***The Signs of the Zodiac, No. 4
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Our study today continues in Romans 10:18-21. Our subject is "Revelation Rejected," and this is segment number 5.

**The Heavenly Luminaries**

Probably the most awesome spectacle seen by human eyes is the vast, starry heavens which have been created by God. There are few things as inspirational as standing out in a very dark place on some cool day with a crystal clear night, looking up into the sky, and seeing what God has splashed across there by His handiwork – to see the clear evidence of His glory; that is, His absolute perfection in every way. The human mind is overwhelmed by the magnificence of the stars and the bodies which are in space. The interstellar spaces portray the omniscience and the omnipotence of our God, and therefore, His competence in speaking to us. The heavenly luminaries therefore, proclaim, as the Bible says, "The glory and the majesty of the God – the God who created it all simply by His spoken word."

**The Star Constellations**

The arrangement of the star constellations in the signs of the zodiac is there to convey God's message of salvation. The meaning of these signs, of course, cannot be deduced simply from the sign itself. It must have an explanation that comes apart from the sign.

**God is a God of Signs**

I want to stress that again, because that is a very important element in this study. God, in ages past, was in the habit of teaching people through signs. He would give a sign, but what the sign meant was not to be determined from the sign itself. You have to have some frame of reference to understand it.

**The Swarm of Flies**

I want to give you three examples of that. The first one is the swarm of flies that God sent over Egypt – the flies that covered all the land in which the Egyptians lived, and everything that they touched. But the same flies would not go over to the Goshen land area in which the Jews lived. Exodus 8:21-23 tell us about that. Moses has asked Pharaoh to release the people. He says in verse 21, "Else if you will not let my people go, behold, I will send swarms of flies upon you." Moses is now quoting God: "And upon your servants, and upon your people, and into your houses. And the houses of the Egyptians shall be full of swarms of flies, and also the ground whereon they are. And I will set apart in that day the land of Goshen in which My people dwell, that no swarms of fly shall be there, to the end that you may know that I am the Lord in the midst of the earth. I will put a division between my people and your people. Tomorrow shall this sign be."

Now if suddenly there were all kinds of flies that have descended upon Egypt, nobody would know what the significance of that was. But God says, "I'm going to send these flies, and it will have this meaning: You will see that you are overwhelmed by these insects: that you cannot control them; and, that you cannot escape them. You will also see that My people over here in their territory are completely free of this irritant. The flies (the insects) are not over there. And I am thereby demonstrating to you, with a visual aid, that there is a difference between being a child of God and being a child of Satan. There is a difference between being in the family of God and being out of the family of God. There is a difference between being My people, and not being My people. And the consequences are enormous."

So, the point of the swarms of flies, as a sign, was explained. It was the power of Israel's God over nature. The magicians of Egypt could do nothing about it. And it was a message of God's power to care for his people, and to punish unbelievers.

**King Hezekiah**

There's a second illustration that God is a God of signs. We find this in 2 Kings 20:1-11. This is a very impressive one indeed. This is the occasion when King Hezekiah is desperately ill. He is, in fact, sick unto death. So, he goes to God, and does what he should do. He prays about his physical condition, and he seeks the healing that God can give him. God says, "OK, I'm going to give you 15 more years of life." Then Hezekiah says, "Could you give me something as a sign to confirm that you are going to do this, to put my mind at ease?" And what God does would have been meaningless in itself? You could stand there and see this thing happening, but you wouldn't know what it meant. It was because there was an explanation that the sign became impressive.

Here's what happened. 2 Kings 20:1: "In those days Hezekiah was sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah, the son of Amos, came to him, and said unto him, 'Thus says the Lord: set your house in order, for you die and not live.' Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed into the Lord, saying, 'I beseech you, Lord. Remember now how I have walked before You in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in Your sight.' And Hezekiah wept very much.

"And it came to pass that, before Isaiah was gone out into the middle court, that the word of the Lord came to him saying, 'Return to tell Hezekiah, the captain of My people, thus says the Lord, the God of David, your father. I have heard your prayer. I've seen your tears. Behold, I will heal you. On the third day, you shall go up unto the house of the Lord. And I will add unto your days 15 years. And I will deliver you, in this city, out of the hand of the king of Assyria. And I will defend this city of Mine for My own sake, and for My servant David's sake.'

Jerusalem at this time was under siege, and under threat, and almost conquered by the Assyrians. So, Hezekiah had this double problem: his health; and, the military threat: "And Isaiah said, 'Take a lump of figs.' And they took, and laid it on the boil, and he recovered. And Hezekiah said unto Isaiah, what shall be the sign that the Lord will heal me; that I shall go up onto the house of the Lord the third day?' And Isaiah said, 'This sign you shall have of the Lord: that the Lord will do the thing that you have spoken. Shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees (that is, on the sundial).' Hezekiah answered, 'It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees (it was no problem for the shadow to go ahead ten degrees), but let the shadow return backwards ten degrees." And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the Lord. And He brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the dial of Ahaz."

**Signs are Significant**

Now if Hezekiah had been standing out there watching the sundial, feeling as bad as he was feeling, and suddenly the shadow moved backward, he would have looked at that twice and said, "Now that is peculiar. What did it do that? I never saw a sundial go backwards." But it would've been a meaningless sign unless God had first told him what it meant. Signs are significant. There are signs in God's dealing with people, but indeed we do have to have the explanation.

Well, Hezekiah lived 15 years more. He did have the evidence that he asked for. And furthermore, he was encouraged because God said, "This sign is also going to tell you something else. I am going to get rid of the Assyrians. I'm going to lift the siege, and I'm going to remove the threat of this foreign invasion upon Jerusalem."

**Isaiah**

There's one other example that illustrates the point that our God is a God of signs. We find this one in Isaiah 20:1-6. The sign here is that the prophet Isaiah, for three years, walks around in public in his underwear, and without any shoes on. Now that will get somebody's attention in a hurry. Obviously, if you were to walk in here your underwear and barefoot, we would observe it. What it meant, we wouldn't know. We'd have some ideas, all of which would have been wrong in this case. But unless somebody had explained what the point was of this, the sign was meaningless. So here it is.

Isaiah 20:1: "In the year tartan came into Ashdod (this tartan is sort of a military authority), when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him, and fought against Ashdod, and took it. At the same time, spoke the Lord by Isaiah, the son of Amos, saying, 'Go and loose a sackcloth from off your loins. Take off your outer garments.'" Isaiah has been in mourning because of the evil of the Jewish people, and the impending defeat upon them in captivity by the Assyrians. He's been pleading with them to change their minds. And he's been showing his own grief by the Oriental way of wearing the sackcloth over his underwear garment.

God says, "'Take the sackcloth from off your loins, and put off your shoes from your foot.' And he did so, walking naked and barefoot;" that is, naked in the sense of not having any outer garments on: "And the Lord said, 'As my servant Isaiah has walked naked and barefoot three years for a sign, and a wonder unto Egypt and upon Ethiopia, so shall the king of Assyria lead away the Egyptians as prisoners, and the Ethiopians as captive; young and old, naked and barefoot, even with their buttocks uncovered for the shame of Egypt.'" What Israel was doing was saying, "You're just an alarmist, Isaiah. We have formed a military alliance with Egypt and Ethiopia. We have people who are going to come to our help. We'll take care of Assyria. You're wrong."

So, God says, "Let me tell you something, fellas. I want you to watch your prophet walking around here in his underwear and in his bare feet. That is a sign to you – a sign that I'm going to strip you naked, and I'm going to send you into captivity, because I'm going to strip Ethiopia down, and I'm going to strip Egypt down, and you'll have nothing left for your defense. You're putting your trust in a false bulwark."

Verse 5: "And they shall be afraid and ashamed of Ethiopia, their expectation; and, of Egypt their glory. And the inhabitant of this coast land shall I say in that day, 'Behold, such was our expectation, where we fled for help to be delivered from the king of the Assyria. And how shall we escape?" Isaiah says that they will realize then that they made a big mistake. Then they'll say, "Now where do we go from here?" And the point was: why in the world didn't we listen to our prophet who was delivering us God's message and warning us?

So, we have these signs of the zodiac in like manner. They circle the sun as the earth moves around the sun. It seems like the sun is moving from one sign of the zodiac (from one house of the zodiac) to the next one. Actually, the sun is not moving. It just appears so as the earth moves around it. These constellations have, from ancient times, been viewed as portraying certain images. And to these have been added certain stories. These stories have since been corrupted. The basic story that was revealed here in the stars was the story that was first revealed to Adam and Eve shortly after they sinned. And in Genesis 3:14-15, we have a summary of the story of divine redemption, and we have the principle actors introduced here in Genesis, and the events. These have subsequently all been illustrated here in the star constellations of the zodiac.

In Genesis 3:14-15, we read, "And the Lord God said unto the serpent, 'Because you have done this, you are cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field. Upon your belly shall you go, and thus shall you eat all the days of life.'" The serpent was the animal which was used by Satan. God is speaking now to Satan. God says, "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed. He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel."

So, here we have all the story of redemption summarized. We had a sinless couple in Adam and Eve. We have Satan disguised as a serpent. We have the reference to the seed of the woman, which is Jesus Christ, Who is coming in the future. We have the bruising of the Seed on the cross in the future. We have the crushing of Satan by the Seed in the resurrection of the virgin's Son. And, we have, as a consequence of all that, justification provided for the human race. Salvation, then, is available to those who trust in Jesus Christ as personal Savior.

**The Signs of the Zodiac**

Now we've already indicated that the 12 signs of the zodiac may be grouped into three books to tell their story of salvation. There are four constellations in each book.

**Book 1 – The Redeemer**

And we have briefly covered, thus far, book one. The title of book one is "The Redeemer." This tells us the story of the Redeemer.

1. **Virgo**

The story of the signs of the zodiac very briefly begins with Virgo the virgin. She is seen as holding a seed and a branch. It portrays a young woman who is to give birth supernaturally to a Son. This Child will be the seed of Abraham, the royal branch of David. Every constellation has three sidepieces called decans, which expand the story of that particular constellation.

* 1. **Coma**

Here we have, first of all, the story expanded by indicating that the child was going to be the desire of all nations, here in the Constellation Coma.

* 1. **Centaurus**

He will possess two natures in one person in the constellation Centaurus.

* 1. **Boötes**

He will act as a harvester of unbelievers, and as the good shepherd of believers, in the constellation of "Boötes."

That's chapter one of book one.

1. **Libra**

Chapter two of book one is the constellation Libra the scales. It portrays the failure of unsaved mankind to balance with the God's standard of absolute righteousness. The justice of God demands absolute righteousness for eternal life in heaven.

* 1. **The Cross**

The Associated decans expand that basic message of this sign. And that is that sin must be paid for by the death of Jesus Christ on the cross, indicated by the Cross constellation.

* 1. **The Victim**

Jesus Christ is thus the sinless victim, indicated by the Victim constellation.

* 1. **The Crown**

Jesus Christ is resurrected and given the crown as ruler over all nations and created beings, illustrated by "Corona" the Crown.

1. **Scorpio**

The third chapter of Book one is Scorpio. Scorpio is representing Satan bruising the heel of Jesus Christ, but at the same time being crushed by Christ in return. This was Satan's effort to destroy, for the purpose of preventing atonement from ever being made. From the time that Jesus Christ was born, Satan tried to kill Him.

* 1. **serpent**

The associated decans expand this basic message, indicating that Jesus Christ does battle with Satan the serpent, that you see in the Serpent constellation.

* 1. **The Serpent-Holder**

At the same time, Jesus Christ is preventing the serpent from seizing the crown, which the serpent is reaching for. He is doing this as the Serpent-Holder in the Serpent-Holder constellation ("Ophiuchus").

* 1. **Hercules**

Also, he is clubbed and conquered by the great Hercules whom you see in the Hercules constellation, clubbing the serpent that he holds in his hand.

1. **Sagittarius**

Chapter 4 of book 1 is Sagittarius the archer. Here we have portrayed the God-man, Jesus Christ, aiming an arrow at the scorpion Satan. We have here a picture of Jesus Christ delivering the death blow in the battle with Satan to terminate the angelic rebellion.

* 1. **Lyra**

The decans accompanying this constellation begin with Lyra the harp, proclaiming the joyful victory song of this redemption.

* 1. **Aura**

Aura the altar is pointing down toward hell, which portrays the light like of fire.

* 1. **Draco**

There is also Draco the dragon, who is seeking to defeat Jesus Christ.

**Book 2 – The Redeemed**

We then began book 2. Book 2 is entitled "The Redeemed."

1. **Capricorn**

The first constellation is Capricornus the sea goat, which portrays Jesus Christ sacrificed in death for the sin of mankind, giving eternal life to those who are trusting in Him. The believers here are pictured as fish who are drawn into the net salvation.

* 1. **The Arrow**

The accompanying side pieces (the decans) portray the death of Jesus Christ from this arrow in flight, the Arrow constellation, Sagita.

* 1. **The Eagle**

We also have the killing of the Eagle, Aquila, thus falling to the earth, representing the death of Jesus Christ.

* 1. **The Dolphin**

However, Delphinius, the Dolphin, represents the springing back to life in the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

1. **Aquarius**

Chapter 2 has to do with the sign of Aquarius. Aquarius, the water bearer, portrays Jesus Christ pouring out the water of eternal life to mankind. The supply of water is inexhaustible, so unlimited atonement is provided.

* 1. **The Southern Fish**

The sidepieces explain this further. They portray believers as fish as we see in the constellation of the Southern Fish, who is drinking up this water of life.

* 1. **Pegasus**

This message is carried quickly to all the world, and certainly those who knew the story in the stars saw it immediately, and learned it from their parents. And this is demonstrated by Pegasus, the winged horse.

* 1. **The Swan**

The message that Pegasus swiftly carries is pointed up to mankind in the cross in the sky, Cygnus the Swan, which is sometimes called the Northern Cross.

1. **Pisces – Their Blessings Delayed**

We begin now, picking up the story where we stopped, with the third chapter of the second book concerning the Redeemed. This is the sign of Pisces the fish. The title of this chapter is "Their Blessings Delayed." This sign portrays two fish that are in the act of swimming. One is heading north, toward the Polar Star. The other one is swimming parallel to the sun – on the ecliptic path of the sun. The two fish, however, are tied together at their tails by a band. The band, we will see, is under the foot of Aries the ram, indicating that he controls what these fish are doing.

This sign, of course, portrays the multitude who would enjoy the blessings of the Redeemer's work. The two fish portray the fact that there are two great bodies of believers in God's plan of the ages. There is the body of believers known as Israel, which is presented to us in the Old Testament theocracy. There is, furthermore, the second body of believers which we have in the New Testament: the church. The two are totally distinct, but both of them are under the provision of eternal life made by Jesus Christ. But the two bodies of believers form God's total program.

We have this indicated in Hebrews 12:22-23, which says, "But you are come unto Mount Zion, and into the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem (that is, Heaven), and to an innumerable company of angels, to the General Assembly and church of the firstborn (that is, Christians), who are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect," referring to Israel. So, there are angels; there are Christians; and, and there are born-again Jews from the theocracy of the Old Testament. Those are three great groups of created beings who are loyal to Jesus Christ.

The fish going northward portrays those who are moving in their orbit of their heavenly relationship, which characterize the church; while the fish which is going along the sun's path refers to Israel, which has basically earthly blessings. It is very important that we distinguish between the blessings of Israel, which have been basically earthly blessings, and the blessings of Christians, which are basically heavenly blessings. God promised material prosperity to the Jews of the old theocracy. He never promised material prosperity to Christians. And the success syndrome idea of going out and finding prosperity success, in a material sense, if you are obedient to God, is a false pursuit. If God prospers you in a material way, it is because He has graced you out in that respect. It isn't because it is a consequence of your dedication and devotion to Him. He has reasons for doing it. The most dedicated, and the most devoted, Christians – the finest, and the most fearless of all the ages, have been among the poorest people on the face of the earth, not the least of which was the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

So, here we have one fish heading for those heavenly blessings – that characterize the church; and, one fish pointing down in the other direction – that which characterizes Israel in its earthly blessings. Jesus Christ, the Messiah, the King of Israel, is also the Lord of the church. These two groups of saints are always totally distinct from one another, as they are in all Scripture, and in God's plan of the ages. They are never mixed.

So, Jews and gentiles, of course, today make up one body, the church, but then they're no longer Jews and they're no longer gentiles. At that point, they are Christians. Ephesians 2:11-22 explain to us.

* 1. **The Band – Upheld and Governed by the Lamb**

Here are the sidepieces (the decans) that explain this in greater detail. First of all is the sidepiece called the Band. The band ties the two fish together by their tails. The title of this paragraph one is "Upheld and Governed by the Lamb." This constellation portrays a band tying the two fish together at their tails. The band is held in check under the foot of the ram Aries, and is also tied to another constellation, Cetus, the sea monster. Here we have Pisces, the two fish, and the band is tied to Cetus, the monster who represents Satan. We have Aries the Lamb, and as they looked up in the sky, they envisioned Aries' foot across the band. So, Aries controls the fish. And it is tied to Cetus (Satan), who is also controlled by Aries the Lamb, representing Jesus Christ.

So, the Constellation portrays a band tying the two fish together. The band is held in check under the foot of Aries the ram, representing Jesus Christ. It is tied to the neck of Cetus (Satan) the monster. The two fish are associated. They cannot move without each other. Actually, in the program of God, they complete each other. Hebrews 11:40 tells us that very thing. It says, "God, having provided some better things for us (we Christians), that they (the Old Testament Jews), without us, should not be made perfect. Jesus Christ provided redemption for the believers of both Israel and the church. The foot of Aries on this band symbolizes His authority over Israel and the church as the source of their salvation.

* 1. **The Crowned King – Head over all Things**

The second sidepiece of the constellation Pisces is "Cepheus," the crowned king. The title of this paragraph is "Head over all Things." In this constellation, there is portrayed a crowned king who is holding out a scepter, with his foot planted on the North Star. If you look at a major star chart, you'll see that his foot is on the North Star. The North Star is the point around which all the heavens revolve every night. Therefore, this symbolizes that Cepheus is Lord of Lords. The Greek word "Cepheus" means "the royal branch," referring to Jesus Christ.

The brightest star in this constellation is called "Alderamin," and it means coming quickly, speaking of the return of this king. The second brightest star is called "AlPhirk." It's an Arabic word, and it means "the Redeemer." The third brightest star in this constellation is called "AlRai," and it means "he who bruises." So, again, we point out to you that the names of these stars which have come down to us, which probably originally came down from the names that God says that He gave them originally, tell us the meaning of these particular constellations. And these names: coming quickly; the Redeemer; and, He who bruises very clearly speak about the work of Jesus Christ. It pictures Him in His role as King of Kings in His Millennial Kingdom. As king of the Jews, He will rule over all the earth with the church as His reigning consort. Jesus Christ carries the royal authority which was given to Him as a descendant of King David.

This was revealed in the Old Testament in Isaiah 9:6-7: "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there should be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with righteousness from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this."

That was told to His mother in Luke 1:31-33, we find, at his birth: "And, behold, you shall conceive in your womb, and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called The Son of the Highest. And the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David. And He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever. And of His kingdom there shall be no end."

* 1. **Andromeda – The Bride in Bondage and Affliction on Earth**

The third sidepiece explaining Pisces is Andromeda. Here is one of the famous star clusters. This is paragraph three of this chapter. The title is "The Bride in Bondage and Affliction on Earth." As you looked up into the sky, the ancients would point out this star cluster and say that what that portrays is a woman – a woman who is suffering – a woman who has chains on her hands and on her feet. We call it Andromeda. The Hebrews call it a name which means "the chained one.”

The brightest star in this constellation is named for an Arabic word which means "the broken down one." The second brightest star has a name which means "the weak one." The third brightest star has a name which means "struck down." So, the names of the main stars, again, portray to us some woman who is in suffering and who is enchained. And what this portrays is clearly of the role of the church in her rejection by the world until Jesus Christ returns.

This is the picture of you and me, really, in the world today. We are portrayed by the Andromeda constellation. We, as members of the body of Christ, Who in our society, this post-Christian era in which we live – we Christians are becoming more and more the off-scouring of the garbage of our society. People don't like to listen to Christians. People don't want to talk to Christians. People are not interested in what Christians have to say. And if they find somebody who comes along, in the political life, for example, and says, "I'm going to go back to basic biblical principles," they're going to lie in the bushes, waiting to destroy him the first time he makes a wrong move, or has a breach of good judgment, because they are out to destroy the church and its message. They're not talking about the religious church (the religious world). They don't mind that, but any time we talk about biblical churches, those are the ones that our society views as a direct threat to their New Age ambitions.

So, this is the significance that, centuries ago, God was saying, "I'm going to have a group of people. They will be very close and very dear to Me, but there will be a period of time when they will be in chains. Now when we come a little later, moving down through the path of the sun, we're going to come to another woman – a really dramatic woman, and his one is now freed, no longer chained, but on the throne, reigning. So, the whole story is there. The more I've gone through these constellations, and the more I move from one segment to the next, the more astounded I am at the message that is up there, and how we have wasted a lot of great opportunity in star studies, and in teaching about what is out there in the sky, without having tied this to the real message, instead of the pagan mythologies that are associated with these constellations.

So, here's Andromeda, the chained woman. Jesus Christ is hated and rejected by Satan's world. So, also is His bride and body, the church. The church, however, is one day going to be exalted on earth to royal authority. We're told this in 1 Corinthians 6:2 about the church: "Do you not know that the saints shall judge the world? And if the world shall be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters?"

Revelation 1:5-6 tell us of that dramatic change: "And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth, and to Him that has loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us a kingdom of priests unto God and his father: to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

When Jesus Christ comes to this earth the second time, He is going to bring His suffering saints with Him. Andromeda's chains are going to be broken then, and she will be established as the ruler over the earth that now despises her. The Bible is full of the fact that you people are someday going to take charge of this earth. Here are some passages you may want to look up: 2 Timothy 2:12; 2 Timothy 3:12; 1 Peter 2:19-21; 1 Peter 3:14-17; 1 Peter 4:12-19; 1 Timothy 4:10; and, Philippians 1:29. Time precludes me from reading these verses, all of which would clinch what I am saying – that this is a picture of a chained woman who is going to be unchained, and who is going to be victorious over those who now hold her under contempt and under foot.

The influence of the church today is chained. There are fewer places all the time where Christianity is free to bring spiritual enlightenment and for human blessings. The New Testament church began its career in rejection and hatred. The trouble was that, once the church became accepted in the world, it accommodated itself to the world, and to the rebellious nature of man. Freeing the church of Jesus Christ to influence society again would mean attacking the lust patterns of the sin nature. And that's why Christians are not liked today. Christians are not appreciated, and they're not welcome. The society in which we live wants to chain the Christian because they do not want us restricting the lust patterns of the sin nature. That would be a restriction on the lust for fame; on the lust for power over other people; on the lust for wealth; on the lust for arrogance; on the lust for human viewpoint justification; on the lust for human good activities; on the lust for illicit sex; and, on the lust for pursuing equality. Sinners want a chained church. They do not want their sin nature inhibited.

In the ancient world, the sign of Pisces, interestingly enough, was looked upon as a most unfavorable sign, and one portending violence and death. Women who believed that their children were affected by what side they were born under – they hated to give birth under the sign of Pisces. It was viewed as a suffering sign. For that reason, the Syrians and the Egyptians rarely ate fish because of the sign of Pisces. In the Egyptian hieroglyphics, the fish is a symbol of something odious; something that is hated; and, something that is disliked.

1. **Aries – The Blessings Enjoyed**

Let's look at one more. Next is the sign of Aries the Ram: chapter four in this second book. The title is "The Blessings Enjoyed." This sign portrays a ram who has powerful curved horns, and who is lying down in composure with a look of confidence and strength. We have seen the lamb before up in the sky, but there he was in a suffering mode. Here, this lamb is confident. He's looking out with strength and with great capacity. Book two, about the redeemed, begin with the goat dying in sacrifice. Now the book ends with this male sheep living again in victory with the atonement completed. The Hebrew name for this sign is the word for the Lamb, relating, of course, to Jesus Christ – the Lamb of God in John 1:29.

The brightest star in this constellation (in this sign of the zodiac) is a word which means "wounded." The second by the star is a word which means "bruised." Thus, the message of death of this lamb, now risen in full strength and glory, is conveyed by the very names of its main stars. Revelation 5:12 tells us this about Jesus Christ.

Mythology associated Aries with the story of the escape of two children from death at the hand of a wicked stepmother who was chasing them. And only through Jesus Christ, the resurrected Lamb of God, can sinners escape the eternal death in hell, such that Satan is chasing them in order to bring them into. Acts 4:12 and John 14:6 make it very clear that you only go to heaven through Jesus Christ. There is no other way. He is the only escape. Jesus Christ, therefore, is the true Aries who was sacrificed for the sins of the world, and He has risen again. Revelation 13:8 observes that.

Therefore Aries, for us Christians, is a sign of rejoicing. This is what it was among Egyptians and the Persians. It was viewed as a sign of rejoicing in the ancient world. At the time of the Jewish exodus from Egypt (here's something interesting), the sign of Aries was on the date in the Jewish calendar, the month of Nisan – the 14th day of the month. It was on the 14th of Nisan that the Passover was slain. When they left, this sign was there in that constellation, on the 14th of Nisan. But by the time of Jesus Christ, the 14th of Nisan had moved farther back into the sign of Aries. Every sign has 30 degrees. It moved farther back into that sign so that when Jesus Christ was crucified on the 14th of Nisan as the true great Passover of God, the sun stood at the very spot where the stars "the pierced, wounded one" and "the bruised one" were to be found. So, when, on high noon on the crucifixion day, the world became dark, and the city of Jerusalem was encased in total darkness, you looked up in the sky, and what should be brilliantly flashing but these two stars in the sign of Aries. The Passover lamb was slain originally on the 14th of Nisan when it was in this constellation. Then when the real final, Lamb of God was slain in Jesus Christ – standing right in the center of those two stars. That is an amazing testimony, again, that God has put a message up there, and one, which if you have the key and the information, you could clearly see.

* 1. **Cassiopeia – The Bride Released and Making Ready**

Let's look at the decans of Aries. Number one is Cassiopeia. We've all heard of her. She's one of our favorites. The title of this chapter is "The Bride Released and Making Ready." The name "Cassiopeia" means "the enthroned one." It's a constellation which pictures a beautiful woman who is seated on a throne, and she is grooming herself. Her left hand is pictured as holding a branch, and she's arranging her hair; while her right hand is rearranging her robe. It is portraying the picture of a woman who is preparing herself for a public function. You will notice that this woman again represents the church, just as Andromeda did – Andromeda, the chained woman. This woman is now no longer chained. Her hands are free. And in her left hand, she holds a branch of victory. When you look up into the sky, this constellation is easily identified because it has five bright stars in the form of a W.

The brightest star has a name which means "the freed." The second brightest star has a name which means "the branch" – a token of victory. What this decan proclaims is the message about the church as the bride of Christ who is preparing yourself for the Lord's return from heaven. Ephesians 5:27 tells us about that. The bride is getting herself ready. How? By her works of divine good righteousness. That is what she is arranging here in her robe. She's arranging the works of divine righteousness. That is what we Christians are going to take into heaven as the robes of our glory, so to speak. The Lamb's wife is seen here as lifted out of her suffering, and her rejection in Satan's world.

The ancients used to call Cassiopeia "the daughter of Splendor" or "the glorified woman." So, even they understood that this was some kind of a special lady. It portrays the church preparing herself for her marriage to Jesus Christ, and the celebration that she will attend of her marriage at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb during the Millennium. Revelation 19:7-8 describe how, for 1,000 years, the marriage of Jesus Christ and the church will be celebrated.

On November 10th, 1572, a star of surpassing brilliance suddenly appeared in this constellation, Cassiopeia, which ordinarily would not be there. This star shown continually in magnificent brilliance for 16 months, and then it suddenly disappeared, as if somebody had turned the light off. And it has never been seen since. This is easy to see, isn't it? This is a symbolic significance there, perhaps, of the rapture of the church. This is what is the light of the world now. This is what is illuminating society, which suddenly is going to be snapped off and out when the rapture takes place.

Next to Cassiopeia in the sky sits Cepheus the king representing Jesus Christ. And Cepheus is holding out his royal scepter to her as His bride.

* 1. **Cetus**

The second sidepiece in this constellation is Cetus, the sea monster. This portrays a great sea monster with scales; an enormous head; a big mouth; big front paws; and, the body and tail of a whale. The sea monster represents Satan, who is viewed as the enemy of the fish – the Christians who he seeks to devour. This is a picture of Satan as the enemy of church believers (1 Peter 5:8).

The band of Pisces, which we pointed out to you before, here is held by Aries, the Lamb, representing Jesus Christ, is tied to the neck of Satan, so that God has him in check.

The brightest star has a name which means "the bound" or "the enemy chain." The second brightest star has a name which means "overthrown." There's a star in the neck of Cyprus, and it has a name that means "rebel." One thing that's interesting about this star. Every 300 days, it diminishes from a second magnitude brightness to where it is invisible to the human eye. Suddenly this thing stops shining, and then it comes back. It is almost as if it were symbolic of the fact that Satan is not immutable. He keeps changing. You can't trust him.

This decan portrays Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, of course, as the conqueror of Satan. Christians are in Christ, so they too have bound Satan and his power over them. Satan will be bound completely, as you know, during the millennium. He will be imprisoned by being thrown into the pit of the abyss. Revelation 20:1-3 tell us about that. For 1,000 years, he'll have no access to this earth. And here again this binding around his neck that the ancients envisioned speaks to us of that binding. Jesus Christ will, of course, permanently bind Satan after the millennium by casting him into the lake of fire.

* 1. **Perseus**

The third decan is one of the most magnificent in the sky, and most significant in its meaning. It is one of the greatest of the hero gods of ancient mythology, Perseus. There is so much about him that we will not go any further today. But we will pick the story up next time with Perseus.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1988

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