

Selected Verses About STARS

Our concept of stars involves huge balls of fiery gas (or plasma), billions of miles away from the earth. We must remember that this was *not* the concept held by those who lived during the time the Bible was written. Their concept was *not* wrong, or in any way inferior to ours; it just had a different focus, being based on what could be *seen*, rather than on what the physical composition may have been. To them, stars were bright points of light that were normally visible at night. This definition of "star" would rightfully include *planets*, which would be seen as points of light that moved across the heavens. (They were called "wandering stars," because they did not remain in a fixed position.) This definition would include other objects, such as meteors (which would be described as "shooting stars" or "falling stars"), and perhaps also comets.

Many of the pagan nations (and Israelites who abandoned the true God) attributed powers to the stars, claiming that they controlled human destinies and the course of events on the earth. Hence, stars became objects of worship - a practice condemned by the God who made them. (See Section C, below.)

A. Their origin and purpose

1. Made by God - Genesis 1:16; Psalm 8:3.
2. Their purpose
 - They help "govern" the night (as an expression of God's love) - Psalm 136:9.
 - Along with the sun and moon, they serve as "signs," and identify different times of the year - Genesis 1:14-16. [Some of the "signs" mentioned in the Bible are: the darkness and the falling stars that occurred during certain times of judgment (see Section G-2), and the star at Bethlehem that shone at the time of Jesus' birth (see Section G-1).]
3. Specific constellations mentioned - Job 9:9; 26:13; 38:31-32; Isaiah 13:10; Amos 5:8; also an indirect reference in Acts 28:11.
4. [Many other verses make a generalized reference to stars.]

B. Comparison to God

1. God is worthy of their praise (in the sense that *all* creation should praise him) - Psalm 148:3. [Job 38:7 also describes *stars* as singing on the day of creation. However, the reference to *angels*, in the second half of the verse, may suggest that the word "star" is being used here in a figurative sense, to describe heavenly beings.]
2. They are imperfect/inferior, compared to God - Job 25:5.
3. [Some additional things are mentioned in other sections.]

C. Stars and idolatry / astrology

1. DO NOT "bow down to" (rely on) them - Deuteronomy 4:19; 17:3. [Those who encouraged this practice were to be put to death. We are to rely *only* on God.]
2. A reference to a star that was associated with a false god - Amos 5:26; Acts 7:43.
3. The powerlessness of astrology, compared to the power of God - Isaiah 47:13 (and context); also illustrated in Daniel 2:2-5; 4:7 and 5:7 (+). [Note: The Devil *does* have some limited power, so there may be times when astrology (and other occult practices) *do* seem to "work."]
4. [See also Section B, which gives additional reasons for *not* relying on astrology.]

D. Their number - used to illustrate large numbers of people

1. Their number determined by God - Psalm 147:4.
2. Used to describe the number of Abraham's offspring (Israel) - Genesis 15:5; 22:17; 26:4; Exodus 32:13; Deuteronomy 1:10; 10:22; 1 Chronicles 27:23; Nehemiah 9:23; Hebrews 11:12.
3. Used to describe the combined number of David's offspring and Levites who will one day serve God together - Jeremiah 33:22.
4. Used to describe large numbers of people who are about to become few in number (due to judgment for their sins) - Deuteronomy 28:62 (Israel, if/when they rebelled against God); Nahum 3:16 (the merchants of Nineveh, who were about to be destroyed because of their sins).

E. Their height and inaccessibility

1. They are beyond our reach, inaccessible to us ("high" or "lofty") - Job 22:12. [The emphasis of this verse: God is even higher than the stars.]
2. Their height can be used to illustrate pride and arrogance. They can be used to describe a wicked, proud nation that is about to be judged by God; One that is about to be brought low in humility and destruction - Obadiah 1:4.

F. Their light

1. Controlled by God
 - They shine because God decreed that they would do so - Jeremiah 31:35.
 - God can also seal off their light - Job 9:7. [This may be a reference to clouds, or perhaps to the darkness described in Section G-2, below.]
2. Their splendor: It varies from star to star - 1 Corinthians 15:41. [Used to teach about the bodies we will have after the resurrection.]
3. Their light, used to teach us about God's people ("the righteous")
 - At the present: They illustrate how the righteous "shine" in a sinful ("dark") world - Philippians 2:15.
 - In the future: They illustrate how the righteous will "shine" in eternity - Daniel 12:3.

G. Stars as a sign

1. A star as a sign of Jesus' birth - Matthew 2:2, 7, 9-10.
2. Stars as a sign of judgment
 - Stars being "darkened" during times of judgment - Isaiah 13:10; Ezekiel 32:7; Joel 2:10; 3:15.
 - Falling stars (meteors?) - Matthew 24:29; Mark 13:25; Revelation 6:13; 8:12.
 - "Signs" in the heavens - Isaiah 34:4 ; Luke 21:25. [In the Isaiah passage, the stars are also described as "dissolving" or "rotting." The verse in Luke parallels the "falling stars," mentioned in Matthew 24:29 and Mark 13:25, above.]
 - An example: Stars (and other elements of creation) described as "fighting" against Sisera's army - Judges 5:20.

H. "Star" used symbolically (though in the dream or vision, an actual "star" - a point of light - may have been seen)

1. Joseph's brothers - Genesis 37:9.
2. The twelve tribes of Israel - Revelation 12:1.
3. The offspring of Jacob (a reference to Jesus) - Numbers 24:17.
4. Representatives of the "seven churches" - Revelation 1:16, 20; 2:1; 3:1.
5. A star (angel?) that will be given the key to the Abyss - Revelation 9:1.
6. Stars (angels?) cast down from heaven, by the "dragon" (Satan) - Revelation 12:4.

I. The "morning star" or "day star" (today called the planet "Venus"), used symbolically, in various ways:

1. Related to the coming of salvation/redemption - 2 Peter 1:19.
2. Given to the "overcomer" - Revelation 2:28. [The nature of the star itself is not specifically defined, unless it refers to Jesus Christ, as in Revelation 22:16.]
3. Jesus Christ - Revelation 22:16.
4. Lucifer - Isaiah 14:12-13. [This was a title that was given to the ruler of Babylon, just as "Pharaoh" was the title for the ruler of Egypt, etc.]

J. "Wandering stars" (planets) - used to describe false teachers - Jude 1:13.

K. A possible comet or meteor, given the name "Wormwood" (Bitter), because of its destructive effects on 1/3 of the world's water supply - Revelation 8:10-11. (It may be comprised of toxic materials that would contaminate the water, making it poisonous and unfit for consumption.) [An alternate view would interpret this "star" as symbolic, and place it in Section H, above.]