

Triennial Torah Study – 2nd Year 25/06/2011

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Ex 21	Isaiah 24-27	Ps 135	John 9
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Ex 21

When God gave the Ten Commandments, “He added no more” (Deuteronomy 5:22). It was a complete spiritual law. Still, God knew that for a physical nation, there would have to be a civil administration with much more detail about what constituted crime and what judgments to execute against specific violations. He had already given capital punishment in Noah’s day. It is not known if He had related any other judgments at that time, although it seems likely that He would have. Frankly, judgments were needed because God knew people would not remain chaste and law abiding (see Exodus 22:16). He knew that they would take advantage of others wrongly (22:25)-and He provided for these eventualities. The judgments exist because of human failings. Penalties would not be needed if people always obeyed. But they don’t-and this could wreak havoc in a national setting. So besides the tablets of the Ten Commandments, God here gives Moses the judgments. These judgments were based on God’s law of love and pertained to relationships between the people.

God allowed slavery, but in a much different way than one may perceive today. An Israelite may have become a slave due to poverty, debt or crime. After six years of servitude, God commanded that he be given freedom and help to reestablish himself so as to better avoid getting in the same situation again (Deuteronomy 15:12-15). Israelite slavery was similar to a state of indentured servitude. The purpose was not intended to be heavily punitive. The intention was to enable a person to make a new start and help him succeed in life. God also gave laws regulating the treatment of slaves. In fact, it was expected that some would be treated so well that they would want to stay with their masters even after the time came for them to be set free (verses 16-18).

It was a capital crime to curse or hit one’s parents. This judgment was based on the Fifth Commandment, “Honor your father and mother.” While the punishment may seem cruel and unusual to our 21st-century minds, its intent was that Israel not raise a nation of rebellious children, as we see so frequently today in our supposedly enlightened societies. This law, like many others, acted as a safeguard for society as a whole. If a rebellious child showed so little respect for authority that he would lash out and strike his own mother or father, there would be little to prevent him from striking out and injuring or killing others. Thus this law helped remove those who scorned authority and lacked the will or desire for self-control before they became too great a threat to innocent people around them. When this law was enforced, society as a whole was kept safe from young, out-of-control thugs who had chosen to live in a way that made them a danger to everyone else.

The words “eye for eye, tooth for tooth” were not intended to encourage vengeful feelings. Nor were they to be taken literally (although “life for life” and “stripe for stripe” could be literal). The principle was that the punishment should fit the crime and not go beyond it. On occasion, capital punishment had to be imposed. But in other cases, we read that there were various ways the guilty party could be redeemed.

God’s laws are not given as a burden to His people. On the contrary, they are imposed to prevent problems from occurring. All people shared a responsibility in both preventing and solving problems. We will be reading much more about God’s laws, comprising commandments, statutes, judgments and ordinances. God revealed them to define what He means by love. Love is the fulfilling of the law (Romans 13:10).

Take a look at Joh 10:1 “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter through the door into the sheepfold, but climbs up by another way, that one is a thief and a robber. 2 “But he who enters through the door is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 “The doorkeeper opens for him, and the sheep hear his voice. And he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 “And when he has brought out his own sheep, he goes before them. And the sheep follow him, because they know his voice. 5 “And they shall by no means follow a stranger, but shall flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers.” 6 ????? used this figure of speech, but they did not know what He had been saying to them. 7 ????? therefore said to them again, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. 8 “All who came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. 9 “I am the door. Whoever enters through Me, he shall be saved, and shall go in and shall go out and find pasture. 10 “The thief does not come except to steal, and to slaughter, and to destroy. I have come that they might possess life, and that they might possess it beyond measure. 11 “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. 12 “But the hireling, and not being a shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees. And the wolf snatches the sheep and scatters them. 13 “Now the hireling flees because he is a hireling and is not concerned about the sheep. 14 “I am the good shepherd. I and My Father know Me, and My Father knows Me, and I know the Father. And I lay down My life for the sheep. 15 even as the Father knows Me, and I know the Father. And I lay down My life for the sheep. 16 “And other sheep I have which are not of this fold – I have to bring them as well, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one flock, one shepherd. 17 “Because of this the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life, in order to receive it again. Joh 10:18 “No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to receive it again. This command I have received from My Father.”

We have some huge teachings here in the Exodus 21:6 then his master shall bring him before Elohim, and shall bring him to the door, or to the doorpost, and his master shall pierce his ear with an awl. And he shall serve him forever.

Yehshua is the door as we have just read in John.

Are you aware that the town of Silwan where Yehshua was nailed to the tree means pillar or post as in a door.

When we are nailed to the door we are in fact committing ourselves for ever to Yehshua. Like when you place a Mezuzah on your door. You are saying you are in covenant with the Creator of the Universe.

When an important person comes to your home in ancient days an animal was sacrificed at the threshold of the door. The threshold was considered sacred. You were to step over it and never on it.

Today when you come to the threshold of a country they give the dignitaries the red carpet treatment. It comes from this offering of the animal at the threshold of your doorway.

Now consider the fact that Yeshua was sacrificed at the door or the entrance to the east side of the Temple as the Lamb. It

was His blood that shed at the door to Yehovah's house. Even the two door posts were made from Olive trees or the two witnesses.

In Eze 46:1 'Thus said the Master ????, "The gate of the inner courtyard facing east is shut the six days of work, but on the Sabbath it is opened, and on the day of the New Moon it is opened. 2 "And the prince shall enter by way of the porch of that gate from the outside, and he shall stand by the post. And the priests shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace offerings. And he shall bow himself at the threshold of the gate, and shall go out, but the gate is not shut until evening. 3 "And the people of the land shall also bow themselves at the entrance to this gate before ????, on the Sabbaths and on the New Moons. 4 "And the burnt offering which the prince brings to ???? on the Sabbath day is six lambs, perfect ones, and a ram, a perfect one. 5 "And the grain offering is one ephah for a ram, and the grain offering for the lambs, a gift of his hand, and a hin of oil for an ephah. 6 "And on the day of the New Moon: a young bull, a perfect one, six lambs, and a ram, they should be perfect.

This is all symbolic of the 7th Millennium when the door will be open and not shut. It is shut for the other six days of work.

Yeshua is to be king during this 7th Millennium and He is the door by which we must enter and cross over the threshold. It is His blood that has made the carpet red for our coming.

Even in the Prodigal son of Luk 15:23 'And bring the fattened calf here and slaughter it, and let us eat and rejoice,

When this calf is killed it is done at the threshold of the door. The son is being given the red carpet treatment. The older brother never got this treatment because he was already in the house with the father.

Again look back in Exo 29:10 "And you shall bring near the bull before the Tent of Meeting, and Aharon and his sons shall lay their hands on the head of the bull. 11 "And you shall slaughter the bull before ????, by the door of the Tent of Meeting, 12 and take some of the blood of the bull and put it on the horns of the altar with your finger, and pour all the blood beside the base of the altar.

So now when the slave has his ear pierced at the door on the threshold he bleeds. And his blood is on the covenant and he then becomes part of the house of Yehovah.

Yeshua was killed on the Mount of Olives and He was the Lamb that was killed at the Door of Temple for us the slaves whose ears will be pierced at the door and our blood shed. This takes place at the end the sixth day or the sixth millennium.

Now go back to the Exodus;

Exo 12:23 "And ???? shall pass on to smite the Mitsrites, and shall see the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, and ???? shall pass over the door and not allow the destroyer to come into your houses to smite you.

Yehovah has said that He would Passover the Threshold, not the House but the threshold to protect us.

Zec 12:2 "See, I am making Yerushalayim a cup of reeling to all the people all around, and also against Yehud'ah it is in the siege against Yerushalayim.

The word cup here means H5592 קַפּ saph saf

From H5605, in its original sense of containing; a vestibule (as a limit); also a dish (for holding blood or wine): – bason, bowl, cup, door (post), gate, post, threshold.

Jerusalem is the door of the threshold we are to cross over. It is here that much blood will be spilled.

Isaiah 24-27

Isaiah 24-27 is often referred to as the “little Apocalypse” or the “Isaiah Apocalypse.” That’s because it describes, in broad, general terms, the great cosmic events that will mark the end of the age—as described in the book of Revelation.

Verse 5 of chapter 24 mentions the breaking of the “everlasting covenant.” And the implication is that all the earth’s inhabitants are part of this covenant arrangement. Yet when did God make a covenant with all humanity? Says *The Bible Reader’s Companion*: “Many see this as a reference to God’s covenant with Noah, never again to destroy the Earth by a flood (cf. Gen. 9:11-17). That covenant also implies human moral responsibility, for it makes man responsible to God to account for shed blood (9:4-6). Thus the laws and statutes here are not those of the O[ld] T[estament] law [that is, the totality of specific obligations given to Israel under the Sinai Covenant]. They are natural moral laws, expressed in human conscience, which God has imbedded in human nature, to which Paul refers in Rom. 2:12-16)” (note on verse 5).

The Nelson Study Bible comments: “The usual language concerning a breach of the covenant is applied more generally to the wicked nations. Perhaps these words speak of that innate sense of right and wrong—the conscience—that God has given to all humankind, but which everyone violates (Rom. 1:18-32; compare Acts 24:16)” (verse 5).

Actually, God did give laws at the time of Adam, but man rejected them—and, as a consequence, God destroyed mankind except for Noah and his family. Noah understood God’s laws and passed them on. But man has transgressed them and changed them to suit himself. And, as mentioned, man as a whole has violated the wonderful gift of conscience that God has given to every person. The earth is defiled by all of this—especially, as stated, by the innocent blood shed on it. So it lies under a curse. And God will bring great havoc on the world.

Some, we should note, misquote this section of the Bible, using it to “prove” that the returning Christ totally destroys the earth and all life on it—and that His thousand-year reign that follows is then over a desolate, uninhabited earth. In support of this wrong teaching, they cite the first half of verse 6, which speaks of the scorching of the earth’s inhabitants. But they leave out the end of the verse—”and few men are left.” Here is a classic illustration of using the Bible to prove an already preconceived idea instead of allowing Scripture to interpret itself. For reading all of verse 6 shows that mankind, though greatly diminished by end-time plague and war, isn’t totally destroyed. Clearly, there will still be people left alive.

Verse 16 gives the impression of people rejoicing in song, while the prophet is bemoaning the “treacherous dealers,” perhaps referring to false messiahs or the False Prophet (see Matthew 24:24; Revelation 16:13).

Then a mighty earthquake is described. Cataclysmic events befall the planet, and the “windows from on high are open” (Isaiah 24:18-20)—apparently picturing the great upheaval and hail to come at the end (compare Revelation 8:8-11; 11:19; 16:18-21). Then there is mention of the “host of exalted ones,” in addition to the kings of the earth, being punished and imprisoned for many days, which could include the human armies that assail Christ at His return as well as Satan and His demons (verses 21-22; compare Revelation 19:20-20:3).

The chapter concludes with the reign of the Lord in Zion (verse 23; compare Revelation 21:22-25).

Isaiah 25

In Isaiah 25, following the destruction of His enemies, God provides a marvelous feast for the whole earth—a wonderful world of plenty for those who are ruled by Jesus Christ. This is what is pictured each

year by God's great fall festival, the Feast of Tabernacles (see Leviticus 23:33-43; Deuteronomy 16:13-15). As was mentioned in our highlights on Isaiah 4, the reign of Christ over all nations will be like one long, expanding Feast of Tabernacles—during which more and more people will submit their lives to God until the actual Feast of Tabernacles is observed by all peoples (see Zechariah 14:16).

God will remove the veil of spiritual blindness that now lies over all nations (verse 7). The apostle Paul mentions it in 2 Corinthians 4: “But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this world [Satan the devil] has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them” (verses 3-4). In the wonderful world that is coming, Satan, who “deceives the whole world” (Revelation 12:9), will be bound in prison (20:1-3)—and all nations will finally see. Not immediately of course. While some people will recognize right away that Christ has liberated them, for others it will take longer. But eventually, through a program of education directed by Christ and the resurrected saints, the true knowledge of God will come to fill the earth as the waters cover the sea (Isaiah 11:9).

Yet for the present age, the veil remains. Even now, though, God lifts the veil for each person whom He calls to be part of the firstfruits of salvation. Rending and opening the spiritual veil, allowing access to God and His spiritual knowledge, has been made possible through the rending of Christ's body and His resultant death, all of which was symbolized by God's tearing of the veil in the temple at the very moment He died (Matthew 27:51; Hebrews 10:20).

In 1 Corinthians 15, Paul discusses the subject of the resurrection and concludes that when we have received immortality, “then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: ‘Death is swallowed up in victory’” (verse 54). That saying is found here—in Isaiah 25:8.

Isaiah 26

Chapter 26 is a song about the end time. “In that day” (verse 1) means the Day of the Lord—but the bright part of it beyond the gloom. Salvation is at last coming to God's people, which will lead to the salvation of all people.

Several themes are addressed. The chapter begins by emphasizing righteousness and trust in God. Look again at verse 3. What a wonderful promise this is. If we trust in God, come what may, we will have perfect peace—inner peace of mind or, as Paul puts it, “the peace of God that surpasses all understanding” (Philippians 4:7).

The chapter goes on to address the punishment and reform of the wicked.

Verse 19 describes the resurrection. “Some argue that this is a figurative application of the idea of resurrection. But there could have been no figure of speech if no belief that ‘their bodies will rise’ existed in ancient Israel. And what a wonder this is. Storms of judgment may sweep over our earth. Wars may devastate, and disease may ravage. Famines may decimate the land, while starvation stalks our families. There are indeed dread fates that are to be feared. But these are not history's last words! At the end of history—both the history of nations, and the personal history of each individual—the shout of God's promise echoes. ‘Your dead will live; their bodies will rise!’ What a truth to hold fast in troubled times” (Bible Reader's Companion, note on verse 19).

Verses 20-21 mention God directing His people to take refuge “until the indignation is past.” This ties in with other verses related to a place of protection for some of God's saints during the final days before Christ's return (see Zephaniah 2:1-3; Revelation 12:14). God will also preserve alive a remnant of the physical descendants of Israel.

Leviathan (Isaiah 27:1) is mentioned in several places in Scripture (compare Job 41; Psalm 74:14; 104:26). It may be a literal sea creature, but here, as in other places, it is apparently a reference to Satan, the serpent and dragon of Revelation 12, and the “beast from the sea” (Revelation 13), the resurgent gentile empire of the last days, the heads of which are portrayed as emerging from Satan (12:3; 13:1-2). It is the constellation of the great dragon in the sky.

Finally, God turns to the wonderful restoration of national Israel that’s coming. His vineyard was forsaken (Isaiah 5:1-5). But now He will tend it again (27:2-4). The great trumpet will call the exiles of Israel to return to the land of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Their emaciated and war-ravaged population, dwindled down to a small fraction of their former numbers, will again begin to blossom and grow (verse 6)—in the very best environment possible.

Ps 135

Psalms 135-137 form the concluding section of what some Jewish traditions label the Great Hallel (or “Praise”)-following the beginning section, the songs of ascents (120-134). As noted in the Bible Reading Program’s introduction to the Great Hallel and songs of ascents, some traditions list the Great Hallel as Psalms 120-136, while others confine it to only Psalm 136.

Psalm 135, an unattributed psalm of praise for the one true Creator God in contrast to worthless idols, is well placed after Psalm 134, the concluding song of ascents. Recall its closing statement about “the LORD who made heaven and earth” (verse 3), repeating wording used in other songs of ascents (see 121:2; 124:8). Indeed, Psalm 134 introduces Psalm 135 in other ways too, as we will see. And we should also note that Psalm 135 repeats themes and language from another Hallel collection, the Egyptian Hallel (113-118). An apparent quotation of Jeremiah 10:13 (and 51:16) in Psalm 135:7, combined with clear indications that this song was intended for temple worship, has led many to conclude that the psalm was written after the Jewish exile in Babylon.

However, it is possible that the repeated verse in Jeremiah was quoted from Psalm 135.

The psalm opens with five calls to praise the Lord (verses 1-3) and closes with five calls to bless the Lord (verses 19-21)-continuing from Psalm 134’s repeated call to bless the Lord (verses 1-2).

Verse 1 of Psalm 135 is basically identical to the opening verse of the Egyptian Hallel, 113:1, except that the second and third lines are transposed. The next verse (135:2), wherein the call to praise God is given to those who “stand in the house of the LORD, in the courts of the house of our God,” continues thematically from, again, the first two verses of 134. Here it is evident that festival worship is still in mind, as in the songs of ascents. Moreover, God’s “house” also signified His holy nation of Israel (compare verse 4). And of course, we today should further understand God’s “house” to represent His Church, His spiritual nation, as well as His eternal Kingdom and family. The description of Israel as a “special treasure” (verse 4; compare Exodus 19:5; Deuteronomy 7:6; 14:2) applies in a higher sense to God’s spiritually elect people (compare Malachi 3:16-17).

Note in Psalm 135:3 the use of the terms “good” and “pleasant,” as in Psalm 133:1, where these terms describe the unity of God’s people. Here in Psalm 135, the word good applies to God as a cause for praise. Yet it is not entirely clear what the word pleasant refers to, whether to God (in which case the translation should be “for He is pleasant”) or to singing praises or to God’s name (in line with the NKJV translation of “for it is pleasant”). If God is intended, the idea would be that God is pleasing to experience (compare the use of both words in 147:1). The praising of God’s name is also paralleled in the opening of Psalm 113 (verse 2).

Verses 5-7 of Psalm 135 constitute a stanza about God as Sovereign Creator. God doing as He pleases in

verse 6 is reminiscent of Psalm 115:3 in the Egyptian Hallel-especially as a section of Psalm 115 is worded much the same as a later section of this song. Psalm 135:7, as already mentioned, may have been taken from Jeremiah 10:13, part of a passage wherein God is shown by His power in creation to be superior to futile idols (see verses 11-16). Yet as also mentioned, it could be the other way around-that these words, found in Jeremiah 51:13 as well, were quoted from Psalm 135.

The next stanza, verses 8-12, presents God as Israel's Deliverer. It is interesting to note that praise for God as Creator followed by praise for Him as Deliverer is also found in the next psalm, Psalm 136. Indeed, the language about destroying the firstborn of Egypt, the slaying of Kings Sihon and Og, and Israel receiving its land as a heritage is essentially found there also (compare 135:8-12; 136:10-22).

Through God's mighty acts and intervention, His "name" and "fame" (zeker, "remembrance") endure for all time (verse 13). Indeed, even though people often forget to consider God and His directives, most people understand on some level that He exists. Moreover, God's name will live forever as generations pass on the story of His saving acts, as those who love Him continue to praise Him, and as He completes His great plan of salvation-bringing all mankind into a relationship with Him (and ultimately removing those who reject Him). God's judgment and mercy in dealing with His people is the subject of verse 14.

The words of verses 15-18 are very close to those found in Psalm 115:4-8. The common assumption is that the passage in Psalm 135 is taken from Psalm 115, though the reverse could be true.

Interestingly, Psalm 115 addressed Israel, the house of Aaron (the priesthood), and all those who fear the Lord (verses 9-11) and noted that God would bless each of these three groups (verses 12-13). Psalm 118, another psalm of the Egyptian Hallel, called on each of these three groups to declare that God's mercy or unfailing love endures forever (verses 2-4). And now in Psalm 135, we see each of these groups called on to, in turn, bless the Lord-with the addition of addressing a fourth group, the house of Levi, thus distinguishing all those involved in the temple service or perhaps the non-priestly Levitical choir, as it may be that different choirs sang different stanzas of this song. In all likelihood the final declaration of blessing in verse 21 and the concluding Hallelujah ("Praise the LORD") were sung by all.

Note also here that as God blessed His people from Zion (134:3), so His people are to bless Him from Zion (135:21). Again, the focus here is on worship at Jerusalem, where God dwells, making this a song of Zion. Besides the obvious meaning, again tying this song to temple festival worship and the songs of ascents, we should also understand Zion in the broader sense of representing God's nation, His Church, His millennial capital, His Kingdom, and His heavenly city. These are all to resound with praise for the Eternal God

John 9

So many times we all read the scriptures and never see what they mean. Then one day as we read them again a light goes off. We see the meaning of the verse or the teaching and we can see just how far from the truth we were.

As I work on this week's Torah portion. I had no idea what each reading had in store.

This past winter a lady had a dream about me and wrote me to tell me. I do not believe in the many dreams people have. Some are so crazy. But this lady was a trusted friend.

She told me all the leaders of the tribes of Israel were gathered in Israel for some meeting except me. Others began to ask where I was and why I was not there. The lady spoke up and said I was in the outer court yard and I was coming but I could not find the door.

Brethren the outer court yard is where the Offerings were made; the sacrifices. Our study this week about the Door and the servant having an awl put through his ear at the door has great and significant meaning to

me. And now as we read the accounts of John 9 and How Yeshua healed the blind man, which led up to Yeshua saying that He is the door in chapter 10, has humbled me once again.

Joh 10:1 “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter through the door into the sheepfold, but climbs up by another way, that one is a thief and a robber. 2 “But he who enters through the door is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 “The doorkeeper opens for him, and the sheep hear his voice. And he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

Yeshua said that He is the “door of the sheep”. What did He mean? Well, a sheepfold during Yeshua’s time had no door which could be opened and closed. The door of the sheepfold was just an opening. In this kind of sheepfold, after the sheep had entered it, the shepherd would sleep at the entrance. The shepherd became, effectively, the “door” of the sheepfold. Yeshua was our threshold which we are to step over with respect. Stepping on that threshold was an act of war.

With all of this in mind let us once again look at the constellation of cancer.

<http://philologos.org/eb-tws/chap33.htm>

The Witness of the Stars

E. W. Bullinger

The Third Book

The Redeemer

(His Second Coming)

“The glory that should follow”

Cancer (the Crab)

With regard to the sign of CANCER, one thing is certain, that we have not got the original picture, or anything like it.

It does not agree with the names either of its three constellations which have come down to us, or of its stars.

In the ancient Denderah Zodiac it is represented as a Scarabaeus, or sacred beetle. * In the Zodiac of Esneh and in a Hindu Zodiac (400 BC) it is the same.

* The Scarabaeus, passing its early existence as a worm of the earth, and thence issuing as a winged denizen of heaven, was held sacred by the Egyptians as an emblem of the resurrection of the body.

According to the Greeks, Jupiter placed this Crab amongst the signs of the Zodiac.

In Sir William Jones’s Oriental Zodiac we meet with a crab, and an Egyptian Zodiac found at Rome bears also the crab in this sign.

The more ancient Egyptians placed Hermanubis, or Hermes, with the head of an ibis or hawk, as the symbol of the sign now allotted to CANCER.

The Denderah name is Klaria, or the cattle-folds, and in this name we have the key to the meaning of the sign, and to the subject of this chapter.

The Arabic name is Al Sartan, which means who holds or binds, and may be from the Hebrew to bind together (Gen 49:11). [This is most appropriate after having read John 9 that we then find in Joh 10:28 “And I give them everlasting life, and they shall by no means ever perish, and no one shall snatch them out of My hand.]

There is no ancient Hebrew word known for the crab. It was classed with many other unclean creatues, and would be included in the general term “vermin.”

The Syriac, Sartano, means the same. The Greek name is Karkinos, which means holding or encircling, as does the Latin, Cancer, and hence is applied to the crab. In the word Khan, we have the traveller's rest or inn; while Ker or Cer is the Arabic for encircling. The ancient Akkadian name of the month is Su-kul-na, the seizer or possessor of seed.

[This ties right into the original meaning of the word sheepfold which was an encirclement with a doorway.]

The sign contains 83 stars, one of which is of the 3rd magnitude, and seven are of the 4th magnitude, and the remainder of inferior magnitudes.

In the centre of the Sign there is a remarkably bright cluster of stars, so bright that they can be sometimes seen with the naked eye. It looks like a comet, and is made up of a great multitude of stars. Modern astronomers have called it the Beehive. But its ancient name has come down to us as Praesepe, which means a multitude, offspring.

The brightest star, α (in the tail), is called Tegmine, holding. The star β (or β_1 and β_2), in the lower large claw, is called Acubene, which, in Hebrew and Arabic, means the sheltering or hiding-place. Another is named Ma'alaph (Arabic), assembled thousands; Al Himarein (Arabic), the kids or lambs.

[Isa 32:1 See, a sovereign shall reign in righteousness, and rulers rule in right-ruling. 2 And each one shall be as a hiding place from the wind, and a shelter from the downpour, as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. 3 And the eyes of those who see are not dim, and the ears of those who hear listen. 4 And the heart of the rash understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers hurries to speak plainly.]

North and south of the nebula Praesepe are two stars, which Orientalists speak of by a name evidently of some antiquity. Asellus means an Ass, and one was called Asellus Boreas, the northern Ass; while the other, Asellus Australis, is the southern Ass. *

* The Ass was the emblem of Typhon, the king who smites or is smitten.

This connects it with the Tribe of Issachar, who is said to have borne upon the Tribal standard the sign of two asses.

This is doubtless the reference in Jacob's blessing (Gen 49:11, RV):

“Issachar is a strong ass,
Couching down between the sheepfolds;
And he saw a resting-place that it was good;
And the land that it was pleasant;
And he bowed his shoulder to bear,
And became a servant under task work.”

Have we not here the gathering up of the teaching of this sign—
Messiah's redeemed possessions held fast.

Here we come to the completion of His work. In CANCER we see it with reference to His redeemed, and in the next (the last) Sign, LEO, with reference to His enemies.

The three constellations develop the truth. What is now called Ursa Minor is the Lesser Flock; Ursa Major gives us The Sheepfold and the Sheep; while Argo, The Ship, shows the travellers and the pilgrims brought safely home—all conflict over.

To accomplish this, we see the true Issachar bowing his shoulder to bear. He could say, “My soul is bowed down” (Psa 57:6). He became a servant, and humbled Himself to death. He undertook the mighty task of saving His people from their sins. “Their Redeemer is strong” (Jer 50:34); for help was laid on “One that

was mighty” (Psa 89:19). And His redeemed shall come to a resting-place that is good, and to a land that is pleasant. No earthly Khan on earth affords them a home. They look for a heavenly home, and in the many mansions of the Father’s house they shall find eternal rest.

Here we see that sheltering home to which the names of these stars point; where the assembled thousands (Ma’alaph) shall be received into the true Klaria, even the “everlasting habitations.”

The teaching about this sheep fold of Cancer the encirclement of the sheep is not complete unless we also look at;

Ursa Major (the Great Bear)

Of these it is written—

“But in Mount Zion there shall be those that escape,

And it shall be holy:

And the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions.”

Obadiah 17-19, RV

It is a large and important constellation, containing 87 stars, of which one is of the 1st magnitude, four of the 2nd, three of the 3rd, ten of the 4th, etc. It always presents a splendid appearance, and is perhaps, therefore, the best known of all the constellations.

In the Book of Job (9:9, and 38:31,32) it is mentioned under the name of Ash. “Canst thou guide Ash and her offspring?” which is rendered in the AV, “Arcturus and his sons,” and in the RV, “The Bear with her train” (marg., “sons”). The Arabs still call it Al Naish, or Annaish, the assembled together, as sheep in a fold. The ancient Jewish commentators interpreted Ash as the seven stars of this constellation. They are called by others Septentriones, which thus became the Latin word for North.

The brightest star, ? (in the back), is named Dubhe, which, as we have seen, means a herd of animals, or a flock, and gives its name to the whole constellation.

The star ? (below it) is named Merach (Hebrew), the flock (Arabic, purchased).

The star ? (on the left of ?) is called Phaeda, or Phacda, meaning visited, guarded, or numbered, as a flock; for His sheep, like the stars, are both numbered and named. (See Psalm 147:4)

The star ? is called Alioth, a name we have had in Auriga, meaning a she goat.

The star ? (in the middle of the tail) is called Mizar, separate or small, and close to it Al Cor, the Lamb.

The star ? (at the end of the so-called tail) is named Benet Naish (Arabic), the daughters of the assembly. It is also called Al Kaid, the assembled.

The star ? (in its right foot) is called Talitha.

The names of other stars all give the same testimony: El Alcola (Arabic), the sheepfold (as in Psa 95:7; and 100:3); Cab’d al Asad, multitude, many assembled; Annaish, the assembled; Megrez, separated, as the flock in the fold; El Kaphrah, protected, covered (Heb. redeemed and ransomed); Dubheh Lachar (Arabic), the latter herd or flock; Helike (so called by HOMER in the Iliad), company of travellers; Amaza (Greek), coming and going; Calisto, the sheepfold set or appointed.

There is not one discordant voice in the rich abundance of this testimony. We have nothing to do here with the Grecian myths about bears or wild boars. We see only the innumerable seed gathered by Him who scattered (Jer 31:10).

Many are the Scriptures we might quote which speak of this gathering and assembling of the long scattered flock. It is written as plainly in the Book, as it is in the heavens. The prophecies of this gathering are as conspicuous in the Word of God as the "Seven Stars" in the sky. It is difficult even to make a selection from the wealth of such promises; but few are more beautiful than that in Ezekiel 34:12-16:

"As a shepherd seeketh out his flock
In the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered;
So will I seek out my sheep,
And will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.
And I will bring them out from the people,
And gather them from the countries,
And will bring them to their own land,
And feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers
And in all the inhabited places of the country.
I will feed them in a good pasture,
And upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be:
There shall they lie in a good fold,
And in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel.
I will feed my flock,
And I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord GOD (Adonai Jehovah).
I will seek that which was lost,
And bring again that which was driven away,
And will bind up that which was broken,
And will strengthen that which was sick:
But I will destroy the fat and the strong;
I will feed them with judgment."

It is of this judgment with which this book, and indeed the whole Revelation, ends, in the next and final chapter.

The whole story of Shavuot points to this time when the second of the wave offerings is taken up; the wheat and presented to Yehovah. This is shown to us in the Big dipper each night along with the stars of cancer. May your eyes be opened to learn the same old truths that have long ago been hidden in religiosity.