

OpenTheo

Gospel in the Stars



Individual Topics - Steve Gregg

Steve Gregg presents the theory of the "Gospel in the Stars", which proposes that the zodiac signs were designed by God to proclaim the Gospel in a certain manner. The theory suggests that the twelve zodiac constellations were passed down through generations, containing a connection to the gospel message. However, some Christians do not approve of this theory, pointing out that it cannot be confirmed by historical evidence, and star names have been documented for only a few hundred years. Despite its controversial nature, the "Gospel in the Stars" theory offers a speculative interpretation of the purpose behind the stars and their arrangement.

Transcript

I was asked by Chris some time ago if I would teach tonight on the subject of the Gospel in the Stars. Now, I think he took an interest in this when he heard my lectures online about Psalm 19, in which I did kind of expound a little on this subject. And I haven't really taught on it much recently, but I became aware of this information back in the 70s from a book I read by a Presbyterian named Dwayne Spencer.

I think he's now deceased, but I think it was called the Gospel in the Stars. If I'm not mistaken, it was the name of his book. And it was the first exposure I had to this, but then I encountered other Christian authors who'd written on it.

I've encountered about five or six books now written by Christian authors that present essentially the information that forms a theory that the signs of the Zodiac were designed by God to proclaim the Gospel in a certain way. Now, this theory is not approved by all Christians, but those who do approve it are not strange Christians. D. James Kennedy, for example, wrote a book promoting it.

Henry Morris, the founder of the Institute for Creation Research, I think it was called, one of the leading creationist authors, he included this information in an appendix in his book, Many Infallible Proofs, his book on apologetics. There are a number of mainstream Christians, Calvinists and Dispensationalists, all others, which are, although I disagree with Calvinism and Dispensationalism, generally speaking, these are people who are not

considered to be cults, certainly not the occult, who have supported the notion that I'm going to be sharing. Now, I'm sharing this as a theory.

This is something that cannot be proven. There is some scriptural hint, and there is some possible support even in the constellations themselves. But, lest you prejudge the matter by the fact that we are not supposed to indulge in astrology as Christians, I just want to make it very clear, we're not talking about what's usually called astrology.

When you hear about the zodiac and the 12 houses and so forth, you never hear about these things except from astrologers. Astrologers, in that particular discipline, are what we'd call diviners. Divination is a form of getting mysterious information through special practices like astrology or reading tea leaves or looking at chicken gizzards and things like that.

Throughout history, occultists have sought to get mystical information from certain practices that we would place in the category of the occult. Among those is the view, which is still widely held, and most newspapers still have horoscopes in them that are based on this occult practice of astrology. They believe that the 12 houses of the zodiac have some influence over your destiny, that each of the 12 houses is associated with a certain time of the year.

Now, if you're not familiar, the houses of the zodiac, each of them are a series or a group of constellations. There's usually a major constellation that gives its name to the house or to the sign. Then there's peripheral smaller constellations associated with it.

I'm not an expert on astrology because I've never had an interest in astrology itself. But from reading these books, I became aware that there is a credible claim that there could be a gospel in the stars that God has presented. But pagan astrology assumes that the stars control destinies and even control your temperament and your personality.

That if you're born between March 20th and April 21st, then you're an Aries, which is traditionally represented by a ram. And that an Aries has certain characteristics in their personality. It's very common for people who take astrology seriously say, oh, you're obviously a Gemini, or you're obviously a Pisces, because you have these personality traits.

And in the horoscopes, when you read them in the newspapers, they act as though, because the stars are in a certain alignment today, if you are a Capricorn, well, then you better stay home because it's going to be a bad day for you if you go outside. Whereas if you're a Scorpio, this is going to be a great day for you. You've got to make some risky investments.

It's like this with the horoscopes are, they're like fortune cookies. Generally speaking, if you get a fortune cookie, you know that it's always true. It's never wrong.

But that's because they are statements that can't be wrong. There are statements that are true of everybody, essentially. Now, that may not be quite as much the case with the horoscopes, but many times it is.

Frankly, if you read the horoscopes, say, okay, since you're a Virgo, you really ought to, you know, don't trust your friends today or something. I mean, well, anybody might find it helpful not to trust their friends on certain days. But I had actually had a couple of friends who were hippies before they became Christians, and they moved to Hawaii, and he was looking for a job.

And there was a little local paper that wanted him to write the horoscopes for them. And he said, well, I'd be glad to do it. One thing is I don't know anything about astrology.

And they said, that doesn't matter. Just write what sounds good. Now, I don't know how many horoscope writers were hired on those terms.

There are people who certainly are experts on the zodiac and so forth. But from the Christian point of view, there's no reason to believe, in fact, it's a form of idolatry and occultism to believe that the stars somehow dictate affairs on Earth. And this, no doubt, is akin to ordinary paganism, which had many deities, many gods, and many were named after stars and planets.

I mean, when you think about the planets in our solar system, many of them are named after Roman gods. And certain stars have Latin or Greek names that are, you know, in the mythology of those ancient pagan cultures, names of some of their gods. And while modern astrologers wouldn't normally say the stars are gods, they may not use that terminology, yet they attribute to them power to affect destinies and personalities and things, but the kind of thing that really we think God does.

I mean, those are God things. It's a little like if, you know, if you pray to Mary and the saints, you're assuming that Mary and the saints have some abilities that, as far as we know, only God has, like the ability to hear everyone praying at the same time and answer, you know, to attend to them. We don't believe, we who are Protestants, don't believe that Mary is omnipresent or omniscient, and therefore to attribute to her the power to do, to hear everybody's prayer and respond in some way, is to, in the mind of a Protestant, to give to Mary certain qualities that really only belong to God himself.

Catholics don't see it that way, and they would not be sympathetic to our suggesting that they've made a goddess out of her, and probably astrologers would not be sympathetic toward us saying that they've made gods out of the stars. But by giving the stars the kind of influence and powers that really, as far as we know, only God has, we have detracted from God himself. Now, the gospel in the stars is not even connected to astrology in any way, with the exception that it recognizes that there are, in fact, 12 houses of the Zodiac, but that's no great revelation.

Even the Bible mentions them as a given in Job. God mentions the Masorah. If you would look at Job chapter 38, for example, the mere existence of 12 houses of the Zodiac do not connect with astrology in general, and what is claimed by those who believe there's a gospel in the stars is an entirely different kind of claim than anything that's related to astrology.

In Job chapter 38 and verse 32, God is speaking, no less than God himself. Now, in Job, a lot of times the people speaking aren't very well enlightened. They're Job's friends who are kind of on the wrong track, but when God speaks for four chapters, you pretty much got to figure, you know, you can't discount the truth of what he's saying, and he's challenging Job to recognize how little man knows, how little Job knows, compared to God, and that's basically what the whole tenor of God's response to Job is, and in that, in Job 38, 32, God says, can you bring out the Masorah in its season, or can you guide the great bear and his clubs? Cubs? Excuse me.

Now, he's referring to constellations, but the word Masorah is a Hebrew word, which the King James and the new King James leave untranslated. Now, I used to use a Cambridge King James version of the Bible, and at this verse where it said Masorah, there was a marginal note that said, or the twelve signs, and there are some Hebrew sources that say we're not really sure what Masorah means, and they all know it has to do with constellations, and there are a few sources that would simply say the Masorah just means constellations, but frankly, the most respected lexicons that I have on my shelf, I've consulted them on this, the most respected ones say it means the twelve signs, or the zodiac, that Masorah is the Hebrew word for the twelve signs, and there's no reason to have any problem with this, because every culture essentially has recognized these. I say every culture, there's no doubt a culture here or there that does not, but for the most part, the Babylonians, the Assyrians, the Greeks, the Romans, even, you know, aboriginal cultures from, you know, the New World, South American, and you know, Australian, and so forth.

These twelve signs are kind of, they've always been there since there have been stars, and they always are recognized, and when I say always, I need to be careful not to be too sweeping. There are, for example, the Chinese zodiac has some differences from Western zodiac, and so forth, but for the most part, traditionally, these signs are associated with a ram, which in our Latin names for them would be Aries, a bull, which we call Taurus, twin humans, which is Gemini, a crab, which is Cancer, a lion, which is Leo, a virgin, which is Virgo, then scales, like balances, that's what Libra is represented by, Scorpio is the Latin for a scorpion, Sagittarius is actually a centaur. A centaur in mythology of the pagans was a creature that had a body of a horse and the upper torso and upper body and head of a man, and in the star charts, traditionally, Sagittarius is depicted as a centaur with a bow and arrow, and so he's sometimes called the archer as well.

Capricorn is represented by, as a goat, but not an ordinary goat, usually has a tail like a mermaid, it's like a sea goat, the front end of it is a goat, the back end is like a fish, and then Aquarius means the water bearer, and then depicted as a human being pouring a jug of water out, and there's a stream of water depicted in the star chart illustration, then Pisces is the fish. Now, although different cultures have their own languages and call them by different names, yet across the world, many of these cultures have the same images, whereas Virgo is Latin for virgin, you know, the Greeks would have a different name for it, the Mayans might have a different name for it, but it's still a virgin, it's just in their language a virgin, and so what's interesting is that these 12 signs are almost universally acknowledged in cultures that are widely diverse from each other and have not had any recent connection to each other in modern times. Now, according to the scripture, of course, all cultures descended from Noah's sons, that is, from a single family, so what Noah and his sons may have known could well have been taken with when at Babel when the languages were changed and the people were dispersed, these people were only a few generations removed from Noah and his sons, and therefore what Noah knew, if he knew anything about this subject, let's just say for the sake of argument, he might have known the names of these houses and passed them on to his sons and grandsons, and when the languages were changed, the concepts remained the same, but just in different words.

This is a theory that some have, but the fact that the reference is to the 12 signs in Job, which is the oldest book of the Bible by many people's reckoning, means that it's a very ancient thing, that even the Hebrews, because Maseroth is a Hebrew word, even the Hebrews recognized the 12 houses of the Zodiac. Now, they didn't recognize them as deities, but they recognized them as existing, and in the course of a year, the apparent location of the sun associates with one of these houses for approximately 30 days at a time and goes through the whole circle. In fact, the word Zodiac is a Greek word, means the circle of small animals.

Now, some of the things in the Zodiac aren't animals at all, and some are not very small, like Taurus the bull or Leo the lion, but nonetheless, the word Zodiac means the circle of small animals. Maseroth seems to be a more descriptive term, the 12 signs, but signs, what are signs for? Well, if you look back at Genesis chapter 1, we find that when God made the stars, there was a purpose in his making them that is stated. It's not elaborated on, I wish it was because I'd like to know more about this, but it is stated briefly in Genesis chapter 1 and verse 14.

It said, Then God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night, and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years, and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth. And it was so. Then God made two great lights, the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night.

He made the stars also. Now, this is on the fourth day of creation, and the opening words of this description of the activity of the fourth day, he says, he said, Let's make some lights in the firmament, and they can give light on the earth, and they can serve as signs, and for seasons, and for days and years. Certainly, we distinguish a day by, you know, the cycle of dark and light, and that's the sun and the moon governing those things.

The years are governed by how, you know, basically the sun's apparent movement through a circle of the zodiac, and at different points in time, the sun is closer or appears to be closer in relation to one of these signs than to another. And that's, you know, if you have any born at the time when it's closer to, you know, Aquarius, then the astrologers say you're in Aquarius, and you'll have certain characteristics, and so forth. These things I do not acknowledge, and will not approve, because I think Christians are foolish to believe in the zodiac, in that sense of the zodiac.

But it's God who said he made the stars for signs. It's God who told Job, something Job already apparently knew, he's referring to something familiar to Job, so the 12 signs. Can you bring out these 12 signs? He's not introducing the subject to Job.

Job knew about the 12 signs. God's simply challenging him. Do you have any control over these? So the fact that there are 12 signs, and that God made the stars for signs, both are declared in Scripture, and perhaps with significance.

What the significance is, is not altogether clear, but many have felt that since a sign is something that communicates information, if you see a sign, it's telling you something. Even Jesus' miracles in the book of John are referred to as simeon, which means signs, meaning that he didn't just do them because, you know, it was something to do, but his miracles actually were communicating something. He healed the blind man, communicated that, and Jesus said, I'm the light of the world.

He turned water into wine, and made the declaration on a different occasion, but nonetheless, I'm the true vine. Vines turn water into wine, so that's what he did, and his miracles actually were communicating something about himself. Even raising Lazarus from the dead was illustrative of his statement just prior to doing so, where he says, I am the resurrection and the life.

He's saying things about himself, and he's giving signs that illustrate or that declare these things about him. His miracles were that way. Now, if the stars or the constellations that the stars form were for signs, it is thought by many that, in fact, the stars are there to communicate a message, and that message, it is theorized by some Christian writers, is the gospel itself.

Now, if you turn to Psalm 19, we find perhaps the most lengthy passage that has any relevance to this subject, Psalm 19, verses one through six. Now, this Psalm has two

parts, the first six verses, and then the few verses that remain at the end, and it is divided into two subjects. One is the witness of nature, especially of the heavens, about God, and the second subject is the witness of Scripture about God, about the law of the Lord, the testimony of the Lord, the statutes of the Lord, and so forth, and so this Psalm is about the witnesses that God has given us about himself.

One is in nature, and one is in Scripture, and the part about nature is the first six verses of Psalm 19, and let me just read these verses for you. It says, the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows his handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, night unto night reveals knowledge.

There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line has gone throughout the whole earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them he has set a tabernacle for the sun, which is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber and rejoices like a strong man to run a race.

Its rising is from one end of heaven to the other, and its circuit to the other end, and there is nothing hidden from its heat. Now, the psalmist begins by saying that the heavens declare the glory of God, and this could be taken in the most generic sense, that anyone who contemplates the heavens must know there's a glorious God. I mean, whoever made those heavens is no small God.

He's a big God. He's incredibly big, as near as we can tell, infinitely large, infinitely powerful. These are traits of God that anyone could deduce from just contemplating the heavens, and it's the same thought that Paul brings out in Romans chapter 1, when he says, you know, the invisible things of God are revealed to the unbeliever because they are plainly seen in the things that he has made.

He says, even his eternal power and deity. Now, you can't, by looking at nature, you can't discern everything there is to know about God. For example, you wouldn't know quite how loving he is, just looking at nature.

You could see things like flowers and say, you know, these are a little bit superfluous, but they brighten our lives. You know, flowers didn't have to be so pretty. They didn't, I mean, they really don't have any function to humans, except to enhance the beauty of our world.

I mean, you could say God's a very good God. In fact, Sherlock Holmes, and I think it was in the study of Scarlet, one of the first Sherlock Holmes stories, written by Arthur Conan Doyle, who was no Christian, and Sherlock Holmes really hardly ever said anything about God, but in one of the first stories, he surprises his new friend, Dr. Watson, by going over to a flower pot and saying, you know, flowers tell us a lot about the beneficence of the Creator, because they don't serve for us a practical purpose, and they would be absolutely superfluous, except that they make life brighter, you know. He didn't say it in

those terms.

Arthur Conan Doyle is much more eloquent than I am, but the point is, I thought it was so surprising when I read it the first time. I thought, how weird that is. Sherlock Holmes was no spiritual character, but he was nothing if not a logical one, you know, and he could look at evidence and tell you where it pointed, and he believed that the existence of flowers points toward the goodness of God.

On the other hand, there are wasps that sting tarantulas in the abdomen and lay their eggs there, and their larva eats the inside of the living spider over a period of days, and it slowly dies, probably painfully. And looking at those kinds of things, you know, I say, the God who made that, I'm not so sure if he's loving or not. That's pretty monstrous.

So, I mean, you can tell certain things about God from nature. Other things you would have to be told more specifically, because in a sense, nature speaks with more than one voice as to the character of God. But one thing that Paul said that anyone could deduce from the things God's is his eternal power and his deity.

That is, that there is a God and he's infinitely powerful. Now, that could be all that David is saying in Psalm 19, the heavens declare the glory of God. You could certainly deduce from the heavens if you're just a logical thinker there's a big God out there, glorious, and you could glorify God.

But the psalmist goes into more detail than that. First of all, he says that the stars, day by day and night by night, they utter knowledge. Now, it could be, again, just the generic knowledge that there is a God, but he kind of unpacks this, you know.

There's no language, no people anywhere in the world that cannot hear this testimony from the stars. Their voice is heard in every language, all people hear it, and knowledge is being communicated. Now, I could not prove that this is going to have any direct bearing on the subject of the gospel of the stars, but if there is a gospel of the stars, this would be a good way to talk about it, and this is where some people find this too.

He goes on to talk about the sun, talks about the constellations or the stars, how that in them God has set a tabernacle for the sun, S-U-N, and he speaks how the sun moves through these constellations, of course, and he likens the sun to a bridegroom or to a strong man ready to run a race. Now, the bridegroom imagery to the Christian easily conveys the notion of Christ, the bridegroom, and a strong man. Jesus referred to his conflict with Satan.

He said when Satan is likened to a strong man too, he says when a strong man, fully armed, keeps his palace, his goods are in peace, but when one stronger than him comes, he takes away all his armor in which he trusted and spoils his house. Jesus is the one stronger, that Jesus is like a stronger man, a hero, a hero who comes and takes on the

bad guy who is also strong, but that the sun is likened to a bridegroom coming out of his chamber and like a strong man ready to run his course. I mean, it could be coincidental.

I'm not insisting on anything from here, but many Christians felt like there's some hints here that this is talking about the sun is like a picture of Jesus himself, and it's not surprising that that would be so because Jesus himself said, I am the light of the world. He said, you know, when he said we need to go down and raise Lazarus, his friend said, but they try to kill you down there only recently. You're going to go down there again where you can get into their claws? And Jesus said, listen, there's only 12 hours in the day we must work while it is day.

That is, while Jesus is here, there's a limited time to do what he's got to do. Can't be worried about the dangers. Daytime is when he's here.

When he's gone, it's night. Like Paul said, the night is far spent. The day is at hand.

Jesus is going to come back again. It's been like a day daybreak. When Jesus came the first time, it was like a daybreak.

The father of John the Baptist in Luke chapter one, when John the Baptist was born, Zacharias prophesied, and among other things, he said, the daybreak from on high has visited us. And Isaiah said in Isaiah nine, which is quoted in the fourth chapter of Matthew about Jesus, it says, those who sat in darkness have seen a great light and upon whom the shadow of darkness was, upon them the light has dawned. Some of the Old Testament scriptures about Christ's first coming seem to speak of him as a sunrise.

And Isaiah 60 says, arise, shine for your light has come and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you like a sunrise. And in Malachi chapter four talks about how on those who fear my name, the sun, S-U-N, of righteousness will arise with healing in his wings. Talk about Christ coming in his first coming.

And so the coming of Christ was like a sunrise. The Old Testament prophets and the New Testament writers and Jesus himself encouraged this imagery. When he went back to heaven, he disappeared from view from the earth.

Now there's an interesting parallel between the church and the moon because we are, Jesus said, as long as I am in the world, I'm the light of the world. But he also said to his disciples, you're the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid.

When the sun goes down, the world can't see the sun anymore. But if they can see the moon, they can see the light of the sun reflected. The moon doesn't have any light of its own.

It's just a rock. It doesn't burn like a sun does. It doesn't generate light, but it is in the sky where the sun is, so to speak.

It is seated with the sun in heavenly places so that when the world does not see the sun anymore, the moon can still have a view of the sun and reflect the light back to the earth. The church is like that too. We're seated with Christ in heavenly places.

The world does not see him anymore, but we see him, it says in Hebrews, and we reflect his light. So during the night, which is when Jesus is absent, the church is like the moon reflecting his light to the world, but like any night, it ends with another day. Jesus, when he came the first time, it's the dawning of a day.

When he comes a second time, it's the dawning of a new day, and he's the light. And therefore, the comparison of Jesus to the sun is shot through old and New Testament images and statements. So when the writer of the psalm says, the sun is like a bridegroom, it's like a strong man, and it goes through this course of these... there's a tabernacle that God has set for the sun in the heavens, in these stars.

How much he's trying to say and how much he's not trying to say is questionable, but there are many who feel that in view of the fact that virtually all cultures recognize these zodiac signs, and that the sun does in the course of a year repeatedly go through these 12 phases of the zodiac, that there is something that ancient people knew, ancient Hebrews included, that there is something being said, that there is speech being uttered, there is knowledge being revealed by the heavens where the sun runs its course. Now, again, this is not very specific, so to apply this to the zodiac requires a certain amount of speculation, but some feel there's reason to do so, and I'll give you more reasons in a moment. Now, in Romans chapter 10, in verse 18, Paul is... it's kind of hard to follow his train of thought in a way, because he talks about how shall they... he says, "...whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." Then he says, "...but how shall they call on him in whom they've not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" So it sounds like he's making a case for, we better send out preachers so that the world can hear, and they can call on the name of the Lord.

But then he says in verse 18, "...but I say, have they not heard?" Now, that's a rhetorical question, because he's suggesting really they have, even if a preacher has not gone to everybody yet, there's parts of the world where the preacher has not gone. Have they never heard the message? And he says, "...yes, indeed." And he quotes Psalm 19, which says, "...their sound has gone out to all the earth and their words to the end of the world." Now, those who do not believe in this gospel of the stars theory, they would say that Paul is using Psalm 19 differently than it's used in Psalm 19. They would say that when he says, "...their sound has gone out to all the earth and their words to the end of the world," that although the psalm that he's quoting is speaking about the stars, that Paul is giving a different application to human preachers, that human preachers have gone and preached all the world.

But I don't think there's much justification for so radically changing the meaning of the psalm. It sounds to me like Paul is saying, even though preachers have not yet penetrated every place in the world in his day, yet it's not like these people have ignorance. I mean, they've got a measure of ignorance, but they're not totally ignorant, because as it says in Psalm 19, "...their voice is heard throughout the world." There is no place on earth where their message is not being heard, and the verse he's quoting from Psalm 19 is talking about the stars.

He's basically suggesting, or he may be suggesting, that though the gospel needs to be preached in its entirety by human preachers, it's not as if the gospel hasn't been preached at all throughout the world. There are voices preaching it, and he cites Psalm 19. And this is a connection that has led many evangelical thinkers and writers to think maybe there is, maybe Paul is referring to, some witness in the constellations that is related to the gospel message.

Now, we read in Psalm 147, in verse 4, about God. It says, "...he counts the number of the stars and calls them all by name." God does. God counts the number of the stars.

By the way, humans have not been able to do that. They say there's billions and billions and billions, and they, you know, and we can't even see all of them, so we don't know how many there are, but among the ones that are actually visible, it would be almost impossible to count them. But God knows the number of the stars, and he calls them all by name.

You know, I always wonder how people who have 10 or 11 children can think of enough names for them. But, you know, if you've got billions and billions of stars, or Adam named all the animals, these people must have, God must have a great imagination, Adam must have a great imagination. But God has named the stars.

It doesn't say here that he's revealed the names of them to anybody, but there's a second time in Scripture that says he names the stars, and that's in Isaiah. The one I just quoted was Isaiah, I mean, Psalm 147, verse 4. But in Isaiah chapter 40, verse 26, we're given similar information. Isaiah, God speaking through Isaiah, says, lift up your eyes on high and see who has created these things, who brings out their host by number and calls them all by name.

So he's talking about the heavenly host, the stars. So again, twice the Bible says that God has names for the stars. Now, we don't want to jump to too many conclusions, but this could be one reason that the identity of these constellations is shared by so many diverse cultures.

The names of them, the original names of them, may have been communicated to Adam, may have been passed down to Noah. Noah's three sons might have been aware of them. We don't know.

This is all conjecture, but it would explain what is otherwise difficult to explain, and that is why, you know, cultures all over the world, unrelated to each other, look up at Virgo, and they say that's a virgin. But if you actually look at the stars in Virgo, they don't look like a virgin. They don't look like anything.

To us, if you don't know anything about astronomy or astrology, it's just random stars. If you look at the, you know, the drawn star charts, if you get a picture of the whole zodiac with all the constellations, and I wanted to bring one, I wanted to, I would like it if I'd had a PowerPoint where I could just put some of these up, these constellations, you could see. But the truth is that Virgo, for example, the virgin, there's like a handful of stars in there, and it's not like you connect the dots and, hey, that looks like a girl, you know? It doesn't.

It's like they're, you know, you've got this elaborate drawing of a woman, and there's a star here, and a star there, and one over here, and one over here. How did they get a virgin out of that? And if someone decided we're going to make that a virgin, though it doesn't look anything like a virgin, why would other cultures I'm related to also see a virgin there? We don't know the answer to that question, but one possible answer is the ancients knew the names that God had given to these stars and to the constellations, and he did give them names. Again, there's no affirmation in scripture that God revealed those names to people, but if he didn't, how did these guys know that God named them? I wouldn't have guessed that they all have names, but if God revealed the names, or of some of them, at least the important ones, then we would know that, then the psalmists would know that, then Isaiah would know that.

So there is this idea that the 12 constellations, or the 12 signs, which involve each of them is complex with more than one constellation, but that they are not just something that pagans thought up. It's interesting that shortly after the flood, before the languages were confused at Babel, in order to prevent themselves from having to scatter throughout the world, the leaders of the post-flood men, and apparently Nimrod is named in the scripture as one of the main ones, they decided to build a tower to form a one-world religion. Now, why do I say that? Why, where does it say a one-world religion? Well, it actually says, let's build a tower that has the heavens in its top, and there have been found in Mesopotamia a great number of what they call ziggurats, which are like Babylonian pyramids or towers, and they have the signs of the zodiac at the top.

It's generally assumed that these were intended as astrological observatories, and some have felt, since the standard history of astrology that you'll read in the encyclopedias as it began in Babylon, well, the Tower of Babel was the beginning of Babylon. In fact, in the Greek Septuagint, it's called the Tower of Babylon. It was on the plains of Shinar, which is where later Babylon sat.

So, the first ruler of Babylon, Nimrod, built a tower, which almost certainly was a

ziggurat, there were others, and probably for the purpose of astrological observation. Now, we don't know this to be so, but it's very possible that since Noah and his family knew, and everybody knew, there were 12 signs, that in order to create a man-made false religion, that Nimrod or somebody decided to make a religion out of these 12 signs. And if, indeed, the 12 signs were earlier known to be a presentation of the gospel, one could easily see how turning it into a pagan religion would be not only wrong in the sense of being pagan, it would be a strategy to obscure something that God had revealed about Christ.

Just the kind of thing the devil might want to do as early as he could get a chance to do it. And pagan astrology, which more or less deifies these stars and gives them influence over destinies of men, we don't know of it existing before Babylon. Nobody knows exactly where it began.

As far as secular history of astrology, if you read about it, I did, generally speaking, they say the Babylonians developed it first. Well, Tower of Babel was the beginning of Babylon. So, it's possible, and we're told in Genesis 10 that Nimrod began to be a king and the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, it says.

So, he may have been the one who either himself or maybe he hired priests or something to develop a false religion associated with the 12 houses of the Zodiac and that the Tower of Babel was to be a shrine, a central place of worship for this new star-gazing religion. Now, I'm saying may, might, I mean, if anybody has problems with this gospel stars theory, they're entitled to doubt everything I'm saying. I mean, I'm telling you true things, but the interpretation I'm placing on them is speculative, okay? I'm giving you the theory.

The theory has some merit, but it's not something that can be proven from Scripture, absolutely, okay? So, we're seeing what the Bible does say is that God made the stars to be signs, that is to convey information. He acknowledged there were 12 signs of the Zodiac when he spoke to Job about it. We're told that he gave the names to the stars and when David said that the heavens declare the glory of God and they utter knowledge and their voices heard throughout the world, Paul quotes that psalm in the context of talking about the gospel being preached to all the world.

Now, how tight that connection is and how loose it is, is up for anyone to make a decision. When I'm done here, you're still not going to know for sure because I don't know for sure, but I'm presenting a theory that has a lot of particular arguments to it that make it intriguing and something worth considering. So, there's also the interesting fact that in Galatians 3 and verse 8, Paul said that the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand saying, in you all the nations shall be blessed.

Now, in you, as we know from reading through Genesis, was later clarified a finer point.

It's not through Abraham himself, but through his seed, all the nations will be blessed. To say it'll be done through him does not exclude that it'd be done through his offspring.

And so, that offspring is Jesus. The seed of Abraham is Jesus. In Genesis, I mean, Galatians 3.16, Paul said he doesn't make these promises to Abraham and his seeds plural, but to his seed singular, which is Christ, he says.

So, Paul understands Abraham's seed, through whom all the nations will be blessed, to be Christ, the seed of Abraham. And he believed that God preached the gospel to Abraham. Now, Paul doesn't mention anything about the stars here, but God revealed aspects of the gospel to Abraham on different occasions in the book of Genesis.

We've got about 12 chapters of the life of Abraham and at least, I don't know, half a dozen times, God appears to Abraham and each time he gives him some more information. But it's apparently, as far as Paul's concerned, what God's given is the gospel. It says he preached the gospel to Abraham.

Now, there's one place where God did connect Abraham with the stars. And you remember, it's a very famous passage in Genesis 15.5. And it says there that God brought Abraham outside and said, look now toward heaven and count the stars, if you're able to number them. And he said to him, so shall your seed be.

And he believed in the Lord and it was counted to him for righteousness. Interesting that in verse six, Abraham believed in the Lord and it was counted to him for righteousness, is quoted twice by Paul and once by James. And it's an important Old Testament passage about justification by faith.

It's in the context where God took him out under the stars and said, look at the stars here. If you can count them, so shall your seed be. Did he mean the multiple seed of Abraham that would be numerous as the stars? Possibly.

Was he saying something cryptic about the seed through whom all the nations be blessed, which is Christ? Possibly also. Now, as far as counting the stars goes, actually the word that's used there, it can also be translated tell. In fact, in the King James version, the same word appears twice in the verse.

And in the King James, I think one time they translated, if you can number the stars and the other is tell the stars. The word tell is actually a word that can mean like to tell a story. Now, whether it means that here or not, I'm not arguing.

It can mean count. It can mean number them. There's, if you look in a lexicon, there's quite a list of English words that can be used for it.

One of them is to cipher or to decipher. I don't know if this is simply God saying, look how many stars there are. That's how many descendants you will have.

He could be saying that and nothing more. In other words, there could be nothing about the gospel and the stars in this statement because on another, on a different occasion, God said your seed will be as numerous as the stars and the sand of the seashore. So it's clearly just talking about the number of them.

But when he says, if you can tell the stars, that's what your seed will be like. There's no, there's no guarantee that there's not a cryptic reference there to your seed. Messiah will be, if you can tell this story in the stars, frankly, God could have meant both in one statement, but I don't know.

But the interesting thing is that Abraham said that God did preach the gospel to Abraham. And Paul is talking about the gospel of Jesus. Now, Paul quotes something from Genesis that isn't the passage about the stars, but another statement God made, that in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.

That's certainly part of the gospel message. But these are the scriptures that kind of are there, you know, pulsating with possible hints about there's something God put into the stars that he wanted people to recognize. He named them and in all likelihood revealed them.

The theory of the gospel of the stars sometimes adds a lot of details that I would not be willing to affirm. For example, sometimes those who write the book say, well, before the scriptures were written, people needed something, you know, a declaration of the gospel, until they had the scripture. And so they had the constellations and God, you know, it's like he painted a big picture in the sky.

And these characters in the circle of small animals, these pictures, each of them tells something about Jesus, something about the story of Jesus. Now, of course, a circle has no natural beginning or end. So if we're going to tell a story, I say, where does the story begin? And where does it end? Well, seemingly, you could start at almost anywhere.

But one thing that is considered to be significant is that the Sphinx in Egypt is connected to the Zodiac also. The Sphinx has a woman's face and a lion's body and tail. Inside the Sphinx, they have found wall drawings, which includes the circle of the Zodiac.

But they actually, in the circle of the Zodiac, they actually have a picture of the Sphinx itself. And the face of the woman is facing Virgo, the Virgin. And the rear end and the tail of the lion is facing Leo, the lion.

Because in the circle, if you start at Virgo, then the last constellation in the circle is going to be Leo. Now, you could arbitrarily start in a different place and end in a different place. But some feel that the ancient Egyptians, this is before Moses' time, that they knew the story of the Zodiac and that they've given the hint to it by depicting the Sphinx on the walls with the woman facing Virgo and the lion facing Leo.

And then there's the circle that goes around. Now, if I were really sure of myself about this, I would go through all the 12 signs and speculate about how any of them might contribute to the telling of the story of the Gospel. This would be quite impossible.

Even those who write book-length treatments, they have to admit, eh, some of this we're not quite sure how it was to be understood. There are certain themes in these star pictures that recur. One of them is conflict.

As I recall, I believe Sagittarius, the archer, is aiming his arrow at Scorpio, if I'm not mistaken. Or maybe it's at Cancer. I have to see how these are pictured.

But there's one constellation, Hercules, who isn't, you know, none of the 12 are named after him, but he's in there, who's holding a snake. And he's got his foot on, in some pictures, it's a scorpion. But not Scorpio, necessarily.

But interestingly enough, at the end of the circle, the classic depictions show Leo the lion pouncing on the head of a serpent, which is called serpens in Latin. But there's these conflicts between heroes, on the one hand, and maleficent creatures like snakes and scorpions and such. And of course, Jesus said to his disciples, behold, I give you authority over serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy.

So Jesus associates serpents and scorpions with the power of the enemy, Satan. And so it is thought, without knowing for sure, that one of the themes in this whole story is Christ defeating Satan. Now, the story, if it begins with a virgin, well, that's where the story of Jesus begins, too, with the birth of Jesus from a virgin.

We can't give clear identifications of everything else. Sometimes people say that one of the themes that you see recurring is the dual nature of Christ, part God, part, I mean, he's the God-man. For example, the centaur itself, part human, part animal.

Man, the human part, is made in God's image. We, as humans, or Jesus as a human being, had the animal part of humanity, but he also had the divine nature, you know? And so some think that the centaur may have communicated this double nature, the pictures of an animal nature mixed with a human nature. But really, its meaning would be, you know, the human nature and the divine nature, the human being the animal aspect.

But, and then the twins, sometimes the twins are thought to be the dual aspects of Christ's nature, the divine and the human. These things are speculative, and those who write the books say they are speculative. They suggest possible meanings.

But what they usually say is that after a while, humanity forgot what the message was. Perhaps after the time of Nimrod or whatever, that basically the message that Adam knew, and his descendants knew, and Noah and his family knew, eventually it got obscured, it got lost, so that now, if we even conclude that there is a story there, we

can't really retell the story, giving its original meaning to these things, but that ancient people might have been able to. The one thing I do find really interesting is that if the story starts with Virgil, it does end with Leo.

And Jesus, of course, is described as the lion of the tribe of Judah. And that he is depicted in the star charts as pouncing on the head of a it connects with scriptural themes in very significant ways. And we understand that Jesus, who began his earthly career, born of a virgin, will end history by destroying Satan, the serpent.

And so these are aspects of it. Now, those who write book-length treatments, they talk about the actual names of individual stars in the constellations. For example, in Virgil, there's a star they say that is called the seed.

And they say in several different languages, the star is called the seed. And in her other hand, there's usually a sheaf of wheat or something like that, and they say a star that's associated with that means the branch. Of course, seed and branch are both terms for Christ in the Bible.

But this is where the critics, really, who don't believe this view, they nail it by pointing out you can't... A lot of these star names, as they have come to be known, they can only be documented back a few hundred years. We don't know if in ancient times everybody recognized that star was called the branch or that star was called the seed. And so I don't go into that kind of detail because it's even more speculated than the whole theory is.

But the gospel of the stars theory is that these constellations exist for a reason. It's not for the reason that astrologers think. It's for the reason that God had in mind before he put man on the earth.

And that was that the story of redemption, the story of Christ, would be waiting for man when man appeared on the earth because he made the constellations two days before he made man. So that there would be never a time or a place on earth where people would be absolutely ignorant of the gospel. Though, who knows? Who knows if people understood these constellations that way before? We don't have any ancient record.

But of course, before the times of Noah, we don't have any written documents from any culture before the time of Noah. So we don't know what they knew or believed. That's why it's speculation.

But there's an interesting story. In the first book I read on this subject, which was called *The Gospel of the Stars* by Dwayne Spencer, he said that, I believe he said he was speaking at the Church of the Open Door in Los Angeles, which some of you may know that's the church where J. Vernon McGee pastored for a long time. But there's a missions conference.

And I believe he or someone he knew was speaking there. And they were speaking about the theory of the gospel of the stars. And after the presentation, an excited older woman came up to the speaker and said, I know that what you're saying is true.

Because I was a missionary to in Japan, in the mountains of Japan to a tribal group that had never had any exposure to the gospel of the Bible before. And she said, I preached the gospel to these people. And as I was preaching, she said, a woman in the back was getting all excited and jumping around and was thrilled.

And she said, I know this story. And it was the it was the tribes astrologer. And she says, I told my people this story.

I've read it in the stars. She said, I never knew his name until you came and told us. But I knew this story.

Now, that's an anecdote. But it's told by a Christian who I believe is an honest person, you know. And if if we take that anecdote at face value, then it would seem to support the theory that pagan cultures, some of them have been able to discern what that message is that sign that God wrote in the sky.

And so that's, that's what the theory is. Now, I realized that it would, you know, be much more satisfying to you as an audience, for me to say, and I know it's true, because this, this and this and this. But you may have noticed that all the scriptures we used, and I use quite a few to build this case, each of them can be understood a different way.

You know, when it says the heavens declare the glory of God, it doesn't say specifically that the constellations tell the story of the gospel. It could just be saying, you know, there's a big God out there when you look at the heavens. I mean, so every scripture I used could support the theory or not.

And so, so I only present it as a matter of interest, as what strikes me as a real possibility, and an alternative explanation to why those constellations, why those houses of the Zodiac not only are there, but are acknowledged to be there in the Bible. So that's, that's about as far as we can go with this particular thing. And I went longer on it than we thought I would.

Not, not those who know me.