

12-28-24 To Roeh Israel Abilene – *Miketz* – “at the end of”
Torah Portion; Gen 41:1 – 44:17
Haftarah: 1 Kings 3:15 – 4:1
Suggested Acheron K’tuvim: Matt 2:1-12

Under the Law Part 24 – What was the “Star of Bethlehem” in reality?

Central question of this message: Was it really a hot thing in the sky visible throughout the earth for many days?

Today’s Torah portion is *Miketz*, which means “at the end of.” Its name comes from the second Hebrew word in the passage, and the fourth through the seventh words in the English translation, below.

Gen 41:1-3

41 Now it happened at the end of two full years that Pharaoh had a dream, and behold, he was standing by the Nile. 2 And lo, from the Nile there came up seven cows, sleek and fat; and they grazed in the marsh grass. 3 Then behold, seven other cows came up after them from the Nile, ugly and gaunt, and they stood by the other cows on the bank of the Nile.

41:1

וּפָרָעָה	יָמִים	שְׁנַתִּים	מִקֵּץ	וַיְהִי
that Pharaoh	full	two years,	at the end of	And it came to pass
<u>6547</u>	<u>3117</u>	<u>8141</u>	<u>7093</u>	<u>1961</u>

חֲלֵם	וַהֲנֶה	עָמַד	עַל-	הַיָּאֵר:
dreamed:	and, behold,	he stood	by	the river.
<u>2492</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>5975</u>	<u>5921</u>	<u>2975</u>

2

וַהֲנֶה	מִן-	הַיָּאֵר	עָלָה	שִׁבְעַ	פָּרוֹת	יְפוֹת
And, behold,	out of	the river	there came up	seven	kine	well
<u>2009</u>	<u>4480</u>	<u>2975</u>	<u>5927</u>	<u>7651</u>	<u>6510</u>	<u>3303</u>

מִרְאָה	וּבְרִיאַת בָּשָׂר	וַתְּרַעֲיֶנָּה	בְּאַחוּ:
favoured	and fatfleshed;	and they fed	in a meadow.
<u>4758</u>	<u>1320</u> <u>1277</u>	<u>7462</u>	<u>260</u>

3

וַהֲנֶה	שִׁבְעַ	פָּרוֹת	אַחֲרוֹת	עָלוּת	אַחֲרֵיהֶן	מִן-
And, behold,	seven	kine	other	came up	after them	out of
<u>2009</u>	<u>7651</u>	<u>6510</u>	<u>312</u>	<u>5927</u>	<u>310</u>	<u>4480</u>

הַיָּאֵר	רָעוֹת	מִרְאָה	וַדָּקוֹת בָּשָׂר	וַתַּעֲמִדְנָה	אֶצֶל
the river,	ill	favoured	and leanfleshed;	and stood	by
<u>2975</u>	<u>7451</u>	<u>4758</u>	<u>1320</u> <u>1851</u>	<u>5975</u>	<u>681</u>

הַפָּרוֹת	עַל-	שִׁפָּת	הַיָּאֵר:
the other kine	upon	the brink of	the river.
<u>6510</u>	<u>5921</u>	<u>8193</u>	<u>2975</u>

We have been in the subseries of our studies, regarding the concept of the covenant relationship with G-d. Last week, I opened the topic of the “New Covenant.” I will resume that subseries, but first I wish to address

something which is unique to this season of the year, and the Christian celebration of Christmas – the “star of Bethlehem.”

The popular depiction of this “star” is as a bright thing in the evening sky, clearly in outer space. It is depicted as leading the “wise men” from the east to the place where Yeshua was lying as a newborn child.



Then, they presume that this “star” somehow indicated *precisely* the place where the Messiah was lying, by some unstated mechanism, from a great

distance into space. And for some reason only these “wise men” were the only ones on the earth who could see this incredibly bright night phenomenon.

I have seen various efforts over the years by sweet believers to “prove” the “star”, and thus give credence to the biblical account. It seems that each of these attempts is focused on the visible light phenomena in the night sky.

It seems that most Christians are firmly entrenched in a premise – that the “Star of Bethlehem” was a bright thing in the sky which could be seen by anyone in the night sky.

I can illustrate this by reference to a new article published in an online magazine, *Christian Today*. The article published on Dec 23 of this year is entitled *What was the star that the wise men followed?*¹ I quote some of that article, below.

The modern word "astronomy" derives from the Greek word for star, astron. Ancient astronomers meticulously tracked the movements of stars. The Babylonians had schools for stargazers, and cuneiform tablets document their

¹ <https://www.christiantoday.com/article/what.was.the.star.that.the.wise.men.followed/142479.htm>

observations. Ancient Chinese emperors also maintained stargazing staff, leading some researchers to examine Babylonian and Chinese records for clues about the Star of Bethlehem.

For example, Chinese records describe an object with a tail (possibly a comet) visible in the spring of 5 BC for 70 days. Some suggest this was a nova, while others propose it was a comet. Many believe Jesus was born around 5 BC, making this event a candidate for the star.

Astronomical Theories

1. The Comet Theory

Early church father Origen suggested the Star of Bethlehem was a comet, a theory that remains popular. Comets are icy bodies that heat up near the sun, producing tails that point in a specific direction. Some speculate that Halley's Comet, visible in 12 BC, was the star.

2. The Nova or Supernova Theory

A nova is a "new star," while a supernova occurs when a star collapses. These rare events are bright enough to be seen during the day, as Johannes Kepler observed in 1604.

3. The Conjunction Theory

Conjunctions occur when planets align. In 7 BC, there were conjunctions of Jupiter and Saturn, and in 6 BC, a triple conjunction involving Jupiter, Saturn, and Mars. Some believe these alignments explain the Star of Bethlehem.

4. The Astrological Theory

In ancient times, astronomy and astrology were intertwined. Some suggest the Magi interpreted astrological signs, such as the alignment of planets in specific constellations, as heralding the birth of a Jewish king.

Conclusion

We may never know exactly what the Wise Men saw. However, the story aligns with what we know about ancient Magi and their interest in celestial events. Patrick Moore, the legendary British presenter of *The Sky at Night*, perhaps summarised (sic) it best: "Frankly, we just don't know!"

The entire exercise by these, and many others, in trying to “prove” the “star” is to me a clear demonstration of the persistent ignorance of the normative church regarding the context of Scripture, and its root deeply in Hebrew thought patterns and idioms. This ignorance breaks my heart.

Most of the problem, in my observation, has come from the fact that Christians have approached Scripture with their own theology, and their own terminology, all rooted in Western thought patterns. And this has become a filter through which they attempt to reconcile all the difficult passages in Scripture.

All they had to do, many generations ago, to resolve this matter into a reasonable understanding, was to read more of the Scripture in context, and that should give them the answer. But a convenient short-cut to the answer could have been achieved by consulting a knowledgeable Jew. But such seemed impossible for the normative church, which had long-since declared Jews cursed as “God-killers” and abandoned by G-d as unbelievers. Given this deep antisemitism, resorting to Jewish thought and understanding was unthinkable.

The idea that the “star” was a bright heavenly body has evolved for generations. It’s even memorialized in old hymns, which have in every

generation overlaid successive reinforcements of this idea deeper yet into the hearts of sweet believers.

It seems that some sweet people in the normative church today are quite offended when I suggested to them that the star wasn't really a "star" – meaning any bright thing in the sky. Their faces show clearly that they believe my assertion to be nothing less than heresy.

Let me be quick to say that I don't need astronomy (either ancient or modern) to prove Yeshua's birth. I have Scripture, and 5000 years of my people's wisdom to draw upon. Further, I have had a personal encounter with G-d. I know Yeshua is the savior, and Messiah.

Let me begin to discuss the whole concept of "following a star" by relating a bit of my personal experience. It seems to me that normative Christians who advocate for "following a star" have never once tried to *actually do so*. I have.

I spent many years as an army infantryman. During much of that time, we operated mostly at night. We rested during the daytime, as others of our brothers carried out their operations.

Then, when night fell, my unit would “gear-up” and seek out the “bad guys” as they were trying to recover from a difficult day battling our brothers. We intended to make their night even more difficult for them. Our unit’s motto was “We own the night.”

Hence, I was required to do a large amount of night land navigation, armed only with a compass and a map (if I was lucky). I tried a number of techniques to learn any shortcut to this labor-intensive task.

One thing I learned very quickly is that I could not follow a star in the sky to accurately navigate at night. All stars appear to have relative movement at night. Time-lapse photos of the night sky illustrate this movement quite



well. Only one star does not have apparent movement at night – the north star. You can follow the north star faithfully in *only one* direction. North.

But I don't need my Army experience to support my opinion of what the "Star of Bethlehem" actually was. I can prove it by Scripture. To do that, we need to go back to the time of Nebuchadnezzar.

You remember that there were three Jewish boys who defied the king.

Dan 1:7

7 Then the commander of the officials assigned new names to them; and to Daniel he assigned the name Belteshazzar, to Hananiah Shadrach, to Mishael Meshach, and to Azariah Abed-nego.

And after they prevailed through the fire of the execution ovens...

Dan 3:28-30

28 Nebuchadnezzar responded and said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, who has sent His angel and delivered His servants who put their trust in Him,

violating the king's command, and yielded up their bodies so as not to serve or worship any god except their own God. 29 "Therefore, I make a decree that any people, nation or tongue that speaks anything offensive against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego shall be torn limb from limb and their houses reduced to a rubbish heap, inasmuch as there is no other god who is able to deliver in this way." 30 Then the king caused Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego to prosper in the province of Babylon.

After Daniel was elevated to a position of rulership in Babylon, he taught the people there the Torah. In Torah, they were exposed to this passage.

Num 24:17-19

17 "I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near;
A star shall come forth from Jacob,
And a scepter shall rise from Israel,
And shall crush through the forehead of Moab,
And tear down all the sons of Sheth.
18 "And Edom shall be a possession,
Seir, its enemies, also shall be a possession,
While Israel performs valiantly.

19 "One from Jacob shall have dominion,
And shall destroy the remnant from the city."

They didn't have the writings of the prophets yet. Those would have been written before the time of Yeshua, though. This one passage was all the Babylonian believers knew regarding a sign of Messiah, but as it turns out, this was all that they needed to know to find Him.

Let's walk slowly through the Scriptures regarding the birth of Yeshua, and see what is there to see regarding those passages, in some detail. That detail will show us what the "star" was... and was not.

Matt 2:1-12

2 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, 2 "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw **His star** in the east, and have come to worship Him."

What do we know about those men?

1. These men were Torah-readers, because of what Daniel had done generations before.
2. They knew that the Messiah would come to the Jews
3. They didn't know where He was to be born
4. They knew to ask the rulers in the capital city, Jerusalem
5. They identified the messenger they followed as "His star", not merely "a star."

Now, let's continue with Matthew's account...

3 And when Herod the king heard it, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

What do we know about Herod?

1. Herod was a violent ruler. He killed his family to secure his throne.
2. He was not likely to give up his throne easily. The people in Jerusalem knew that, so they were troubled.

Continue with the passage ...

4 And gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he began to inquire of them where the Christ was to be born.

We can see more information, now...

1. Herod had not seen any star, nor had anyone in the region.
2. Herod knew that the Messiah would be king of the Jews.
3. Herod knew that there was prophecy about where Messiah would be born. He knew that the priests should know the answer because they were readers of Torah, and also the scribes, the writers of Torah, would know.

Continuing with the passage ...

5 And they said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet,

6 'And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah,

Are by no means least among the leaders of Judah;

For out of you shall come forth a Ruler,

Who will shepherd My people Israel.'" (quoting Micah 5:2)

7 Then Herod secretly called the magi, and ascertained from them the time the star appeared.

What do we now know?

1. We have further proof that neither Herod nor anyone else in the area had seen this “star.”
2. Herod didn’t know when they had seen the “star”, so he asked. That was important to him, because it would give him the approximate age of the child. He needed to know the maximum age of the boys he was going to need to murder. He didn’t want to kill all the boys of all ages. That’s not efficient, and would cause an uprising against his throne.
3. Herod knew he needed to trick these foreigners into telling him where to go, because the people of Jerusalem knew the treachery of Herod, and they would not be helpful.
4. The trip of the Magi from “the east”, most probably Babylon, had taken some time, probably months. They would not have traveled at night in unfamiliar territory. So, they couldn’t have “followed a star” during the daytime. Further, the route is not directly across from east to west, because of the Euphrates River. According to Gen 11:31, the route that Terah and Abraham took from that same area was first to the north (to get around the river)

to the southern border of what is Turkey today, then southwest to Jerusalem.²

Back to the passage ...

8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, "Go and make careful search for the Child; and when you have found Him, report to me, that I too may come and worship Him."

What now can we conclude?

1. There was nothing in the sky to give Herod or the other people in the region a hint as to which city was involved, nor precisely where in Bethlehem the family was still living. If there were such evidence visible to all, Herod would have sent his own trusted spies. He was stuck with only the partial information furnished by the visitors from the east, and the contents of the prophecies. At this time, because of the census, the city of Beit Lechem was likely crowded and every available space was filled.

Back to the passage ...

² If this "star" were a hot thing in the sky, how could they follow it first north, then southwest? And wouldn't it have been such a remarkable sight that everyone in the region would take notice, including Herod and his court? And the timing would have been known to all, making it silly for Herod to ask about the timing.

9 And having heard the king, they went their way; and lo, the star, which they had seen in the east, went on before them, until it came and stood over where the Child was.

And now we see more...

1. This must have been the same “star” as they saw “in the east” because Scripture affirms they recognized it as the same.
2. The “star” seems to have disappeared even to them while they were speaking with Herod, and didn’t appear again until they left Jerusalem and headed south to Bethlehem. This is now at least the third change of direction that this “star” has taken since leaving Babylon.
2. The “star” must have led them in a specific pathway, showing them which side of forks in the road to take, because they were unfamiliar with that part of the world.
3. The “star” finally stopped and “stood” over where the child was. We know that bright things in the sky don’t stop moving, and certainly none can be said to be stopping over a certain house on the earth. Is the description of a star “standing” figurative, or does it better describe a being who has legs, and actually can stand upon (or over) a roof?

More of the passage...

10 And when they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.

1. These magi rejoiced. Why? They had not been abandoned by the star, and it had led them specifically to the very place where Yeshua lay.
2. They already knew they were going to Bethlehem. But they were happy because their guide would save them from asking everyone there about a child which by this time might be two years old or older. They just needed to follow the guide, which led them to a very specific location.

More of the passage ...

11 And they came into the house and saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they fell down and worshiped Him; and opening their treasures they presented to Him gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. 12 And having been warned by God in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed for their own country by another way.

What do we see here?

1. The family is not living in the barn, or a stable. They are living in a house.³ This clearly means a period of time has passed since the birth. Because of the decision of Herod to kill all the baby boys two years old and under, this tells us probably almost two years have elapsed since the birth.
2. There were three gifts. We don't know how many "wise men" there were. The Christian tradition has most certainly paired a single "wise man" with each of the three gifts. There had to be more than two of them, but there could have been more than three, as well.

An account in Luke tells us of the time before the "wise men" came to Bethlehem. It speaks of greater detail regarding the birth of Yeshua. We see in this passage that the visitation of the men from the east came significantly later in time.

Luke 2:1-21

³ This shows us why when Christians put up a "nativity scene" with the "wise men" adoring a baby in a manger, they are violating a clear timeline given in Scripture.

2 Now it came about in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth. 2 This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. 3 And all were proceeding to register for the census, everyone to his own city. 4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, 5 in order to register, along with Mary, who was engaged to him, and was with child. 6 And it came about that while they were there, the days were completed for her to give birth. 7 And she gave birth to her first-born son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

This all happened before the passage in Matthew begins. Bethlehem was not their actual home. And now we find something that gives us a bit more of the picture regarding angels.

8 And in the same region there were some shepherds staying out in the fields, and keeping watch over their flock by night.

9 And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened.

This passage gives us important information as well.

1. The angel appeared suddenly (not like a star or other natural phenomenon in the sky).
2. The “glory of the L-rd” was around them. I picture a circle of visible light together with a deep sense of holiness.
3. They were very frightened.

Back to the passage...

10 And the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which shall be for all the people;

We see more...

1. The angel spoke to them in Hebrew
2. These shepherds were commissioned as prophets to announce the gospel to all the people. It is important to note that shepherds

were not to be witnesses in court, because they were not believable under oath.⁴ This is because they took their flocks over the lands of others, and the sheep stole the grass as they crossed, thus shepherds were considered “thieves”, and unfit to be credible witnesses.⁵

Back to the passage ...

11 for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

And we see now...

1. It happened in Bethlehem (City of David).
2. Born “today”
3. Born for you
4. Savior (Yeshua means “salvation”).
5. He is the King Messiah that our people had been awaiting.

More from the passage...

⁴ Sanhedrin 25b

⁵ Bava Metzia 5b

12 "And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths, and lying in a manger."

We see more...

1. They will identify the child by a sign
2. Baby will be wrapped in “cloths” (actually, burial cloths).
3. Lying in a feed trough.
4. Since conditions 2 and 3 are very unlikely, there can be only one child that fulfills these requirements in Beit Lechem.⁶

Back to the passage...

13 And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

1. Again, the others appear suddenly. It seems that the angels were there all along, but couldn't be seen until they chose to “appear” to these men.
2. Those beings who suddenly appear are also angels, but are described as the “heavenly host” (better translated as the “army of heaven”).

⁶ In English, Bethlehem.

More from the passage ...

14 "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased."

15 And it came about when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds began saying to one another, "Let us go straight to Bethlehem then, and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us."

We now see more...

1. The angels disappeared quickly as well.
2. The shepherds needed no further convincing, and wished to go see this amazing child.
3. They were very near Beit Lechem, so they could leave their flocks for a short time safely.

More from the passage...

16 And they came in haste and found their way to Mary and Joseph, and the baby as He lay in the manger. 17 And when

they had seen this, they made known the statement which had been told them about this Child.

We can now see..

1. They came in a hurry
2. The sign was as the angel said it would be
3. The shepherds told Joseph and Mary what they had seen and heard
4. Although all this happened near Beit Lechem, nobody else saw what they saw, and they had to report it to Mary and Joseph, and the others there.

More of the passage...

18 And all who heard it wondered at the things which were told them by the shepherds. 19 But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. 20 And the shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, just as had been told them. 21 And when eight days were completed before His circumcision,

His name was then called Jesus (actually, Yeshua), the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb.⁷

What do we now know?

1. This all happened within the first few days of the child's life.
2. Yeshua was named on the 8th day... just like all Jewish boys at his bris.⁸

So, it is clear so far that what these shepherds were seeing *could not have been* a shining thing in the night sky that all could see. The account clearly identifies the beings as angels.

⁷ The name "Jesus" wasn't conferred upon Him until very much later, by English speakers, who apparently wished to distance the Messiah from His Jewishness. According to *Christianity*, <https://christianity.stackexchange.com/questions/11918/when-was-the-first-occurrence-of-jesus-being-used-as-a-name>

In 1604, Robert Cawdrey published the first English dictionary, the letter "J" was added to create the modern English alphabet we know today. The 1611 King James Bible written in English did not use the letter "J" instead used Latin words. If Jesus name was used before 1611 why was the name Jesus not used in the 1611 King James Bible? This would only mean that the English did not accept the "J" until after 1611 and before 1638 A.D. or the name Jesus was not used until after 1611 A.D. One possible answer to how "J" was used to create the name Jesus is someone took the Latin word Iesus and added "J" to create the name Jesus. The problem is the use of the Latin word and not the Greek word. The second problem this had to take place after 1604 A.D. The third problem is that the 1611 A.D. King James Bible used the Latin word Iesus not Jesus.

However the 1638 A.D. King James Bible used Jesus' name. We know the Latin did not use the letter "J" until the 18th Century or 100 years after 1638 A.D. King James Bible used Jesus' name. King James I of England authorized the Protestant translation of the King James Version and chose to continue the anti-Catholic policies.

⁸ The "bris" is a ceremony during which a Jewish boy is circumcised and receives his name.

But maybe a couple of years later, did the visitors from the east see something different than what the shepherds saw?

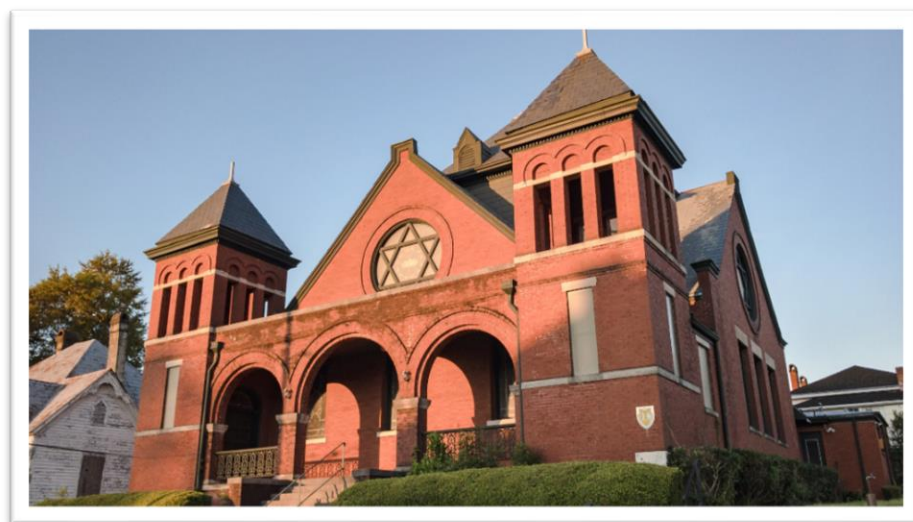
All we can be certain of is that the “star” that the eastern visitors followed appeared *only to them*, changed directions frequently, stayed with them for a very long journey, and appeared and disappeared on at least one occasion. And one other thing we can surmise is this - Since the visitors traveled by day through unfamiliar territory, they could follow this “star” easily in daylight.

Are there other hints in Scripture regarding such a heavenly guide?

Rev 1:12-20

12 And I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands; 13 and in the middle of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His breast with a golden girdle. 14 And His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire; 15 and His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been caused to glow in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters. 16 And in His right hand

He held **seven stars**; and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength. 17 And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as a dead man. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying, "Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, 18 and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades. 19 "Write therefore the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall take place after these things. 20 "As for the mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: the **seven stars are the angels of the seven churches**, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.



In synagogues, it is customary to have a prominent six-sided star on the building. Sometimes on the outside, and

sometimes inside. That is because the Jewish people believe that the Star of David also represents the “star”, the angel, of that congregation.

We see more about “stars” of heaven being angels, in the book of Job, beginning in chapter 38, where G-d begins to speak to him for the first time after this trial began.



Job 38:1-7

38 Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind and said,

2 "Who is this that darkens counsel

By words without knowledge?

3 "Now gird up your loins like a man,

And I will ask you, and you instruct Me!

4 "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?

Tell Me, if you have understanding,

5 Who set its measurements, since you know?

Or who stretched the line on it?

6 "On what were its bases sunk?

Or who laid its cornerstone,

7 When the **morning stars** sang together,
And all the sons of God shouted for joy?

וַיִּשָּׂאוּ	בִּקְרָא	כּוֹכְבֵי	יַחַד	בְּרִין־	7
and shouted for joy?	morning	the	stars	together,	When sang
<u>7321</u>	<u>1242</u>	<u>9999</u>	<u>3556</u>	<u>3162</u>	<u>7442</u>

אֱלֹהִים:	בְּנֵי	כָּל־
God	the sons of	all
<u>430</u>	<u>1121</u>	<u>3605</u>

It is merely poetic language, describing the “morning stars” singing together? Or might it describe a special class of angels who formed a celestial choir singing praises to G-d for His work of creation? Our people understood these “stars of the morning” were the ministering angels who rejoiced regarding what G-d had done.⁹

We see also in Scripture that one of these angels was Lucifer, who chose to challenge G-d for His authority and majesty.

Rev 9:1-2

⁹ Breshit Rabah 65:21. Then, “all the children of the great shouted” – these are the ministering angels. What do they recite? “Blessed is the glory of the Lord from His place” (Ezekiel 3:12).

9 And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a **star from heaven** which had fallen to the earth; and the key of the bottomless pit was given to **him**.

Isa 14:12-14

12 "How you have fallen from heaven,
O star of the morning, son of the dawn!
You have been cut down to the earth,
You who have weakened the nations!
13 "But you said in your heart,
'I will ascend to heaven;
I will raise my throne above the stars of God,
And I will sit on the mount of assembly
In the recesses of the north.
14 'I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;
I will make myself like the Most High.'

Rev 12:3-4

And another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads

were seven diadems. 4 And his tail swept away a third of the **stars of heaven**, and threw them to the earth.

If only the smallest segment of a third of all the burning suns in space even came even relatively near to the orbit of our sun (which is rather small by comparison to most stars) all that we know would have been quickly incinerated, and our solar system destroyed by immense gravitational forces. So, this passage is clear that it does not speak of suns in space, which we call in colloquial English, “stars.”

You now see that our ancients thought that the “stars of heaven” can also refer to angels. Thus, the Hebrew word for “star” is often interpreted to mean “angel”.

Let’s see what an angel can do that a hot thing in the sky cannot:

Angels can...

1. appear to a small group of people in different places at different times.
2. be personal to anyone.
3. hover close to the ground, or even walk on the ground, in a way that allows the angel to be closely followed from one place to another by a small group of people.

4. disappear and reappear instantly.
5. cast a cloud of holiness around them in a visible or tangible way.
6. Change directions from heading north, to southwest, to south.
7. come to hover closely over, or even stand over, one particular house so that only the ones following can see.

So, now that you know the truth, please be patient with those sweet ones who still are enamored by the concept of something in the night sky that shines so brightly that it must be “special.”

Don't be disappointed in them, when they put a star on top of their Christmas trees, signifying something shining in the night sky. They are doing the best that they can with what they know. Love them with the love of G-d, because when you were giving your best effort to love G-d in the best way that you knew – although you today know you were in error at that time – your heart still made G-d smile. None of us gets it perfectly right. We all are still short of the glory of G-d. And that's an ok place to be, so long as we don't languish there.



Let's let love for G-d and for one another be our banner as we unite with other believers in our communities to celebrate the love of G-d coming to Earth, becoming a baby, and living among us to show us by His life what He had been trying to tell us for generations about living a holy life bathed in love for one another.