

CETUS THE SEA MONSTER

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Introduction

This is the fourth installment in our examination of the witness of the stars, also called “The gospel in the stars,” in which we review astronomical traditions and writings dating back almost to the Flood around 2300 B.C., if not earlier. These traditions associate the constellations with a message that a redeemer will come to deliver his bride from the clutches of a wicked one. The wicked one usually appears in the form of a serpent or some monstrous beast. The hero rescues the bride at the cost of his life, which may include being swallowed by the monster for three days and nights. Yet the hero is regurgitated or resurrected and becomes king, marries the fair damsel, and wins himself a kingdom which he rules with his bride reigning beside him as queen. Additional themes include the wounding of the hero’s heel and the bruising of the heel’s head. (Sorry, I could not resist the pun. After all, that is whence the term arose in the first place. For those who may not know, “heel,” in addition to the back part of the foot, is an informal English word referring to a dishonorable man, a cad.)

The foundation for the theory of the witness of the stars is that God, when he created the stars for signs and for seasons, formed the constellations and placed into their arrangement an account of his plan for the redemption of man, which is the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. That gospel is that no man is righteous and that all have sinned and deserve eternal damnation in hell. But God, willing to make his mercy known, reconciled man to himself in the person of his only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ; who was fully God and fully man, and who without sin shed his blood on the cross as a sacrifice for all sin. Thus he cleansed us of all our sins past, present and future; and all who believe that simple fact, not seeking to establish their own (self-) righteousness but accepting the imputed righteousness of God, are counted righteous in the sight of God and will live eternally with him in indescribable joy.

The theory continues that God instilled in Adam that knowledge, and thence to Seth who is held by many of the ancients to be the first astronomer. Others regard Adam as the first. Over the millennia, the interpretation of the constellations has become secularized among the Gentiles, and

corrupted by Cabbalistic teachings among the Jews. Our current constellation, Cetus, affords us an example of such corruption.

We further assume that the original language, given to Adam and Eve, was Hebrew. All Semitic languages seem to stem from it. And most languages contain a remnant foundation of Semitic words. That is, we believe that Aramaic was derived from Hebrew, and not the reverse. As it is written in Genesis 11:9, “Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there *confound* the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.” *Confound* has synonyms entangle, snarl, knot, and twist; in this case an entangled foundation for all the major language families. Without such a common “foundation,” languages cannot be translated one to another, *viz.*, the languages of dolphins, whales, cats, dogs, birds, insects which primarily communicate by scents (pheromones), and even trees and plants. *Confuse* is the wrong translation, since confusion implies “To cause to be unable to think with clarity or act with intelligence or understanding.”¹ In other words, confused languages cannot be translated. And so, it is our contention that using Hebrew word roots, we recover the witness of the stars in its original, Scriptural form.

Our last assumption is that if God made the constellations for the gospel reason, then a figure should reflect what its name suggests. That assumption is flatly denied today. Indeed, textbooks on the constellations flatly state that the signs do *not* reflect what their names signify. The main reason why such a statement can pass as fact today is because of the widespread belief in the myth of evolution. Since evolution says we’re evolving for the better, and that each generation is physically superior to the former, it follows that if we are not visually acute enough to see the forms, certainly the vision of our grunt-and-groan troglodyte ancestors could not possibly be superior ours today. Our position is that since Adam was closer to the moment of creation, his vision was superior to anyone living today. We assume simplification (the antonym of evolution) over time. That is, we assume that the second law of thermodynamics is in effect. On that basis, we conservatively assume that our ancestors could perceive stars down to magnitude 6, whereas the limiting magnitude for the modern eye is around 5.²

To augment the assumption that Hebrew is the antediluvian language in our analyses of the individual constellations, we use two primary refer-

¹ American Heritage Dictionary.

² When astronomers speak of magnitude, the larger the number, the fainter the star. The faintest stars that have been observed using instruments is 32. The sun is magnitude -26. A magnitude 5 star is 2.5 times more luminous than one of magnitude 6.

ences and three secondary ones. The oldest primary reference is Frances Rolleston's monumental tome, *Mazzaroth or, the Constellations*.³ The second is Richard Hinckley Allen's *Star Names: Their Lore and Meaning*.⁴ The secondary references are English translations of *The Constellations* of Pseudo-Eratosthenes and the *Poetic Astronomy* of Hyginus,⁵ the *Euphratean Star List*, and the *Star List of Ptolemy*.

Cetus today

Most of what we know about Cetus comes from two fifth-century B.C. playwrights, Euripides and Sophocles, each of whom, wrote a dramatic play about a woman named *Andromeda*. Her story was old even at the time. The nineteenth century English orientalist, Archibald H. Sayce of Oxford, claimed that Andromeda, under another name, appeared in the ancient Babylonian *Epic of Creation*, written about 2000 B.C., not too long after the Flood. In the story of Marduk⁶ and the dragon, Tiamet, we find the oldest reference to the story of Perseus and Andromeda. Tiamet⁷ was the monster of primeval chaos, and was associated with the constellations Draco,⁸ Hydra,⁹ Cetus, and Serpens. The latter is part of the constellation Ophiuchus.

The playwrights' story starts when Andromeda's mother, Queen Cassiopeia, vainly claimed that her beauty rivaled that of the Nereids. This so infuriated their father, Neptune (the same is Poseidon), that he sent a sea monster to plague Cassiopeia's husband, king Cephus. Another version claims that the monster was sent to devour their daughter, Andromeda, who was chained to a rock for her mother's impertinence. On his way back home after slaying the Gorgon Medusa, Perseus¹⁰ arrived on the scene and uses the Gorgon head, which turns to stone anyone who looks at it, to kill the monster. In gratitude, Andromeda leaves her parents, marries

³ Rolleston, F., 1862. *Mazzaroth or, the Constellations*. (London: Rivington's, Waterloo Place).

⁴ Allen, R. H., *op cit*.

⁵ Condos, T., trans., 1997. *Star Myths of the Greeks and Romans: a Sourcebook*, (Grand Rapids: Phanes Press).

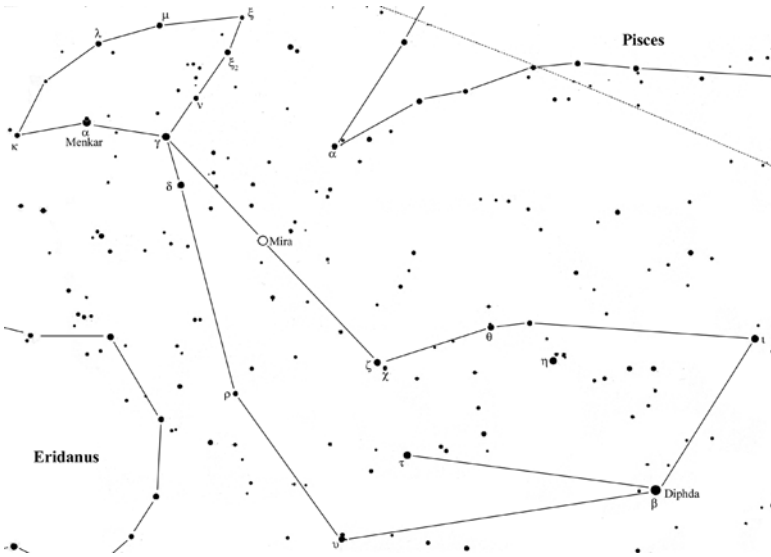
⁶ Marduk later acquires the name Bel (lord), who was also called "Baal."

⁷ Tiamet, described as the embodiment of evil, both physical and moral, was said to be some 300 miles long, and moved in undulations 6 miles high.

⁸ Bouw, G. D., 2002. "Draco the Dragon," *B.A.* **12**(99):51.

⁹ Bouw, G. D., 2002. "Hydra the Serpent," *B.A.* **12**(100):92.

¹⁰ Persues may actually be Greek for Persian. The Greeks were not known for their knowledge of other peoples. For instance, the Greeks did not know the name of the sixth century B.C. Ethiopian moralist Lochman, so they referred to him by his nationality, Æthiops, that is, Æsop. By the way, *Lochman* means gentle man.



Perseus, and freely goes to Argos with him. Another version has the couple staying with king Cephus for several years, and, when they depart for Argos, they leave their firstborn son, Persis, with Cephus to inherit the kingdom after him, seeing he had no son.

Thus far, the tale has little in common with the gospel. But there is more behind it than meets the eye. Earlier tales about Perseus identify him with Hercules, who freed Hesione (the same is the Greek Andromeda). This places him to the time of Jason and the Argonauts, that is, back to the Argosy, and also ties him to Perseus's home town of Argos. Lycophron,¹¹ in his *The Twelve Labours of Hercules*, says that Hercules spent three days and three nights in a sea monster's belly. Æneas Gazeus said, "Hercules is reported to have been, when shipwrecked, swallowed up by a whale." That tale, in turn, came from the Euphrates, not from Greece.¹² Thus, the earliest known account was told in a Semitic language, in this case Aramaic.

In the Aramaic account, we see echoes of the story of Jonah, who went to preach repentance unto Nineveh, the Assyrian capital city on the banks of the Tigris River, (whose ruins lie across the river from modern

¹¹ Lycophron lived at the court of Ptolemy Philadelphus.

¹² Allen, R. H., 1899. *Star Names and Their Meanings*. Reprinted 1963 as *Star Names: Their Lore and Meaning*, (New York: Dover Publications), p. 160.

Mosul, Iraq). Nineveh fell to the Babylonians roughly a century after its revival due to the preaching of Jonah. So the story was old when the Greeks received it from the Babylonians.

Why did the Greeks not acknowledge the Babylonian origin? Except for philosophers, the Greeks believed that only Greece was civilized and all other nations were barbarians. The philosophers made pilgrimages to Babylon and, especially, Egypt. Upon their return, the knowledge they acquired made them appear great in the eyes of their countrymen. So, it just wasn't in their best interest to tell the truth about such things. Indeed, they may have deliberately changed foreign names to Greek.

In the Egyptian star chart called the *Dendera*, the constellation is called *Khem*. The word means "subdued," reflecting its conquest by Perseus or Marduk.

The star names of Cetus

Since this is an ancient "Euphratean" constellation, do the names of its stars reflect its Semitic origin? Of the current star names, most are Arabic and less than two millennia old. Indeed, they describe the features of the constellation. For instance, β , which despite its secondary designation is the brightest star, is called *Deneb Kaitos*, meaning tail of the whale (Kaitos) in Arabic. In our figure of the constellation, it is at the front of the whale's mouth. The star that is the eye, η , is also called *Deneb*, meaning tail. The star ζ is called *Baten Kaitos*, meaning belly of the whale. Clearly, this star is higher up the body. The circlet of stars ϵ , π , ρ , and σ are the Arab astronomer, Al Sufi's, *Al Sadr al Kaitos*; the whale's breast.

The second brightest star, α , is called *Menkar*, which is *Al Minhar* in Arabic. The Arabic name means nose. But herein lies the key, for *Menkar*, it turns out, has a Hebrew meaning, namely, apportioned enemy, or, according to Rolleston, bound or chained enemy. Since the Arabic names are recent, it seems likely that the ancient Hebrew name Menkar was taken by them to be minhar, meaning, "nose," and so is possibly responsible for turning the orientation of the beast around into its modern state. The only star definitely not labeling a body part is another name for β , *Diphda*, (also spelled *Difda*.) which in Arabic means "frog." In Hebrew, *diphda* means thrust down," implying the star is part of the head.

The most unusual star visible to the naked eye is also found in this constellation. It is called Mira. Mira is an example of a long-period variable star. Over the course of about eleven months it varies in brightness from magnitude 1.7, brighter than the brightest stars in the Big Dipper, to magnitude 9.5, requiring a moderately-sized telescope to see, and back to

1.7 again. Mira means “wonderful,” (think mira-cle), but Rolleston found a Hebrew form meaning “rebel.” The only other prominent naked-eye variable is a star in Perseus called “Algol,” literally, the ghoul. If this is indicative of how variable stars were viewed by the ancients, then Rolleston’s translation of Mira as “rebel” appears more likely than the Arabic “wonderful.”

Even so, the star names tell us little to nothing about the constellation of Cetus that we could not infer from its name and the following scriptural references.

The whale in Scripture

Four times in Scripture whales are mentioned, and one time a sea monster. The four references to whales are these:

1. Gen 1:21—And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that *it was* good.

The Hebrew is *tannin*, expressing a lengthy monstrosity, that it, a huge, frightful creature. The modern versions erroneously translate the word as “jackal.” Apparently, they do so on the strength that some Arab names applied to stars in the constellation Draco (the dragon), refer to hyenas and camels. This, however, has nothing to do with the constellation itself. Spiritually and literally speaking, the jackal reading comes from the dragon.¹³

2. Job 7:12—*Am* I a sea, or a whale, that thou settest a watch over me?
3. Ezek 32:2—Son of man, take up a lamentation for Pharaoh king of Egypt, and say unto him, Thou art like a young lion of the nations, and thou *art* as a whale in the seas: and thou camest forth with thy rivers, and troubledst the waters with thy feet, and fouledst their rivers.

This identifies the whale as a type for Pharaoh. The predatory characterization implies something like a killer whale (orca) is meant, but more lies ahead which suggests a larger, more terrible form.

¹³ Bouw, G. D., 2002. “Draco the Dragon,” *B.A.* 12(99):51.

The last mention of whale identifies the fish that swallowed Jonah as a whale:

4. Mat 12:40—For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Some may argue that this is a great fish, as proclaimed in Jonah, but the Greek is the root for “cetaceous,” meaning, “pertaining to whales.”

Finally, we have the sea monster:

5. Lam 4:3—Even the sea monsters draw out the breast, they give suck to their young ones: the daughter of my people *is become* cruel, like the ostriches in the wilderness.

Here we note firstly that the Scripture knew that whales are mammals, likely long before scholars knew that. Secondly, since dragons are reptiles this cannot refer to a sea serpent or dragon.

We also have certain parallels between the above scriptures and the various accounts of the constellations. First, Israel was in Pharaoh’s “belly” before the Exodus, starting with the attempt by Pharaoh to devour their sons (Ex. 1:10 v.f.) and ending with the sea devouring Pharaoh (Ex. 14:27). So, too, was Jonah in the belly of the whale three days and three nights, which was a type of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. The first parallel was to call Israel to repentance, the second to call Nineveh (a type of the Gentiles) to repentance, in type, a call to the world to repentance, even to call out of it a bride for himself.

A second parallel stems from the comparison of Pharaoh with other animals, particularly, a whale in Eze. 32:2. The whale, as Pharaoh, inherits the properties of the dragon and the serpent, that is, Satan. Tiamet was said to be immense, and the rest of the verses in Ezekiel 32 communicate the same when it prophesies that Pharaoh’s body will feed the beasts of the whole earth (v. 4), that it shall cover the mountains and fill the valleys with its height (v. 5). The same things are said about Pharaoh in several other places in Scripture. I leave it to the reader to judge whether the Scripture got these ideas from the legend of Tiamet, expressed a thousand years before Ezekiel; or Tiamet’s nature and size, stemmed from an earlier revelation, probably oral, but perhaps written.¹⁴

¹⁴ There is a theory, called the “Toledoth theory,” which maintains that each time in Genesis we read “These are the generations of ...” (Gen. 2:4; 5:1; 6:9...), a change of scribe is indicated. The theory has been around for a long time.

Tiamet reminds one of leviathan,¹⁵ which is another type of Satan. Leviathan is not a whale for it has scales. Neither does the description of Tiamet suggest a whale. However, the description of Tiamet fits that of Leviathan as far as it goes, except that leviathan has seven heads (Psa. 74:14; Rev. 13:1), whereas Tiamet apparently had one.

We conclude from these things that in Scripture, the whale is a type of death itself. (Perhaps the tradition of the seven deadly sins comes from the seven heads.) And just as the princess Andromeda was rescued from unavoidable death, even so, the Lord Jesus Christ will rescue his bride from unavoidable death, for in Adam each soul is bound to die. It is significant that in Scripture, the soul is typed by a woman, such as the story of Ruth, for instance, and the woman called Love in the Song of Solomon. Death itself will be abolished (Rev. 20:13-14¹⁶) and suffer the same fate as the devil, the beast, and the false prophet (Rev. 20:10¹⁷).

(To be continued)

QUOTE

Darwin did not invent all of his zoo-mania. Erasmus Darwin (1731-1802) wrote a pulp article called “Zoonomia,” which greatly inspired William Paley (1732-1805). Both of these men were instrumental in erecting the superstructure of Darwin’s monstrosity. Jean Baptiste de Lamarck (1774-1805), Robert Chambers (1802-1871), and Rousseau (1712-1778), all contributed; and Darwin’s and Spencer’s final statement on the theory included slavish fidelity to the “Nebular Hypothesis” of Kant and Laplace. It is interesting to note that Charles Darwin (1809-1882) love Lyell’s *Principles of Geology* (1797-1875).

—Peter S. Ruckman, *The Sure Word of Prophecy*
(Pensacola, FL: Bible Believers Press), pp. 33-34.

¹⁵ Job 41:1-34.

¹⁶ Rev 20:13-14 – And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

¹⁷ Rev 20:10 – And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet *are*, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.