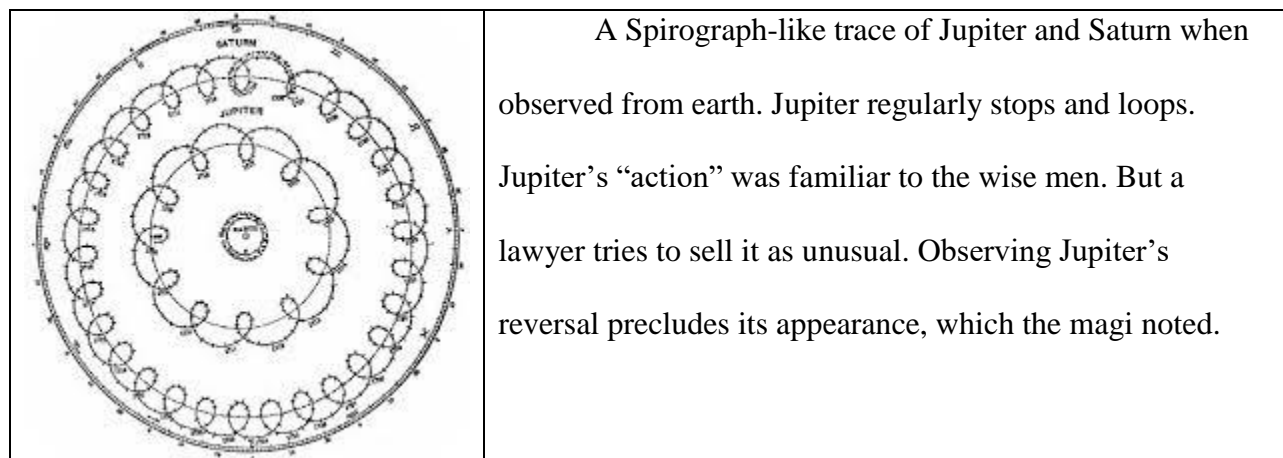


Figure 57: Motion of Jupiter and Saturn as viewed from Earth

Jupiter “crowns” one star and then stops in its retrograde motion over Bethlehem. If Regulus means king, why does it need to be crowned? Jupiter ‘crowns’ many stars with his logic, and this retrograde motion indicates many or no locations. Jupiter “crowns” Regulus about every 83 years.

Colin R. Nicholl, Ph.D., a biblical scholar and former Cambridge teacher, wrote *The Great Christ Comet: Revealing the True Star of Bethlehem*, (Wheaton: Crossway, 2015). He

proposes it was the most extraordinary comet. A comet so great the tail reached from horizon to horizon, visible for months and in the daytime. The ancients recorded many lesser comets but failed to record this one, and it hasn't returned. The comet was too spectacular; his presentation is implausible.

His entire theory is conjecture, with no observational support especially considering the comet's greatness. He suggests that the comet guided south from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, and the comet's tail pointed to Jesus' house. He proposes that the comet looked like a scepter and was in the night sky between 8 and 6 B.C. He offers an exact time, but we learn nothing about the timing of this star's first or second appearance because it is conjecture. His comet was too early. Jesus' died in 33 A.D. Why did the nations ignore a great comet? He slowly reveals this comet, so one doesn't realize how incredibly great it was.

An Angel or a Miracle— Biblical scholars know astronomers haven't found any reasonable star. Therefore, many biblical scholars (Scott Hahn, Jimmy Akin, Aquinas, etc.) believe it was a miraculous star or an angel (occasionally called stars). Matthew carefully differentiates between angels and stars. He called the star of Bethlehem a star. Today we live when airplanes and helicopters regularly fly overhead. God could have done this, but why say a star guided them rather than an angel? Can an angel heliacally rise, maybe, but predictably? How would the wise men know when to arrive to be ready to see it happen the second time? If it was an angel, wouldn't it lead directly to Bethlehem? Since God made the sun, moon, and stars for signs, why not something notable for Jesus?

If an angel guided the wise men, Satan could reproduce it as an angel of light to deceive. If an angel led the wise men to Jesus, why didn't the nearby shepherds follow as well? They already saw an angel once. Where was Joseph when the wise men visited? We lose the heavenly

speech giving glory to God with an angel; the stars can't do the job.

Most (or all?) with this view don't know Venus's unique attributes to guide the wise men. God used the lights He set in the sky to guide them.

Would the Designer use an angel when He could use Venus? If an angel guided the wise men, why didn't many curious people follow, and a crowd arrived at the house of Mary and Jesus?

God created planets for signs. God used a planet so we can know the year, the day of the year, the time between the star's first and second rise, the time between Jesus' birth, and the second rise. We know the location of the house of Jesus, David, and Boaz millennia after they died.²⁴³ Venus' timing allows us to find other signs during Jesus' life. All these things would be impossible with an angel guiding the wise men. We wouldn't discover the heavens bowing to worship Jesus.

Why did the magi go to Jerusalem if they followed an angel? Which is more convincing a star led them or a helicopter led them? How did they know the heliacal rise was the same star/angel?

Why did Jesus say, "I am the bright morning star?" At the end of His unveiling, He said it to help us link it to what the wise men called his star.

Nazareth or Bethlehem?

Some say the wise men found Jesus in Nazareth. They infer this because Luke 2:39 says, "When Joseph and Mary had done everything the law required, they returned to Galilee to their town of Nazareth." They returned to Nazareth at least forty days later because they presented Jesus at the Temple then.

Those holding this view forget the law, "The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers; you must listen to him" (Deuteronomy 18:15).

Since Jesus was like Moses, He was similar to Moses. Both were born under foreign rule, and a murderous king threatened their lives for three months. Moses fled from Goshen to Egypt to save his life when he was three months old; Jesus escaped from Judah to Egypt when He was three months old to save His life. In both cases, other boys died.

Moses left Egypt suddenly at midnight on Passover. Jesus left for Egypt at midnight on Passover. After the king and all who sought the child's life died, both returned to their home country. Matthew 2:15 quotes Hosea 11:1, referring to Exodus 4:22 Out of Egypt I have called my son. Jesus fulfilled this by returning from Egypt. Jesus had more requirements to be like Moses before they returned to Nazareth. After returning from Egypt, they returned to Nazareth.

If the wise men followed a star from Jerusalem to Nazareth, it would take at least three days and attract attention as they traveled much of the country's length. Many would see them and the star, and a curious crowd would accompany them to Jesus' house. The Christ would then be revealed early. Herod would know to look for Christ in Galilee, not Bethlehem.

When the Holy Family returned from Egypt, they intended to remain in Bethlehem. Their fear of Archelaus and direction in a dream caused them to settle in Nazareth (in Herod Antipas' territory). If hidden in Nazareth, why the need to flee to Egypt?

Why did the Holy Family remain in Bethlehem?

Why did the Holy Family stay in Bethlehem after Jesus' birth? They didn't want King Herod to kill Jesus. He needed to hide. Without a baby, it took about a week to walk to Nazareth. The frequent need to nurse slows travel with a newborn. A newborn is delicate, and they wouldn't want to hurt Jesus. They needed to go to the Temple for Jesus' presentation when He was forty days old. They again need to be in Jerusalem for Passover seven weeks later. They avoided four weeks of travel and the increased risk of injuring Jesus by remaining in Bethlehem. Only after they returned from Egypt did the fear of Archelaus cause them to return to Nazareth.

So they planned to resettle in Bethlehem, where they owned hereditary property with a house.

Appendix B: Census of Quirinius

“In those days, a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled. This was the first enrollment when Quirinius was governor of Syria” (Luke 2:1–2). Joseph and Mary journeyed to Bethlehem because of this decree. This decree’s timing and Quirinius leading it have been much discussed but without consensus on the date. Because of the timing, many doubt it even occurred. King Herod died no later than 1 A.D., and Quirinius governed Syria in 6 A.D. There is no evidence Quirinius was Syria’s legate earlier.

Tacitus mentions Augustus Caesar ordered Quirinius to be Gaius’ rector [tutor] in 1 B.C. Gaius Caesar was Augustus’ grandson and intended successor. He was to administer Syria as the Legate (a military governor). Gaius’ mission was to visit the eastern provinces and learn about government. Gaius left Rome on January 29, 1 B.C.

Quirinius had been the Legate of Galatia and Cilicia (territories near Syria). So in 1 B.C., Quirinius trained Gaius to be the Legate of Syria. Near the beginning of the training, Quirinius governed but wasn’t the governor. Luke (2:2) says he ‘governed;’ ESV-CE translates as ‘was governor.’ Luke describes Pontius Pilate similarly (Luke 3:1). Gaius died in 3 A.D. after a battle with the Parthians.²⁴⁴

Since Quirinius trained Gaius to rule the region, in a sense, both governed. Herod’s kingdom was a part of Roman Syria. So Quirinius and Gaius governed Syria, with Quirinius as the master and governor Gaius, the apprentice. Luke is Scripture; Mary was his source, and she lived through the events. He mentions this was the first census, so he knew of at least one more, the 6 A.D. one. This insight allows us to reconcile Herod’s death in early 1 A.D. and Quirinius’ census in late 1 B.C.

Maybe Augustus instructed Gaius to conduct a census to become familiar with Syria’s

population and then made that census empire-wide? Gaius could reach Syria in March 1 B.C. This relation means Jesus' birth could be no earlier than the Spring of 1 B.C. The rest of the year was spent organizing, announcing, and executing that task. The following year, Gaius made peace with Phraataces bringing a brief peace between Rome and the Parthia. Gaius may have focused on military affairs and left civil affairs like a census to Quirinius.

Connecting King Herod's death to Passover

Josephus, a Jewish priest, general, and historian, writing c. 90 A.D., recorded a lunar eclipse shortly before King Herod's death. It occurred ninety years earlier, was interpreted as a sign,²⁴⁵ and is key to dating Herod's death. The correct eclipse was December 29, 1 B.C. The lunar eclipses of March 13, 4 B.C., and January 10, 1 B.C., were only visible in the middle of the night when few would see them. Their significance as a sign or omen would be slight.

The standard lunar eclipse theory before King Herod died came from Whiston's Josephus translation. He specified the eclipse on March 13, 4 B.C., a date Kepler calculated before accurately knowing the moon's position. From the star of Bethlehem, we learn Herod slew the babes of Bethlehem on Passover. Therefore, King Herod died after Passover 1 A.D.

One can celebrate Passover a month later if unclean or traveling (Numbers 9:10–13). In Herod's last months, God afflicted him with unclean sores, so I infer he delayed celebrating Passover. Josephus' source here appears to be King Herod's biographer. It focused on the king and his family rather than on national events. Herod's illness meant Venus could rise on Passover. Yet, Herod died before he celebrated Passover the same year. The wise men visited Jesus on Passover, but Herod, according to Josephus, died sometime before Passover.²⁴⁶

Herod was alive after Bethlehem's star rose because he had Bethlehem's babes slaughtered (Matthew 2:10–18) but died shortly after that. Therefore, Herod planned to celebrate Passover in the second month. Since Josephus isn't Scripture and wasn't an eyewitness, he

misunderstood a ninety-year-old biography.

The plagues link Pharaoh to Herod. Moses turned the Nile to blood. A bloody stream flowed from Jerusalem from the quarter-million lambs sacrificed at Passover. The third plague on Egypt was lice (or gnats Exodus 8:16). King Herod had lice.²⁴⁷ Many plagues didn't come on Israel, and these events happened in Israel, so they were skipped. The lice were in pockets under Herod's skin like boils; when lanced lice came out, the sixth plague was boils (Exodus 9:9–11).²⁴⁸ The ninth plague was three days of darkness—and there was the winter solstice darkness.

Pharaoh commanded to kill the Israelite boys because they threatened his dynasty. Herod murdered Bethlehem's boys because Christ threatened his legacy.

After the eclipse, Herod fell ill; with pain so intense, he attempted to kill himself. A servant prevented it, but a loud cry was heard in Herod's palace. At the Exodus, there was a great cry in the king's palace (Exodus 12:30). Antipater II, the king's oldest son locked in a cell for fratricide and other wicked deeds, heard the wailing and assumed the king had died. He tried to bribe his guard to release him so he could make himself king. His act annoyed Herod, so he decided to execute his son, but he needed Caesar's permission.

Herod sent ambassadors in haste to Rome, but they could only quickly travel there when sea travel became safe, usually about mid-March. It took about two weeks for a fast military ship to journey between Rome and Judea. If they went by land and returned by sea, it is reasonable that the ambassadors would return at about Passover. Caesar said Herod could exile or execute his son, which gave Herod joy and buoyed his spirits.

The final plague was the firstborn's death (Exodus 12:29). King Herod killed his oldest son Antipater II five days before he died. A few weeks later, Caesar, "On hearing that the son of Herod, king of the Jews, had been slain when Herod ordered that all boys in Syria under the age

of two be killed, Augustus said, “It’s better to be Herod’s pig than his son.””²⁴⁹ Bethlehem was in the Syrian territory. The death of Antipater II occurred when Herod issued the command to kill the boys of Bethlehem. So Antipater, Herod’s firstborn son, died on Passover. His death matches the death of Pharaoh’s firstborn on Passover. King Herod died five days (inclusive count) after his firstborn son, four days after Passover.

Six things link Herod to Passover. His firstborn son died on the same day he executed Bethlehem’s babes. His death ties to Pharaoh’s son’s death and other firstborn sons on Passover. The river of blood, either the Nile or the blood from a quarter-million lambs. The plagues on his body link to the plagues in Egypt. Darkness in Egypt and Bethlehem. Ship travel was safe, so his ambassadors could return, and the Holy Family could flee. Finally, Herod died the same number of days after Passover as Pharaoh died at the Red Sea. Coincidence?

Herod’s sons’ coregencies

King Herod was about age 70 and sick, so he made some of his sons coregents. Rome recognized his end neared and assigned Quirinius, the tutor to the ruler of Syria, some oversight functions like doing the census. Rome needed to maintain order after a despotic ruler’s death in an area prone to revolt.

To many, Josephus’ lunar eclipse puts Jesus’ birth four or more years earlier. At the same time, the census places His birth about six or more years after it. Those arguing for the earlier date don’t successfully deal with the census date.

Appendix C: Timeline of heavenly events

(All dates are Julian)

| | | |
|-------------------------------|-----|---|
| Nov-Dec 1398 B.C. | | Joshua's long day |
| Spring 704 B.C. | | Hezekiah's return of the sun's shadow |
| August 13, 2 B.C. | Wed | Conception: sun, Venus, and Jupiter set |
| August 18, 2 B.C. | Sat | King's staff/scepter forms in Leo |
| August 23–24, 2 B.C. | | Venus marks the picture of a scepter in Leo |
| August 28, 2 B.C. | Thu | A golden scepter extended to Esther |
| April 7, 1 B.C. | Wed | Jesus conceived—Passover midnight |
| August 13, 1 B.C. | | John the Baptist born |
| December 25, 1 B.C. | Sun | Jesus born—Winter solstice |
| December 29, 1 B.C. | Thu | Jesus' due date—early evening blood moon |
| January 1, A.D. 1 | Sun | Jesus circumcised |
| February 2, A.D. 1 | Fri | Jesus presented in the Temple |
| March 22, A.D. 1 | Wed | Magi visit Herod in Jerusalem (Nisan 10) |
| March 27, A.D. 1 | Sun | Magi saw the star of Bethlehem Passover (Nisan 14). They followed it on Nisan 15 |
| April 22, A.D. 13 | | Jesus remained At Temple, Venus evening rise |
| August A.D. 30 | | John ordained and started baptizing |
| January 8, A.D. 31 evening | Mon | John baptized Jesus |
| February 27, A.D. 31 evening | Tue | Purim, Venus depicts the Spirit remains on Jesus |
| March 4, A.D. 31 evening | Sun | Picture—Ladder to Heaven—Lamb of God |
| March 31, A.D. 33 evening | Tue | Solar Passover Last Supper |
| April 1, A.D. 33 3:20AM | Wed | Satan's hour of darkness |
| April 3, A.D. 33 | Fri | Jesus' Crucifixion—moon turned to blood |
| April 4, A.D. 33 | Sat | Lunar Solar Passover Jesus in the tomb |
| April 5, A.D. 33 morning | Sun | Jesus' Resurrection |
| May 14, A.D. 33 evening | Thu | Jesus' Ascension—Ladder to return to heaven |
| October 27, A.D. 312 evening | | Constantine and his army see Jesus' initials the next day at the battle of Milvian Bridge |
| December 12, 1531A.D. morning | Tue | Mary's final appearance to Juan Diego—sun, moon, and Venus set, A new Aztec era |
| November 17, 2036A.D. morning | Tue | Two great signs in heaven, Virgo gives birth, and the great red dragon falls. |

Appendix D: Priestly courses date Jesus' birth

We can narrow Jesus' birth date with the Levitical priestly rotation cycle. David divided the priests into twenty-four groups called courses (1 Chronicles 24:1–31). Each group served for eight days switching at noon on the Sabbath. Dead Sea scroll records show priestly cycles continued to rotate.²⁵⁰ During the weeklong feasts, all the priests ministered.

We've two primary sources for dating these courses, the Dead Sea Scrolls and Josephus. The Dead Sea scrolls include a detailed seven-year calendar²⁵¹ that lists each course of priests' order and ascension to service and the moon phases. The rotation doesn't restart each year but is continuous. The priestly calendar in the Dead Sea Scrolls started in 42 B.C. and matched up to Josephus' date for the Temple's destruction in A.D. 70.²⁵²

The first priestly course Jehoiarib (1 Chronicles 24:7) or Joarib (1 Maccabees 2:1), had taken office when the temple burned on August 5, A.D. 70.²⁵³ Josephus and the Maccabees were members of this course. The previous Sabbath started on August 3, A.D. 70.

Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist, was a priest of Abijah's (Abia) order (Luke 1:5). He ministered as a priest as part of his course when the angel announced John's birth (Luke 1:8–17). Abijah is the eighth course of priests (1 Chronicles 24:10). One can determine the dates Zechariah served in his priestly course of Abijah.²⁵⁴ When John was ordained at age 30, he served in the same course.

We can track the courses' dates back through the years from 70 A.D. and include the earliest start of Elizabeth's sixth month and Mary's ninth month.²⁵⁵ Each cycle has 168 (24*7) days;²⁵⁶ we can date events. Elizabeth conceived after Zechariah's service. Priests remained clean during their week of service.

We know why John the Baptist didn't follow Jesus. He raced to Jerusalem to minister as

a priest when he sent John and Andrew after Jesus.

Appendix E: Planetary visibility

Ancient civilizations recorded Venus reappeared on day eight, but some deny they saw it today. Venus and the planets in these signs may be beyond the limit of visibility *today*. There's increased light pollution, moisture, and particles in the air. Many factors affect Venus' visibility; clouds, latitude, total extinction coefficient, the magnitude of Venus, the wise men's visual acuity, the elevation, the azimuth difference,²⁵⁷ and the number of particles in the air. Programs that determine planetary visibility at heliacal rising assume average clarity. Visibility isn't an exact science. The sun was closest, so brightest on January 3, most distant, and therefore dimmest on July 4, so on August 24, it was about 5% below maximum brightness.

The wise men viewed Venus under ideal conditions. God painted these pictures to be observed and made sure they were. God put the planets in their orbits before the world's foundation. He controlled the weather, atmosphere, and planets' visibility and didn't hide His lamp (Matthew 5:5).

"The calculation of visibility phenomena is plagued by uncertainties that will only be resolved by a body of reliable observations that does not yet exist."²⁵⁸ Besides extinction, three other factors affect visibility, light from earthbound sources (which dilutes light), the amount of moisture (which scatters light), and the number of particles (which absorb light). The wise men observed before light pollution. The humidity was minimal, and they were long before autos and contrails pumped moisture into the atmosphere. They lived long before industry increased air-born particulates.

God organized the sign; the brightest planets were closest to the horizon and seen. The planets had similar visibility because extinction reduces the lowest planets' brightness more. Mars was visible because the atmosphere absorbs red less.

Today astronomers assume a planet or star can't be seen until it rises about ten degrees above the horizon. This assumption helps indicate why they didn't find these signs.

Forbush decrease

God controlled solar/cosmic weather. The Forbush decrease refers to the reduction in cosmic rays due to the sun's activity. The decrease dramatically increases visibility because cosmic rays fill the atmosphere with particles. The particles nucleate water droplets. The Forbush decrease events occur sporadically with no apparent pattern and last for a few days. Esther and the king's golden scepter story demonstrates that God controls the daily visibility of these signs.

Appendix F: Thirty questions any star theory should answer

1. How did the star signal the *birth* of a child?
2. How did the star signal the birth of a *boy* (not a girl)? We saw “his” star at its rising.
3. How did the star signal that the birth was of a *king*?
4. How did the star signal the birth of a king *of the Jews*?
5. It *wasn't ambiguous*—why did the magi not ask “if” a king was born—but where is he?
6. The magi observed *his star* at its rising. How was he associated with the star?
7. They were believers; worship was for God alone. Why did the magi worship this king?
8. Why did God expect wise men to see and understand the star?
9. Why was the star (or sign) too *subtle* to be observed as it rose by most?
10. Why did the magi say they *saw* the star rather than calculated its rise?
11. The *same star* they saw in the east, they saw in the holy land—how did they know?
12. Why a *precise time* the star appeared, not over weeks or months?
13. How did the star disappear, and how did it appear a second time?
14. Why mention *only* “one” star if other stars were present?
15. What star had *two helical risings*, one in the east and the second in the holy land?
16. Why was the wise men’s star *explanation* convincing?
17. Why didn’t Herod have the wise men followed? Or did he have them tracked?
18. Herod was in Jerusalem. Would he have been there in the cold of winter?
19. Jesus was at least 40 days old when the magi visited him. Why didn’t He return to Nazareth?
20. How did a star *go before* and *stop* over where Jesus was?
21. How did they *single out* Jesus from the other boys of Bethlehem?
22. How did the *same* star that led the magi to Jerusalem from the east point out Jesus’ house?

23. Why did the wise men *rejoice* when they saw the star again?
24. Why no mention of Joseph when the wise men visited Jesus?
25. Could the Holy Family safely flee to Egypt by land? In what season did they escape?
26. How did the rising of the star tell so much of a story?
27. Why did the wise men need a star to guide them rather than people?
28. If the star was conspicuous like an angel, why didn't others follow with the wise men?
29. God made the stars for signs; why not use one for an important one?
30. Could Satan pretend to be the star?

Appendix G: Venus in the Bible

Venus references in the Bible is a vast and technical topic, which we'll only study briefly. This book doesn't exhaust this topic.

A great light²⁵⁹

God calls the sun and the moon great lights. If great lights are those we can see during the day, then Venus qualifies. The great light is associated with the nations. The countries can see Venus, and God communicates with them using it. He gave them incentives to track it.

The Greek Bible used *ANATOLE* for *TSAMACH* (Branch, Messiah) could explain why the wise men called Venus *His star* long before John wrote Revelation 22:16. Zechariah links darkness and the shadow of death. Shadows of darkness occur in morning and evening twilight. There are passages in the Old Testament that link the coming of a great light with the Messiah. Isaiah says,

But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,
on them has light shone.
For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Of the increase of his government and of peace
there will be no end,
on the throne of David and over his kingdom,
to establish it and to uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and forevermore.

The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this. (Isaiah 9:1–2, 6–7)

Matthew quotes Isaiah and links it to Jesus.

“The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned.” (Matthew 4:15–16 quoting Isaiah 9:1–2)

Zebulun and Naphtali are Israelite tribal territories near the Sea of Galilee, where Jesus ministered.²⁶⁰ This great light wasn’t the sun because it can be seen day and night, and it appears in several other Bible passages directly linked to Jesus.

Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” (John 8:12). And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts (2 Peter 1:19). Here the ESV-CE translates daystar as the morning star. So it’s the morning star, but more; it could shine in darkness (so it wasn’t the sun), appear at dawn, but it was a great light that could guide.

More Bible names for Venus

1. The morning star Psalm 110:3 *Septuagint* *HEOSPHOROS* morning bringer (or dawn bringer). In Hebrew, *MISHACHAR*, a difficult to translate word, occurs only once. *SHÂCHAR*, the root, is usually translated as dawn. It has the connotation of rising early and waiting for the light. It also connects to disaster, looking early and diligently watching and awaiting dawn.
2. The *Septuagint* also translates *SHÂCHAR* as *HEOSPHOROS* in Job 3:9; Job 38:12; Isaiah 14:12.²⁶¹ It means to break forth like the dawn. Here are all Hebrew verses: Job 7:21; Job 8:5; Job 24:5; Psalms 63:1; Psalms 78:34; Proverbs 1:28; Proverbs 7:15; Proverbs 8:17; Proverbs 11:27; Proverbs 13:24; Isaiah 26:9; Hosea 5:15.
3. The *Septuagint* also translates other words or phrases as *HEOSPHOROS*: *MEHANESEF* (morning twilight) 1 Samuel 30:17; *TAOOFAH CHABOKER* (shine forth as the morning) Job 11:17; *AFAFIM SAHAR* (eyelids of the morning) Job 41:18.
4. *TSAMACH* in the *Septuagint* is translated *ANATOLE*, meaning Dayspring in Zechariah 3:8; 6:12; and Jeremiah 23:5²⁶² (c.f. Luke 1:78). *TSAMACH* is a Messianic term, usually translated as Branch. It means ‘a shoot’ or ‘to rise.’ *ANATOLE* is the bright morning star.²⁶³ Zechariah reasonably knew this because he shared the author’s name.
5. The day-star *PHŌSPHOROS* Job 11:17 *Septuagint* “And brightness like that of the noonday, shall arise to thee at evening: and when thou shalt think thyself consumed, thou shalt rise as the *day star*.” Venus is the only heavenly body visible with the sun at noon.
6. The evening star *HESPEROS* (Job 38:32) “Canst thou bring forth the day star in its time, and make the *evening star* to rise upon the children of the earth?” (Job 9:9) Vespers comes from this root.

7. Ashtoreth (2 Kings 23:13) 1 Kings 11:5, 33; 1 Samuel 31:10; Deuteronomy 1:4.
8. Queen of Heaven Jeremiah 7:18 and tablet of Ammisaduqa, “bright Queen of Heaven.”
9. *NOGAH* (bright light) Modern Hebrew for Venus? Brightness 2 Samuel 22:13; 2 Samuel 23:4; Psalms 18:12; Proverbs 4:18; Isaiah 4:5; Isaiah 50:10; Isaiah 60:3, 19; Isaiah 62:1; Ezekiel 1:4, 13, 27–28; Ezekiel 10:4; Joel 2:10; Joel 3:15; Amos 5:20; Habakkuk 3:4, 11.

Appendix H: Revelation 12 constellations

This scene has at least nine constellations/signs of importance: Virgo, Draco, Bootes, Corona Borealis, Hercules, Crater, Hydra, Crux, and Leo.

Jesus—Sun (born), Venus (preborn), Crux (crucified)

Satan—Draco (tail), Mercury (Lucifer), Bootes (head), Corona Borealis (crown), and half of Hercules (horn).²⁶⁴

Archangel Michael—Leo and his angels—the Leonid meteor storm.

Virgin Mary—Virgo (her body), Crater, and half of Hydra (crown) are shaped as a mantle.

Angels—Stars and meteorites

| Star magnitude → ↓ Constellation | 1 st mag. | 2 nd mag. | 3 rd mag. | 4 th mag. | Reference in Capt ²⁶⁵ | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Virgo | 1 | 0 | 6 | 10 | p. 33 | Woman |
| Hydra | 0 | 1 | 3 | 12 | p. 133 | Woman's veil |
| Crater | 0 | 0 | 1* | 4* | p. 134 | Woman's crown |
| Corvus | 0 | 0 | 4 | 1 | p. 135 | Mary chair/throne? |
| Bootes | 1* | 0 | 6* | 11 | p. 39 | Dragon's seven heads |
| Corona | 0 | 1* | 0 | 6* | p. 48 | Dragon's seven crowns |
| Hercules | 0 | 0 | 7 | 17 | p. 55 | Part is Dragon's ten horns |
| Draco | 0 | 4 | 7 | 10 | p. 65 | Dragon's tail |
| Crux | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | p. 44 | Jesus' cross |
| Ursa Minor | 0 | 1 | 2 | 4 | p. 121 | Throne of God |
| Leo | 2 | 2 | 6 | 13 | p. 129 | Archangel Michael |
| Leonid's | | | | | | Michael's Angels |

*marks stars numbered as part of a sign

Appendix I: Sequencing Revelation's events

The Revelation 12 sign as a pole shift gives an order to the sequence of events in the book of Revelation.

1. **Revelation 7:2–3** Then I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, with the seal of the living God, and he called with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm earth and sea, saying, “Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.”
2. **Revelation 11** The ministry of the two witnesses ends just before the fall of Satan.
These events happen before the sign of Satan is cast down.

The following events are near-simultaneous.²⁶⁶

3. **Revelation 12** is the great signs in heaven with the accompanying pole shift.
4. **Revelation 6:12–14** When he opened the *sixth seal*, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood, and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale. The sky vanished like a scroll being rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place.
5. **Revelation 8:5–12** Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and hurled it on the earth; and there came peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning and an earthquake. Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it on the earth, and there were peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake. Now the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared to blow them. The first angel blew his trumpet, and there followed hail²⁶⁷ and fire, mixed with blood, and these were thrown upon the earth. And a third of the earth was burned up, and a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up. The *second angel blew his trumpet*, and something like a great mountain, burning with fire, was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood. A third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed. The third angel blew his trumpet, and a great star fell from heaven, blazing like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many people died from the water, because it had been made bitter. The fourth angel blew his trumpet, and a third of the sun was struck, and a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of their light might be darkened, and a third of the day might be kept from shining, and likewise a third of the night. [Earth rotating faster 33%?] or dark clouds block them one-third of the time.
6. **Revelation 16:12** The *sixth angel poured out his bowl* on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, to prepare the way for the kings from the east.
7. **Revelation 16:17–21** The *seventh angel poured out his bowl* into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple, from the throne, saying, “It is done!” And there were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, and a great earthquake such as there had never

been since man was on the earth, so great was that earthquake. The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell, and God remembered Babylon the great, to make her drain the cup of the wine of the fury of his wrath. And every island fled away, and no mountains were to be found. And great hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, fell from heaven on people; and they cursed God for the plague of the hail, because the plague was so severe.

8. **Revelation 9:1–2** And the *fifth angel blew his trumpet*, and I saw a star fallen from heaven to earth, and he was given the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit [Cracked crust]. He opened the shaft of the bottomless pit, and from the shaft rose smoke like the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were darkened with the smoke from the shaft.

Appendix J: Alphabetical Old Testament Index

| | | | |
|------------------------------|---------|-------------------------------|------------|
| 1 Chronicles 21:16, 27 | 189 | Esther 01–16 | 28 |
| 1 Chronicles 24:01–31 | 170 | Esther 02:11–16 | 27 |
| 1 Chronicles 24:07 | 170 | Esther 03:01 | 15 |
| 1 Chronicles 24:10 | 170 | Esther 03:02–6 | 27 |
| 1 Kings 11:05 | 178 | Esther 04:01 | 27 |
| 1 Kings 11:33 | 178 | Esther 04:02 | 16 |
| 1 Maccabees 02:01 | 170 | Esther 04:03 | 16, 27 |
| 1 Samuel 07:09 | 105 | Esther 04:11 | 22, 27 |
| 1 Samuel 16:1–13 | 60 | Esther 05:01–2 | 14, 21, 27 |
| 1 Samuel 28:24 | 34 | Esther 06:07–11 | 24, 27 |
| 1 Samuel 30:17 | 177 | Esther 06:12 | 24, 27 |
| 1 Samuel 31:10 | 178 | Esther 06:14 | 23 |
| 2 Chronicles 09:11 | 189 | Esther 07:01–10 | 27 |
| 2 Chronicles 32:31 | 118 | Esther 07:09–10 | 25 |
| 2 Kings 04:16 | 71 | Esther 09:09–14 | 16 |
| 2 Kings 18:10 | 114 | Esther 10:06 | 16 |
| 2 Kings 19:29 | 117 | Esther 11:11 | 16 |
| 2 Kings 20:08–11 | 115 | Esther 14:02 | 27 |
| 2 Kings 23:05 | 105 | Esther 14:13 | 21 |
| 2 Kings 23:13 | 178 | Esther 15:01 | 21, 27 |
| 2 Maccabees 02:04–5 | 134 | Esther 15:06 | 21, 27 |
| 2 Samuel 22:13 | 178 | Esther 15:07 | 21, 27 |
| 2 Samuel 23:04 | 178 | Esther 15:08 | 23 |
| Amos 3:07 | 132 | Esther 15:08–10 | 21, 27 |
| Amos 5:20 | 178 | Exodus 02:01–10 | 57 |
| Daniel 02:21 | 39, 116 | Exodus 04:22 | 163 |
| Daniel 02:39–44 | 43 | Exodus 07:14–21 | 139 |
| Daniel 02:48 | 10 | Exodus 08:16 | 167 |
| Daniel 07:13–14 | 43 | Exodus 09:09–11 | 167 |
| Daniel 07:14 | 90 | Exodus 12:03 | 42 |
| Daniel 08:20–22 | 43 | Exodus 12:06 | 50 |
| Daniel 09:24–27 | 42 | Exodus 12:15 | 50 |
| Daniel 10:06 | 94 | Exodus 12:22, 24, 29–32 | 92 |
| Daniel 10:13, 21 | 139 | Exodus 12:29 | 167 |
| Daniel 12:01 | 139 | Exodus 12:30 | 167 |
| Deuteronomy 01:04 | 178 | Exodus 12:34, 37, 51 | 73 |
| Deuteronomy 04:19 | 76 | Exodus 12:38 | 127 |
| Deuteronomy 18:15 | 162 | Exodus 12:42 | 61 |
| Deuteronomy 18:15–19 | 57 | Exodus 19:04 | 139 |
| Deuteronomy 29:29 | 2, 150 | Exodus 25:31–32, 37 | 93 |
| Esther 01:01k | 15 | Exodus 25:32 | 93 |
| Esther 01:06 | 16 | Exodus 27:13–16 | 120 |
| Esther 01:13 | 39 | Exodus 30:23 | 60 |
| Esther 01:13–14 | 39 | Exodus 35:14 | 94 |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|-------------|
| Exodus 40:35 | 82 | Isaiah 62:10–11 | 83 |
| Ezekiel 01:04, 13, 27–28 | 178 | Isaiah 62:25 | 105 |
| Ezekiel 10:04 | 178 | Jeremiah 03:16 | 134 |
| Ezekiel 30:12 | 145 | Jeremiah 07:11 | 178 |
| Ezra 07:12 | 41 | Jeremiah 23:05 | 177 |
| Genesis 01:09–14 | 127 | Job 03:09 | 177 |
| Genesis 01:14 | 9, 75, 83, 86, 94 | Job 07:21 | 177 |
| Genesis 01:14–16 | 94 | Job 08:05 | 177 |
| Genesis 01:16 | 23, 92 | Job 09:09 | 177 |
| Genesis 01:26 | 23 | Job 11:17 | 177 |
| Genesis 15:05 | 76 | Job 11:17 Douay | 95 |
| Genesis 17:21 | 70 | Job 24:05 | 177 |
| Genesis 18:10, 14 | 71 | Job 26:13 KJV | 143 |
| Genesis 27:35–36 | 1, 81 | Job 38:04–7 | 5, 75 |
| Genesis 27:41–47 | 81 | Job 38:12 | 177 |
| Genesis 28:11–12 | 82 | Job 38:32 | 105, 177 |
| Genesis 35:19–21 | 33 | Job 41:09 | 177 |
| Genesis 37:09–10 | 23, 76 | Job 41:18 | 177 |
| Genesis 49:09–10 | 10, 27, 28, 72, 152 | Joel 2:10 | 178 |
| Genesis 49:10 | 19 | Joel 2:30–31 | 74 |
| Habakkuk 3:04, 11 | 178 | Joel 2:31 | 75 |
| Habakkuk 3:09, 11 | 134 | Joel 3:15 | 178 |
| Habakkuk 3:11 | 125, 189 | Joshua 08:34–35 | 124 |
| Hosea 11:01 | 163 | Joshua 10 | 125 |
| Isaiah 01:18 | 77 | Joshua 10:6–7, 9–14 | 124 |
| Isaiah 02:02 | 145 | Joshua 15:01–64 | 58 |
| Isaiah 04:05 | 178 | Judges 05:20 | 189 |
| Isaiah 09:01–2 | 177 | Leviticus 12:02 | 77 |
| Isaiah 09:01–2, 6–7 | 176 | Leviticus 12:02, 06 | 37 |
| Isaiah 11:16 | 189 | Leviticus 12:02–4 | 38 |
| Isaiah 14:12 | 75, 189 | Leviticus 12:02–8 | 38 |
| Isaiah 14:12–17 | 116 | Leviticus 15:18 | 77 |
| Isaiah 14:16–17 | 118 | Leviticus 25:11–12 | 117 |
| Isaiah 19:05 | 145 | Micah 4:01 | 145 |
| Isaiah 26:09 | 177 | Micah 5:02 | 44 |
| Isaiah 37:30 | 117 | Micah 5:02–4 | 51 |
| Isaiah 37:36 | 115 | Nehemiah 08:13–18 | 125 |
| Isaiah 40:01–5 | 86 | Numbers 02:03 | 9 |
| Isaiah 40:05 | 87 | Numbers 06:23 | 37 |
| Isaiah 40:11 | 105 | Numbers 09:10–13 | 166 |
| Isaiah 50:10 | 178 | Numbers 10:14 | 9 |
| Isaiah 60:01–3, 5–06 | 59 | Numbers 15:01–12 | 37 |
| Isaiah 60:03 | 178 | Numbers 18:15–16 | 37 |
| Isaiah 60:19 | 178 | Numbers 19:11–13 | 42 |
| Isaiah 60:19–20 | 151 | Numbers 24:09, 17 | 11, 28, 152 |
| Isaiah 62:01 | 178 | Numbers 24:17 | 27 |

| | | | |
|------------------------|-----|-----------------------|--------|
| Numbers 24:17–19..... | 44 | Psalms 110:01–3 | 5, 152 |
| Proverbs 01:28 | 177 | Psalms 110:02–3 | 27, 28 |
| Proverbs 04:18 | 178 | Psalms 110:03 | 177 |
| Proverbs 07:15 | 177 | Ruth 2:03–8..... | 58 |
| Proverbs 08:17 | 177 | Ruth 4:20–21..... | 58 |
| Proverbs 11:27 | 177 | Song 6:10 | 23 |
| Proverbs 13:24 | 177 | Tobit 12:11..... | vi |
| Proverbs 25:02 | 2 | Wisdom 18:13b–14..... | 71 |
| Psalms 018:12..... | 178 | Zechariah 03:08 | 177 |
| Psalms 018:12–14 | 125 | Zechariah 04:12 | 94 |
| Psalms 019:01 | 1 | Zechariah 06:12 | 177 |
| Psalms 063:01 | 177 | Zechariah 10:11 | 145 |
| Psalms 078:34 | 177 | | |

Appendix K: Alphabetical New Testament Index

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|------------------------|--------------|
| 1 Corinthians 05:07..... | 94 | Luke 01:36 | 70 |
| 1 Peter 1:10–11 | 67 | Luke 01:78 | 177, 189 |
| 1 Thessalonians 5:02–4..... | 148 | Luke 01:78–79 | 56, 152 |
| 2 Corinthians 11:14..... | 76 | Luke 02:01–2 | 165 |
| 2 Peter 1:19 | 45, 189 | Luke 02:01–7 | 30 |
| 2 Peter 1:19 KJV | 82 | Luke 02:02 | 165 |
| 2 Peter 1:19 RSV–CE | 177 | Luke 02:08–20 | 32 |
| Acts 01:09–11 | 89 | Luke 02:11, 17 | 35 |
| Acts 02:09 | 42 | Luke 02:21 | 37, 69 |
| Acts 02:19–20 | 74 | Luke 02:22 | 37 |
| Acts 02:20–21 | 75 | Luke 02:22–24 | 38 |
| Acts 02:22 | 73 | Luke 02:34 | 37 |
| Acts 07:49 | 138 | Luke 02:39 | 162 |
| Acts 07:56 | 96 | Luke 03:01 | 165 |
| Hebrews 07:14 | 189 | Luke 03:04–6 | 86 |
| Hebrews 09:12 | 94 | Luke 03:15 | 35, 42 |
| James 1:11..... | 189 | Luke 04:16–30 | 30 |
| John 01:05–9..... | 86 | Luke 10:18 | 141 |
| John 01:07 | 83 | Luke 12:54 | 189 |
| John 01:14..... | 87 | Luke 19:04 | 92 |
| John 01:23 | 1, 86 | Luke 22:53 | 92 |
| John 01:29 | 50 | Mark 04:06..... | 189 |
| John 01:29, 36..... | 83, 94 | Mark 08:11 | 84 |
| John 01:29–31, 35–39, 43–51 | 80 | Mark 11:12–14..... | 92 |
| John 01:29–34..... | 91 | Mark 16:02..... | 189 |
| John 01:31 | 83 | Mark 16:09..... | 95 |
| John 01:36..... | 1 | Matthew 01:01–16 | 58 |
| John 01:38–39..... | 87 | Matthew 01:05 | 58 |
| John 01:51 | 1, 79, 80, 84 | Matthew 01:20–21 | 30 |
| John 08:12..... | 74, 177 | Matthew 02:01 | 6 |
| John 10:24..... | 30 | Matthew 02:01–12 | 3, 152 |
| John 11:09 | 51 | Matthew 02:02 | 6 |
| John 11:55 | 42 | Matthew 02:02–10 | 2 |
| John 14:04–5..... | 87 | Matthew 02:09 | 6, 7, 52, 53 |
| John 19:31 | 73 | Matthew 02:10–18 | 166 |
| John 20:01 | 95 | Matthew 02:12–18 | 60 |
| John 20:28..... | 87 | Matthew 02:15 | 163 |
| Jude 1:09 | 139 | Matthew 02:19–23 | 66 |
| Jude 1:13 | 5 | Matthew 03:16–17 | 91 |
| Luke 01:05 | 170 | Matthew 04:15–16 | 177 |
| Luke 01:08–17 | 170 | Matthew 04:16 | 75, 189 |
| Luke 01:27 | 58 | Matthew 05:05 | 172 |
| Luke 01:28 | 70 | Matthew 05:45 | 189 |

| | | | |
|---------------------------|-----|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Matthew 06:22 | 94 | Revelation 11 | 180 |
| Matthew 12:39 | 84 | Revelation 11:03, 11, 13 | 149 |
| Matthew 13:06 | 189 | Revelation 11:03–13 | 132 |
| Matthew 16:01, 4 | vi | Revelation 11:06 | 149 |
| Matthew 16:01–4 | 153 | Revelation 11:09 | 149 |
| Matthew 16:16, 20 | 30 | Revelation 11:12 | 139 |
| Matthew 22:41–46 | 4 | Revelation 11:13 | 149 |
| Matthew 24:21–22 | 150 | Revelation 11:19 | 132, 135 |
| Matthew 24:29–30 | 146 | Revelation 11:19–12:09 | 130 |
| Matthew 24:37 | 148 | Revelation 12 | 129, 130, 158, 159, 180 |
| Matthew 25:13 | 148 | Revelation 12:01, 5 | 142 |
| Matthew 26:04 | 93 | Revelation 12:01–2 | 74, 153 |
| Matthew 26:63–65 | 30 | Revelation 12:01–2, 5 | 106 |
| Matthew 28:01 | 95 | Revelation 12:05 | 74, 130, 135 |
| Revelation 01:16 | 138 | Revelation 12:12 | 150 |
| Revelation 03:03 | 148 | Revelation 12:14 | 139 |
| Revelation 05:05 | 28 | Revelation 12:17 | 135 |
| Revelation 06:12–14 | 180 | Revelation 13:08 | 75 |
| Revelation 06:14 | 140 | Revelation 16:12 | 180 |
| Revelation 07:02–3 | 180 | Revelation 16:17–21 | 180 |
| Revelation 08:05–12 | 180 | Revelation 16:18 | 135 |
| Revelation 08:08 | 141 | Revelation 17:19 | 147 |
| Revelation 08:09 | 147 | Revelation 19:11–16 | 135 |
| Revelation 09:01–2 | 181 | Revelation 22:16 | 4, 28, 82, 176 |

Copyright © 2021 by Bruce Alan Killian
All rights reserved.
Published in the United States by \$

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Killian, Bruce Alan
Jesus' Star
A storyteller evangelizes the nations

First Edition

Scripture references primarily from
English Standard Version Catholic Edition (ESV-CE)
Single verses, words, and phrases quoted from
KJV, NKJV
Septuagint
RSV-CE

Appendix L: Endnotes

¹ MECILLAH highway, star course, staircase, raised way, or ladder: Isaiah 11:16; Judges 5:20; 2 Chronicles 9:11. W.H.F. Gesenius, *Gesenius' Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon*, (Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1979), #4546, 490,

<https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=H4546>

² My translation, the ESV-CE reads, "had seen."

³ Shooting stars are God's arrows or spears, e.g. Habakkuk 3:11 Sun and moon stood still in the heavens at the glint of your flying arrows, at the lightning of your flashing spear. Comets were associated with disaster, for example the angel's sword David saw was probably a comet when seventy thousand men died (1 Chronicles 21:16, 27).

⁴ Scott Hahn gen. ed., "Stars," *Catholic Bible Dictionary*, (New York, Doubleday, 2009), 874.

⁵ They didn't seek the truth but cherished their own false teachings.

⁶ Kurt Aland, Matthew Black, Bruce M. Metzger and Allen Wikgren, *The Greek New Testament*, (London: United Bible Society, 1966), 908.

⁷ Verse 3 in Hebrew is obscure. *Septuagint* frequently used by Jesus and His apostles. I present poetic passages in verse format like most Bibles.

⁸ Lancelot C.L. Brenton, *The Septuagint with Apocrypha: Greek and English*, (Hendrickson Publishers, 1986/1851); or *The Septuagint Version of the Old Testament with an English Translation*, (Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing House, 1970). The Septuagint English version mistranslates HEOSPHOROS as the morning. The *Septuagint* is a Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, translated about 250 B.C.

⁹ The *Septuagint* often provides clarity to passages where Venus appears.

¹⁰ One must differentiate the morning stars. Mercury is a morning star linked to Lucifer "How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! [How] you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! (Isaiah 14:12 NKJV)

¹¹ ANATELLO is Greek for the rise of the sun, moon, stars or clouds: Matthew 4:16; 5:45; 13:6; Mark 4:6; Mark 16:2; Luke 12:54; Hebrews 7:14; James 1:11; 2 Peter 1:19. Only in Hebrews 7:14 it is used of Jesus not rising from a line of priests. Used for a non-heliacal rising.

¹² Anatole in Luke 1:78 translated Dayspring means Venus.

¹³ Walter Bauer, William Arndt and F. Wilbert Gingrich, and Fredrick Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 2nd Ed. (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1979), 62.

¹⁴ Helios is Greek for sun.

¹⁵ Noel Swerdlow, *The Babylonian Theory of the Planets*, (1998),

http://thelivingmoon.com/42stargate/03files/Babylonian_Theory_of_the_Planets.html.

¹⁶ Venus has a secondary heliacal rise as it sets as the morning star after 263 days.

¹⁷ The duration between when two successive Venus heliacal rises is the synodic period.

¹⁸ We will learn, many nations watched and recorded the motions of Venus.

¹⁹ Babylonian record of similar conjunction see Teije de Jong & Hermann Hunger, (Aug 2020), "Babylonian observations of a unique planetary configuration,"

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00407-020-00252-1>

²⁰ Jesus regularly slept where He could see a heliacal rise like Bethlehem, the Mt. of Olives, etc.

-
- ²¹ Chart by *Cartes du Ciel*, www.astrosurf.com/astropc. Assumes clear weather and horizons.
- ²² Chart by *Cartes du Ciel*, www.astrosurf.com/astropc. Other programs are available.
- ²³ This doesn't include clouds, early comets, or shooting stars.
- ²⁴ "Definition of Extinction," *Oxford US English Dictionary*, (Oxford University Press, 2021), <https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/extinction>.
- ²⁵ The sunrise should color blank background on these sky shots.
- ²⁶ There are three heavens, the atmosphere, the abode of the stars, and the abode of God. (2 Corinthians 12:2).
- ²⁷ Luke 21:25 There will be *signs* in the sun, moon and stars. God reveals things to the nations by the motions of the sun, moon and stars.
- ²⁸ A simplification, sign has many meanings, but picture is a primary one.
- ²⁹ Job 9:9, 38:3, 31–32; Isaiah 13:10; Amos 5:8; Wisdom 7:29.
- ³⁰ E.W. Bullinger, *The Witness of the Stars*, (Grand Rapids: Kregel Classics, 1893), 163.
- ³¹ <http://jahtruth.net/britspan.htm>. Each tribe had a standard on a pole to lead the tribe.
- ³² There is no 360-day prophetic year. The sun, moon, and stars govern the length of the year. It appears the moon doesn't control the length of the month.
- ³³ *OTH* Hebrew for sign, starts with the alphabet's first letter and ends with its last letter connected by the letter meaning 'and' like "alpha and omega" in Greek.
- ³⁴ Jack Finegan, *Handbook of Biblical Chronology: Principles of Time Reckoning in the Ancient World and Problems of Chronology in the Bible*, Revised Ed., (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 1998), 291.
- ³⁵ Flavius Josephus, *The Works of Flavius Josephus*, Translated by. William Whiston, A.M. Auburn and Buffalo, John E. Beardsley, (Edinburgh, Scotland: 1895). <https://tinyurl.com/3y4bf4r3>.
- ³⁶ The Dead Sea Scrolls include Esther. Asher Tov-Lev, "Newly Deciphered Qumran Scroll Revealed to Be Megillat Esther," <https://www.thetorah.com/article/newly-deciphered-qumran-scroll-revealed-to-be-megillat-esther>. The Esther scroll was so stained it couldn't be identified. Details confirm the canonicity of the Greek Esther version.
- ³⁷ H.W.F. Gesenius, *Gesenius' Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament*, (1979), Esther, 635, 68–69, <http://blb.sc/002zMY>; Haman (in Sanskrit), 2001, 228, <http://blb.sc/0041EN>; Mordecai, 4782, 507, <http://blb.sc/0089A1>; Ahasuerus, 325, 34. Greek Xerxes or Artaxerxes <http://blb.sc/006w3q>. <http://blb.sc/003aBd>. Called the king of kings (Ezra 7:12). Jupiter was the Roman pantheon's king. Esther is akin to the Hebrew Astaroth meaning the planet Venus. Jeremiah 7:18 and tablet of Ammisaduqa, Venus "bright Queen of Heaven."
- ³⁸ Fredrick Larson identifies Jupiter as the king planet. The nations called it the king of the gods.
- ³⁹ There are two versions of Esther, Catholics and Orthodox accept the longer as canonical, it was in the *Septuagint* the apostles used. The extra portions tend to be prayers, dreams, and edicts.
- ⁴⁰ The Catholic version of Esther includes details the abridged versions omit. Different Catholic versions order and number the additional chapters and verses differently, confusing.
- ⁴¹ A record of a seven day disappearance of Venus. "The Dresden Codex Venus Table," George Sarton, *Ancient Science Through the Golden Age of Greece*, (New York: Dover Publications, 1993), 77–8, <https://tinyurl.com/y8jkeu8q>, "on the 25th of Tammuz Venus disappeared in the west for 7 days remaining absent in the sky, and on the 2nd of Ab Venus was seen in the east"
- ⁴² The ①②③ etc. link to the table page 27.

⁴³ The best picture is on 8/11 but works through 8/13. Were there clouds?

⁴⁴ Colin R. Nicholl, *The Great Christ Comet: Revealing the True Star of Bethlehem*, (Wheaton: Crossway, 2015).

⁴⁵ My brother and a friend, sailing off Baja California Sur, saw Jupiter rise and for a time confused it with a boat's port (red) running light.

⁴⁶ Depending on where they viewed from the handmaid can be very close to Venus.

⁴⁷ For reference, the middle star of the handle of the Big Dipper is actually two stars. The brighter is Mizar and the dimmer is Alcor. If you have normal eyesight, you should be able to separate both stars without any optical aid. Twelve arc minutes separate them.

⁴⁸ Better translation, they took a beam and impaled you on it (Ezra 6:11).

⁴⁹ Disaster etymology—bad star, *Online Etymology Dictionary*, <https://www.etymonline.com/word/Disaster>. Oliver Taylor, "10 Disastrous Earthly Events Linked To Comets," Aug 18, 2019, <https://listverse.com/2019/08/18/10-disastrous-earthly-events-linked-to-comets/>.

⁵⁰ Passages where star (here Esther) and scepter appear together: Esther 5:1–2; 8:4; 15:12–14.

⁵¹ All references without a book are from Esther.

⁵² Scott Hahn, "Typology," *Catholic Bible Dictionary*, (New York: Doubleday, 2009), 930.

⁵³ Kings often had many wives, in Israel the queen was the king's mother.

⁵⁴ Conceived no more than 1.6 years earlier, the king was at most 10.5 months old (19 months–8.5 months).

⁵⁵ The minimum scepter length in Leo was about 3.5 degrees, and Orion's belt is about 3 degrees. The scepter in Leo was much brighter, even though Orion is the brightest constellation.

⁵⁶ Colin R. Nicholl, *The Great Christ Comet: Revealing the True Star of Bethlehem*, (Wheaton: Crossway, 2015).

⁵⁷ The Sanhedrin was the highest Jewish ruling, law making and judicial body equivalent to the executive, congressional and the judicial branches and the pope and College of Cardinals.

⁵⁸ Chuck Missler, "The Scepter of Judah," (1999), <https://www.khouse.org/articles/1999/187/>.

⁵⁹ If Jesus' earliest conception was August 13, 2 B.C. and gestation is 38 weeks, His earliest due date was about May 5, 1 B.C. If the Magi visited Jesus at Venus' heliacal rise, March 27, 1 A.D. and Jesus was at least 41 days old at that time, His latest birthday was about February 15, 1 A.D.

⁶⁰ Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, New updated edition, Book 2 chapter 6 (Grand Rapids: Hendrickson, 1993), 129.

⁶¹ Josephus, *Jewish Wars* 6.9.3, 256,500 lambs were sacrificed per year for Passover c. 66–70 A.D. <https://textcritical.net/work/the-wars-of-the-jews/6/9/3>.

⁶² Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, Book 2, Eerdmans, (1953), 186–187. www.philologos.org/_eb-lat/.

⁶³ Jewish oral law recorded c. 200 A.D.

⁶⁴ *Mishnah* (Shekalim 7.4) https://www.sefaria.org/Mishnah_Shekalim.7.4?lang=bi; Beasts found in Jerusalem as far as Migdal Eder and within the same distance in any direction: ... which is fit for a pesach offering, is a pesach-offerings. Pesach means Passover.

⁶⁵ En caul birth occurs in fewer than one in eighty thousand births. The baby is born in an intact amniotic sac (caul). This birth has less pain and associates with royalty. Was Jesus born en caul?

⁶⁶ Were newborn lambs wrapped to indicate inspection required? Inspecting at birth would guarantee all were without defect.

-
- ⁶⁷ Solomon Schechter and Lewis N. Dembitz, "Evidence," *Jewish Encyclopedia*, (1906), <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/7435-hearsay-evidence>.
- ⁶⁸ B.C.E. Before Common Era and C.E. Common Era, because Satan hates Jesus.
- ⁶⁹ "Passover Lamb sacrifice Procedure," <https://jewishroots.net/library/holiday-articles/passover-lamb-sacrifice-procedure.html>.
- ⁷⁰ Bruce Killian, "The Immaculate Conception," (2020), <https://tinyurl.com/yb78wu35>.
- ⁷¹ "Why was the Parthian Empire So Powerful?," https://dailyhistory.org/Why_Was_the_Parthian_Empire_So_Powerful%3F
- ⁷² The Parthian capital moved between these cities: Ctesiphon, Ecbatana, Hecatompylos, Susa, Nisa, Asaak, and Rhages. "Parthian Empire," *Wikipedia*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parthian_Empire.
- ⁷³ Gaius Caesar and Phraataces worked out a rough compromise between the two powers c. 1 A.D. "Roman-Parthian Wars," *World Heritage Encyclopedia* (2018), also https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman%E2%80%93Parthian_Wars.
- ⁷⁴ A council of relatives and magi assisted the Parthian monarch. Tiara and jewel-studded belt were emblems of their rank. Only one with a tiara could offer the king advice. <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/courts-and-courtiers-ii>
- ⁷⁵ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 17.6.5, <https://penelope.uchicago.edu/josephus/ant-17.html>.
- ⁷⁶ The day Venus was directly between the earth and the sun, its darkest day.
- ⁷⁷ Bruce Killian, "The Chronology of Jesus' Life," (2020), 44–45, <https://tinyurl.com/y5oth3qy>
- ⁷⁸ Usually called Babylon from the most important city captured.
- ⁷⁹ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 17.6.5, Callirrhoe. <https://penelope.uchicago.edu/josephus/ant-17.html>. Herod (now old and ill) stayed primarily near Jericho. It was warm, and the hot springs nearby soothed his pains. Herod was in Jerusalem; another hint our season for the wise men's arrival is correct.
- ⁸⁰ Josephus, *Antiquities*, 17.6.5, <https://penelope.uchicago.edu/josephus/ant-17.html>.
- ⁸¹ Learned of Venus' daytime visibility from Leo Bauer LtCdr, USN, a WWII aviator.
- ⁸² Dictionaries translate day star as Venus or Sun not realizing it's Venus visible during the day.
- ⁸³ H.B. Curtis, "Venus Visible at Inferior Conjunction," *Popular Astronomy*, 44, 18, (Jan 1936), 18–19, <http://adsabs.harvard.edu/abs/1936PA.....44...18C>.
- ⁸⁴ Since Venus could be seen during the day, it could be seen before dawn August 24, 2 B.C.
- ⁸⁵ We can see Venus in the day at the heliacal rise when it is sufficiently separated from the sun.
- ⁸⁶ Balaam also mentions horns of the wild ox (Numbers 24:8) a possible link to the Venus' crescent. On June 15, 5 B.C., Venus set before the sun; on January 15, 3 B.C., Venus set after it.
- ⁸⁷ Brown-Driver-Briggs, *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979) *TALEH*=young male lamb, 378, <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/h2924>.
- ⁸⁸ Great comets and supernova are daytime visible so they could wait as here proposed. There are no records of either of these near Jesus birth. They needed to have two heliacal rises usually meaning it persisted over a year, why no record?
- ⁸⁹ One can follow the wise men's route because the sun on the right day about April 15 follows a similar path to Venus'. A challenge the road is buried and buildings block the route.
- ⁹⁰ Map subsection, (1912), <http://www.kchanson.com/PTJ/bethlehem.html>.
- ⁹¹ Venus appeared fixed on the horizon at the point toward which the wise men moved. It had no apparent motion along the horizon. The wise men's slight southward vector canceled Venus' slow northward vector.

⁹² Were “No Vacancy” signs in use?

⁹³ *TSAMACH* a Messianic term, usually translated Branch. The *Septuagint* translate it *ANATOLE* or Dayspring, in Zechariah 3:8; 6:12; and Jeremiah 23:5 (c.f. Luke 1:78). Edwin Hatch, Henry Redpath, *A Concordance to the Septuagint and other Greek Versions of the Old Testament* in three Volumes, (Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1888, Reprinted 1987) vol. 1, 83–84. Dayspring appears to be a proper name for Venus. Translators often mistranslate it as the dawn.

⁹⁴ Babies get louder as they grow, so harder to hide.

⁹⁵ Frank Mason Good, Near Bethlehem—supposed site the angel appeared to the shepherds, (1875), <https://tinyurl.com/ybytnmxa>.

⁹⁶ The Ark of the Covenant was a type of Mary, *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd Ed., (Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1997), #2676, <http://www.scborromeo.org/ccc/para/2676.htm>. The periods when the Ark remained for a time seem to correspond to the periods of Mary’s life. The Holy Family lived in a house near a threshing floor for three months, and the Ark of the Covenant remained in the house of Obed Edom near a threshing floor for three months (2 Samuel 6:3–11).

⁹⁷ Isaiah is the second most quoted book in the New Testament.

⁹⁸ Ramah is about six miles north of Jerusalem.

⁹⁹ “Egypt (Roman province),” *Wikipedia*, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egypt_\(Roman_province\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egypt_(Roman_province)).

¹⁰⁰ Paul M. Davidson, “On the Plausibility and Purpose of Paul’s Sea Voyage in Acts 27,” (2017), <https://tinyurl.com/ybp9cu9x>.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Cyril Martindale, “Christmas,” *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. III, (Robert Appleton Co., 1908), (Copyright, K. Knight, 2003), www.newadvent.org/cathen/03724b.htm.

¹⁰³ Jack Finegan, *Handbook of Biblical Chronology*, #499, 290.

¹⁰⁴ VIII KAL. IAN. NATUS CHRISTUS IN BETLEEM IUDEAE, The Chronography of 354 A.D. Part 12: Commemorations of the Martyrs. MGH *Chronica Minora I* (1892), 71-2, http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/chronography_of_354_12_depositions_martyrs.htm.

¹⁰⁵ John Pratt, “Yet Another Eclipse for Herod,” Reprinted from *The Planetarian**, vol. 19, no. 4, (Dec. 1990): 8–14. www.johnpratt.com/items/docs/herod/herod.html.

¹⁰⁶ John Pratt, “Newton’s Date for the Crucifixion,” Reprinted from *Quarterly Journal of Royal Astronomical Society* 32, (Sept. 1991): 301–304, www.johnpratt.com/items/docs/newton.html.

¹⁰⁷ John Pratt, “Yet Another Eclipse for Herod,” Reprinted from *The Planetarian**, vol. 19, no. 4, (Dec. 1990): 8–14. www.johnpratt.com/items/docs/herod/herod.html.

¹⁰⁸ We measure human gestation from the last period, not conception. Conception would be two weeks later. Eighth course when Zechariah ministered started November 22, 2 B.C. +8 days until conception = November 30, 2 B.C. John’s birth about August 12, 1 B.C. The sixth month when Mary conceived April 7, 1 B.C. When Jesus was born December 25, 1 B.C.

¹⁰⁹ Ein Karem the more traditional site of John the Baptist’s birth is near Jerusalem.

¹¹⁰ Killian, “The Immaculate Conception,” <https://tinyurl.com/yb78wu35>.

¹¹¹ NASA Eclipse Catalog <https://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/LEcat5/LE-0099-0000.html>.

¹¹² Killian, “The Chronology of Jesus’ Life,” <https://tinyurl.com/y5oth3qy>

¹¹³ Some twist this to mean Passover preparation, to move it to a different day.

¹¹⁴ The Jews would later rule Passover was always a Sabbath.

-
- ¹¹⁵ Rodger C. Young, “How Lunar and Solar Eclipses Shed Light on Biblical Events,” Associates for Biblical Research, (2015), <https://tinyurl.com/yamr5gsk>.
- ¹¹⁶ Josephus interpreted it as a sign that is why he recorded it.
- ¹¹⁷ Steven O'Reilly, “The Historicity of the Crucifixion Darkness,” (Posted 2017) <https://romalocutaest.com/2017/04/13/the-historicity-of-the-crucifixion-darkness/>
- ¹¹⁸ Hippolytus of Rome (c. 202–211 A.D.) spoke of Christmas, long before the cult and festival of Dies Natalis Solis Invicti (birthday of the unconquerable sun) developed (c. 274 A.D.).
- ¹¹⁹ Steven Bancarz, “NASA Discovers Planets And Stars Give Off Music – This Is What It Sounds Like,” (2015), <http://thespiritscience.net/2015/06/15/nasa-discovers-planets-and-stars-give-off-music-this-is-what-it-sounds-like/>
- ¹²⁰ A solar eclipse is like twilight, only the brightest stars can be seen without optical aid.
- ¹²¹ “The Privileged Planet,” (Illustra Media, 2005), video, <http://vimeo.com/8361588>
- ¹²² Teens, over a year later only Jesus and Peter needed to pay the Temple tax required of men age twenty and up (Matthew 17:24–27).
- ¹²³ Bruce Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, (London: United Bible Society, 1971), 201. Missing from the proto Alexandrian. He calls it a gloss.
- ¹²⁴ Debated location, but two days walk from Cana in Galilee and two days walk from Jerusalem so on the Jordan River about half way between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea.
- ¹²⁵ Killian, “The Chronology of Jesus’ Life,” <https://tinyurl.com/y5oth3qy>.
- ¹²⁶ Since this was a sign to the entire world, the cloud could also be a ball shaped comet.
- ¹²⁷ Brown-Driver-Briggs, *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979) *MECILLAH*, 699, <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/h4546/kjv/wlc/0-1/>.
- ¹²⁸ Nathaniel’s other name was Bartholomew.
- ¹²⁹ God the Father sent His Son Jesus to find a wife (the Church) from among His relatives.
- ¹³⁰ In the late winter, the sky over central Israel could be easily be overcast and then clear.
- ¹³¹ Peter, Andrew, James, John and Nathaniel were fishermen, Philip from Bethsaida translated “house of fish” was familiar with fishermen and may have been one.
- ¹³² E.G. Luke 5:5, John 21:3.
- ¹³³ Brant Pitre, *Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist*, (New York: Doubleday, 2011) 63–4. Ref. *Pesahim*, 7:1; Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho the Jews*, 40.
- ¹³⁴ Killian, “The Chronology of Jesus’ Life,” 89, <https://tinyurl.com/y5oth3qy>.
- ¹³⁵ Comfort—also means repent; Jesus ministry centered at Capernaum meaning comfort. The book of Isaiah transitions at this point. Isaiah was the third most popular book at the time.
- ¹³⁶ It was peace time, *PAX ROMANA*. John’s baptism was of repentance (Acts 19:4).
- ¹³⁷ John’s baptism was for the remission of sins (Mark 1:4).
- ¹³⁸ Malachi 3:1 echoes this, Behold I send my messenger and he will prepare the way.
- ¹³⁹ Jesus a master of understatement, made them figure out what He is saying. The authors translation, the ESV-CE “where are you staying?”
- ¹⁴⁰ Tertullian, *Prescription against Heretics*, Chapter 36, <https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0311.htm>
- ¹⁴¹ Nikki Withers, “Do the planets ever align with one another?,” *BBC Science Focus Magazine*, <https://www.sciencefocus.com/space/do-the-planets-ever-align-with-one-another/>

¹⁴² Govert Schilling, “Ancient Babylonians Witnessed Unique Planetary Gathering,” (*Sky & Telescope*, Dec 17, 2020) <https://skyandtelescope.org/astronomy-news/ancient-babylonians-witnessed-unique-planetary-gathering/>.

¹⁴³ My conjecture is the Holy Spirit likely descended as a comet on Jesus following His baptism.

¹⁴⁴ Bruce Killian, “Jesus Our Passover Jesus Our Passover,” (2010), 4–8,

<https://tinyurl.com/y3r8kr2z>

¹⁴⁵ Matthew 5:15; Mark 4:21; Luke 11:33; Luke 8:16; Matthew 6:22, Luke 11:34–36; Revelation 21:23; Matthew 5:14.

¹⁴⁶ John P. Pratt, “Venus Resurrects This Easter Sunday,” (*Meridian Magazine*, 2001), Gregorian dating, <https://www.johnpratt.com/items/docs/lds/meridian/2001/venus.html>

¹⁴⁷ Bruce Killian, “The Chronology of Jesus’ Life,” 18–19, 44, <https://tinyurl.com/y5oth3qy>

¹⁴⁸ Eusebius of Caesarea was from Palestine and Constantine was from Rome. Eusebius’ understanding of Constantine’s description may be flawed because in Judea the sixth hour was counted from dawn, while in Rome it was counted from noon, so Eusebius heard noon while Constantine meant sundown. Evening is more a change of day then noon and suddenly it was night, consistent more with evening than noon. The sun reaches its highest point at noon, was the sign above the sun? Is that logical?

¹⁴⁹ Eusebius of Caesarea, *Vita Constantini*, 1.28.2, *Library of Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers*, 2nd series (New York: Christian Literature Co., 1990), vol I, 489–91,

<https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/source/conv-const.asp>

¹⁵⁰ “Labarum,” *New World Encyclopedia*,

<https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Labarum>.

¹⁵¹ David Whitehouse, “Space impact ‘saved Christianity,’” (2003), *BBC News Online science* editor, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/3013146.stm>

¹⁵² “#107: Constantine’s vision,” *The Life of the Blessed Emperor Constantine* by Eusebius Pamphilus. Modernized and introduced by Stephen Tomkins. Edited and prepared for the web by Dan Graves. <https://christianhistoryinstitute.org/study/module/constantine/>

¹⁵³ Seraphim Danckaert, “Four Reasons Why Early Christianity Grew So Quickly,” (2014), <https://myocn.net/four-reasons-why-early-christian-church-grew-so-quickly/>

¹⁵⁴ Constantine the Great and Christianity,

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constantine the Great and Christianity](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constantine_the_Great_and_Christianity)

¹⁵⁵ New World Encyclopedia contributors, “Labarum,” *New World Encyclopedia*, ,

<https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/p/index.php?title=Labarum&oldid=799706> (accessed July 27, 2021).

¹⁵⁶ Venus tablet of Ammisaduqa, Wikipedia,

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Venus_tablet_of_Ammisaduqa

¹⁵⁷ <https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/cuneiform-tablet-with-observations-of-venus/uQGtUbfuWfzvLQ>.

George Sarton, *Ancient Science Through the Golden Age of Greece*, (1993), 77–8 @ [link](#).

¹⁵⁸ “The Dresden Codex, Chapter 3 The Venus Table,”

<https://dresdencodex.org/?view=chapter&chapter=3>

¹⁵⁹ From synagogue at Beit Alpha (sixth century A.D.), Israel Jewish views on astrology,

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jewish_views_on_astrology

¹⁶⁰ On Formed.org, Movie: *1531: A Story not yet finished*, This video is the source of many details included here, but it makes no connection to the star of Bethlehem or stars in the Bible.

-
- ¹⁶¹ It was Venus' the last day as the bright morning star, this day it rose and set heliacally.
- ¹⁶² Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate, *A Handbook on Guadalupe*, (Waite Park, MN: Park Press, 1997), 1, 68–71, 80, 89–91. Similar www.jkmi.com/ologimage.htm.
- ¹⁶³ Antonio Peláez, *1531*, (TV Movie, 2010), <https://watch.formed.org/1531-a-story-that-is-not-finished-yet>
- ¹⁶⁴ Repairs (gold leaf for the sun rays and silver leaf for the moon), have damaged the image.
- ¹⁶⁵ Chart by Cartes du Ciel, www.astrosurf.com/astropc.
- ¹⁶⁶ Divine rule, Jacob's twelve sons, twelve tribes, twelve apostles, twelve zodiac signs, etc.
- ¹⁶⁷ When a number is multiplied, its meaning is intensified.
- ¹⁶⁸ Does this signal the United States of America 245 years before 1776?
- ¹⁶⁹ Hezekiah's life is covered in 2 Chronicles 28:27-32:33; 2 Kings 18:1-20:21; Isaiah 36:1-39:8.
- ¹⁷⁰ A pole shift breaks the sundial's accuracy because it's latitude specific.
- ¹⁷¹ For example, why do we divide the circle into 360 degrees?
- ¹⁷² Immanuel Velikovsky, *Worlds In Collision*, (New York: Doubleday, 1950), 333-361.
- ¹⁷³ Lucifer is identified as the morning star Mercury by *The Biblical Astronomer*, Vol. 11, No. 97. (Summer 2001), 84-93. <http://www.geocentricity.com/ba1/097.pdf>. The ESV-CE translates bright one as day star, but it is visible near dawn. In Latin its Lucifer.
- ¹⁷⁴ *New American Bible*, (Cleveland OH: Collins World, 1976) footnote for Psalm 48:3 cf. Isaiah 14:13.
- ¹⁷⁵ *The Biblical Astronomer*, Vol. 11, No. 97. (Summer 2001), 84-93. <http://www.geocentricity.com/ba1/097.pdf>
- ¹⁷⁶ E. Raymond Capt, *The Glory of the Stars*, (Muskogee, OK: Hoffman Printing, 1998), 7.
- ¹⁷⁷ Bruce Killian, "Joshua's Long Day," 2020, <https://tinyurl.com/yyheyle5>.
- ¹⁷⁸ Bruce Killian, "Jubilee Timetable," (1994-2019), <http://www.scripturescholar.com/JubileeTimetable.htm>.
- ¹⁷⁹ *Ages in Chaos*, *Worlds in Collision* and *Earth in Upheaval*. Velikovsky proposed the cause of pole shifts were close encounters between the earth and Venus and between earth and Mars.
- ¹⁸⁰ Bruce Killian, "The Bible vs. Archaeology, You Decide," 2020, <https://tinyurl.com/y6bcjp7p>.
- ¹⁸¹ Kelly Young, "Satellites solve mystery of low gravity over Canada," *NewScientist*, May 10, 2007, <https://www.newscientist.com/article/dn11826-satellites-solve-mystery-of-low-gravity-over-canada/>, accessed Aug 19, 2021.
- ¹⁸² "Temple's location found, says Israeli archaeologist Study of ancient cisterns pinpoints sacred site," (February 11, 2007), Courtesy Hebrew University. (Drawing by Leen Ritmeyer), http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=54197
- ¹⁸³ Charles Hapgood, *The Earth's Shifting Crust*, (1958). The earlier edition of *Path of the Poles*.
- ¹⁸⁴ Flavio Barbiero, "On The Possibility Of Very Rapid Shifts Of The Poles." <http://www.westerni.unibg.it/maths/dynamics/poles.html> find on <http://web.archive.org/>.
- ¹⁸⁵ Hapgood had the poles shifts take over a thousand years, caused by ice buildup at the poles causing an unstable earth resulting in a pole shift.
- ¹⁸⁶ Bruce Killian, "Joshua's Long Day," 2020, <https://tinyurl.com/yyheyle5>.
- ¹⁸⁷ Plumes can't drive the motion of the crust. Controversy discussed Gillian R. Foulger, "Teaching the Plates vs. Plumes Controversy," 21 may 2020, http://www.mantleplumes.org/TeachingPlates_vs_Plumes.html

¹⁸⁸ <http://www.westerni.unibg.it/maths/dynamics/poles.html> This document described the math and size of the force to overcome the earth's gyroscopic force. find on <http://web.archive.org/>. A half kilometer diameter rock was sufficient to do the shift.

¹⁸⁹ Stuart Kirkham, *Glaciers and Peiglacial Lndforms and Landforms Paleoclimatology*, <https://www.slideshare.net/wskirkham/glaciers-2556151> slide #79.

¹⁹⁰ "African humid period," *Wikipedia*, accessed Aug 2021, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_humid_period. Part of Khety's desert hunt scene ca. 2051–2000 B.C. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/590883>

¹⁹¹ Jonathan Amos, "London's small but relentless dip," (*BBC News*, July 12, 2007), <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/6231334.stm>

¹⁹² Charles Hapgood, *The Path of the Pole*, (Philadelphia: Chilton, 1970), 107.

¹⁹³ Only after understanding Bethlehem's star and Joshua's long day did I understand these signs.

¹⁹⁴ *God's Voice in the Stars: Zodiac Signs and Bible Truth*, Ken Fleming, 2012, pp.@.

¹⁹⁵ For more info on Biblically related pole shifts see, Bruce Killian, "Joshua's Long Day, And Other Pole Shifts Recorded in the Bible," 2020, <https://tinyurl.com/yyheyle5>

¹⁹⁶ G.K. Chesterton, "A Thing Worth Doing," (1910), <https://www.chesterton.org/a-thing-worth-doing/>.

¹⁹⁷ There might be three stars in a line representing the child's iron scepter. The only constellation representing Jesus is never near the planets.

¹⁹⁸ Initially I assumed this sign was in the evening because the sign would link to the fall feasts like Tabernacles.

¹⁹⁹ But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief (1 Thessalonians 5:4).

²⁰⁰ Chart made with *Cartes du Ciel*, www.astrosurf.com/astrope. Some constellations colors changed. This software is free and allows the sky to be viewed from any location on earth at any time back to 2000 B.C.

²⁰¹ My translation ESV-CE lightning.

²⁰² Bruce Malina and John Pilch, *Social-Science Commentary on the Book of Revelation*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 153, www.bibleandscience.com/science/dinosaurs.htm.

²⁰³ Bruce Killian, "Venus The Star of Bethlehem," (2020), <https://tinyurl.com/y3326t9l>. The birth of the sun happens at the winter solstice when the days start growing longer.

²⁰⁴ Capt, *The Glory of the Stars*, 7.

²⁰⁵ Bruce Killian, "Easter Transfiguration," (2020), <https://tinyurl.com/y5ykzyj9>.

²⁰⁶ "Mary, Ark of the Covenant," <https://tinyurl.com/y48qffln> and <https://tinyurl.com/6q5c4y>.

²⁰⁷ My translation.

²⁰⁸ Exodus 19:16, 19; Job 40:9; 1 Samuel 7:10; 1 Samuel 12:18; Isaiah 29:6; Revelation 4:5.

²⁰⁹ The Great Leonid Meteor Storm of 1833; A first-hand account by Elder Samuel Rogers, science.nasa.gov/NEWHOME/headlines/ast22jun99_2.htm.

²¹⁰ Capt, *The Glory of the Stars*, 33.

²¹¹ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd Ed., (Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1997), #2676.

²¹² There might be three stars in a line representing the child's iron scepter. The only constellation representing Jesus is never near the planets.

²¹³ Jerusalem is assumed because Michael the guardian of Israel is involved and because Jerusalem is the location of the two witnesses who have recently died.

- 214 There are two types of crowns, stephanos or victor's crown and stephanos or rulers crown.
- 215 Matthew 16:3 And in the morning, 'It will be stormy today, for the sky is red and threatening.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times.
- 216 It has one first magnitude star and six third magnitude stars.
- 217 It has one-second magnitude star and six fourth magnitude stars.
- 218 Capt, *The Glory of the Stars*, 27.
- 219 Killian, "Venus The Star of Bethlehem," 2020, <https://tinyurl.com/y3326t9l>.
- 220 References relating Jesus and sun Habakkuk 3:3-4; Psalm 19:4-6; Malachi 4:2; John 8:12.
- 221 Wil Milan, "The 1833 Leonid Meteor Shower: A Frightening Flurry," @ Nov 14, 2001, http://www.space.com/scienceastronomy/astronomy/leonids_1833_011114.html
- 222 One witness in Revelation 11:06 changes water to blood, so he is likely Moses.
- 223 "Astronomical events of American Renaissance, Meteor Storm of 1833," @ <http://coursesite.cl.uh.edu/hsh/whitec/LITR/5535/lectures/lect11whitman.htm>
- 224 My guess is the North Star typifies God's throne.
- 225 Emmett O'Regan, "St. Patrick and the End-Time Flood of Ireland", 14 October 2011, <https://unveilingtheapocalypse.blogspot.com/2011/10/st-patrick-and-end-time-flood-of.html>
- 226 Revelation 1:16 His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance. Malachi 4:2 But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in his wings. John 8:12 I am the Light of the world. Psalms 19:5 He has pitched a tent for the sun, which is like a bridegroom coming forth from his pavilion, like a champion rejoicing to run his course. Virgo isn't visible during a solar eclipse.
- 227 Bruce Killian, "The Chronology of Jesus' Life," 2020, <https://tinyurl.com/y5oth3qy>
- 228 Capt, *The Glory of the Stars*, 27. Another possibility Job 3:8 may refer to the constellation Draco. In ancient times, the sky was seen as a mirror image of the earth below. So the leviathan in the sea or nether world had a counter part in the sky, Draco who would swallow the sun or moon when there is an eclipse.
- 229 This is about two months before the heliacal rise/set of Venus.
- 230 Chart by *Cartes du Ciel*, www.astrosurf.com/astropc. Constellations color changed.
- 231 The alternative is this is the new Jerusalem, which replaces the sun as the source of light for the earth and the sun goes dark. Bruce Killian, "The New Jerusalem," 2004–2020, <http://www.scripturescholar.com/NewJerusalem.pdf>
- 232 Capt, *The Glory of the Stars*, 44.
- 233 Ethelbert W. Bullinger, *Number in Scripture: Its Supernatural Design and Spiritual Significance*, (1894) Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, pp. 123-134.
- 234 <http://jumk.de/astronomie/img/shoemaker.jpg>.
- 235 Bruce Killian, "The Chronology of Jesus' Life," (2019), 35, <https://tinyurl.com/y5oth3qy>.
- 236 Bruce Killian, "The New Jerusalem," (2004, 2020), www.scripturescholar.com/NewJerusalem.pdf.
- 237 MECILLAH highway, star course, or ladder: Isaiah 11:16; Judges 5:20; 2 Chronicles 9:11. Gesenius' Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon, <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strong's=H4546>
- 238 And Joseph's in a subtle way.
- 239 Many star of Bethlehem theories see planetary conjunctions as conveying meaning to the wise men, e.g. Martin, Larson, etc. Conjunctions mean the planets come close to each other or a star.

- ²⁴⁰ Ernest L. Martin, *The Star of Bethlehem: The Star that Astonished the World*, Second ed. (1996), <http://www.askelm.com/star/index.asp>
- ²⁴¹ Fredrick Larson, www.bethlehemstar.net, DVD. Short portions are available on YouTube.
- ²⁴² “The Birth date of Jesus Christ [Part 2.],” (2014), <http://blog.try-god.org/the-birth-date-of-jesus-christ-part-2/>
- ²⁴³ Maybe God wants Jesus’ house to be excavated.
- ²⁴⁴ “P. Sulpicius Quirinius,” Livius Articles on Ancient History, (2004, 2020) <https://www.livius.org/articles/person/quirinius-p-sulpicius>; <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quirinius>; <http://www.biblehistory.net/newsletter/quirinius.htm>
- ²⁴⁵ Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* XVII, 167, wesley.nnu.edu/biblical_studies/josephus/ant-17.htm. Book XVII, Chapter 6.4 A sign of God’s displeasure with Herod after he killed a leader attempting to stop Temple desecration.
- ²⁴⁶ Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* XVII, 191–213. www.ccel.org/j/josephus/works/ant-17.htm.
- ²⁴⁷ J. Bondeson, MD, PhD, “Phthiriasis the riddle of the lousy disease,” *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine*, (1998): 91:328–334, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/014107689809100617>
- ²⁴⁸ Could the winter solstice darkness link to the ninth plague three days of darkness.
- ²⁴⁹ The report of the slaughter of the boys in Bethlehem and the death of Herod’s oldest son reached Caesar at the same time. Syria was the Roman Province for the region including Judea which includes Bethlehem. Loeb Classical Library, Ed. Jeffrey Henderson (Harvard University Press, 1911), https://www.loebclassics.com/view/macrobius-saturnalia/2011/pb_LCL510.349.xml?readMode=recto
- ²⁵⁰ Killian, “The Chronology of Jesus,” <https://tinyurl.com/y5oth3qy>.
- ²⁵¹ 4Q Calendar Document A and B (also called 4Q320 and 4Q321).
- ²⁵² John C. Lefgren and John P. Pratt, “Dead Sea Scrolls May Solve Mystery,” (*Meridian Magazine*, 2003), www.johnpratt.com/items/docs/lds/meridian/2003/qumran.html
- Flavius Josephus, *Wars of the Jews* VI.iv.5 (6.250), in *The Complete Works of Flavius Josephus*, trans. William Whiston (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1981), 580.
- ²⁵³ Josephus, *Jewish Wars*, Lous [Ab] 10. Flavius Josephus, *Wars of the Jews* VI.iv.5 (6.250), in *The Complete Works of Flavius Josephus*, trans. William Whiston (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1981), 580. <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/josephus/complete.iii.vii.iv.html>. Ninth of Ab, Finegan, *Handbook of Biblical Chronology*, 275. August 3, 70 A.D. Julian (or August 5, 70 A.D. Gregorian).
- ²⁵⁴ Most dating Jesus’ birth using priestly courses make two mistakes. They restart them annually, and have the pilgrim feasts interrupt the flow. They assume 24 courses * 2 times per year + 3 weeks = Two cycles are completed in 48 weeks so the courses rotate through the year at 365.25–336 days per year. The first courses would annually serve a third time. The feasts didn’t interrupt the normal course flow, because they didn’t necessarily start and end on the Sabbath. Joarib just took office when the Temple was destroyed, so the courses rotated through the year. It also shows the pilgrim festivals didn’t interrupt the flow of the courses.
- ²⁵⁵ This would place Jesus birth late December 1 B.C. or early January 1 A.D.
- ²⁵⁶ The Julian calendar was in use, but initially they added a leap day every three years; to compensate they were omitted in 1 B.C. and 4 A.D.
- ²⁵⁷ Victor Reijjs, “Extinction angle and heliacal events,” (2007), <http://www.archaeocosmology.org/eng/extinction.htm>.

²⁵⁸ “Planet, Lunar and Stellar Visibility,” www.alcyone.de.

²⁵⁹ A great light Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 4:16; Acts 22:6.

²⁶⁰ This refutes the statement that no prophet comes from Galilee.

²⁶¹ Hatch and Redpath, *A Concordance to the Septuagint*, vol. 1, 593.

²⁶² Ibid.

²⁶³ See also Isaiah 4:2.

²⁶⁴ Satan is 3½ constellation a half of seven a very imperfect number.

²⁶⁵ E. Raymond Capt, *The Glory of the Stars*, (Muskogee, OK: Hoffman Printing, 1998 Edition).

²⁶⁶ The sixth seal = the second to fifth trumpets = the seventh bowl

²⁶⁷ Rather than hail or hailstones, stones so meteorites.