Astrology in the Bible

by Ralph Ellis

Introduction.

The Old and New Testaments are often portrayed as being written in isolation, and bearing little or no connection to the beliefs that preceded them. But this view is unlikely in the extreme, as the Israelites were resident in Egypt for many centuries prior to the claimed Exodus and are likely to have been influenced by Egyptian monotheism (of Pharaoh Akhenaton). It is well known, for instance, that Proverbs 22 comes from the *Instructions of Amenemopet*, while elements of the Sermon on the Mount come from *Maxims of Ani.* *1 There are many other such examples in the Bible.

This particular article explores the possibility that Egyptian astrology was once a central component in the two primary Judaic religions, Judaism and Christianity, but that it has been obscured from popular view by subsequent transcriptions and translations of the original text. Indeed, the evidence that follows also suggests that the astrological foundations of some secular symbolism has likewise been lost to mainstream understanding. The observations presented here may be considered subjective, but the evidence is so consistent as to be on a par with the best that religio-historical evidence has to offer.

The Article.

There is astrology in the Bible? Readers who know anything about Christianity may be quite confident that the Bible contains no information or veneration of 'heretical' beliefs like astrology whatsoever. In fact, surely astrology is Pagan and idolatrous and the complete antithesis of Judaism and Christianity. Is that not so?

Actually, this is not so at all. Yet so deep-rooted is this common view of Judaeo-Christianity that it may come as a bit of a shock to some readers to learn that astrology was originally a central component of this belief system. But this as not necessarily the kind of daily astrology we find in magazines of the modern era, but rather a study and veneration of millennial astrology. This long-term study of the heavens is known as precessional astrology, and it is more akin to what we would now call astronomy, as it is based upon a real astronomical event known as the precession of the equinox.



Fig 1. The precession of the equinox around the constellation of Draco takes nearly 26,000 years to complete. This period is known as a Great Year. This precessional 'wobble' moves the 'vernal point' through each constellation, one by one.

Precession is a real astronomical effect, that changes the dominant constellation that rises with the dawn Sun at the vernal equinox (the spring equinox) roughly every 2,140 years. It happens because the earth 'wobbles' gyroscopically on its axis, making the axis of the Earth rotate around the constellation of Draco (around the ecliptic pole) once every 25,680 years. But this rotation has a secondary effect, which causes the vernal equinox sunrise (the vernal point) to pass through each constellation in turn, but in a retrograde fashion to normal astrology. Therefore, the Sun takes about 2,140 years to transit each of the twelve constellations. The terminology this celestial motion generates is as follows:

- The very long period of 25,680 years is called the Great Year.
- The shorter period of 2,140 years is known as the Great Month.

But the constellations are not all of the same size, and so the Great Months are not all of the same duration. The established start-dates for the recent Great Months are as follows (all dates +/- 20 years or so):

Sign	Start date	Icon
Taurus	4300 BC	(bulls)
Aries	1750 BC	(sheep)
Pisces	10 AD	(fish)
Aquarius	2550 AD	(water) *2

If we are to discover any references to astrology within the Bible, the first change in the constellations in which we might find that evidence happened in about 1750 BC, when Taurus (the bull) turned into Aries (the ram). Remember that this millennial movement of the Sun through the constellations is a real astronomical event, as can be seen on the following image from a computer planisphere, where the path of the Sun is marked in red. The numbers here are in thousands of years either side of our normal year zero (00 AD). As can be seen, in about 1800 - 1700 BC, the vernal equinox sunrise was moving away from Taurus (the bull) and towards Aries (the sheep).

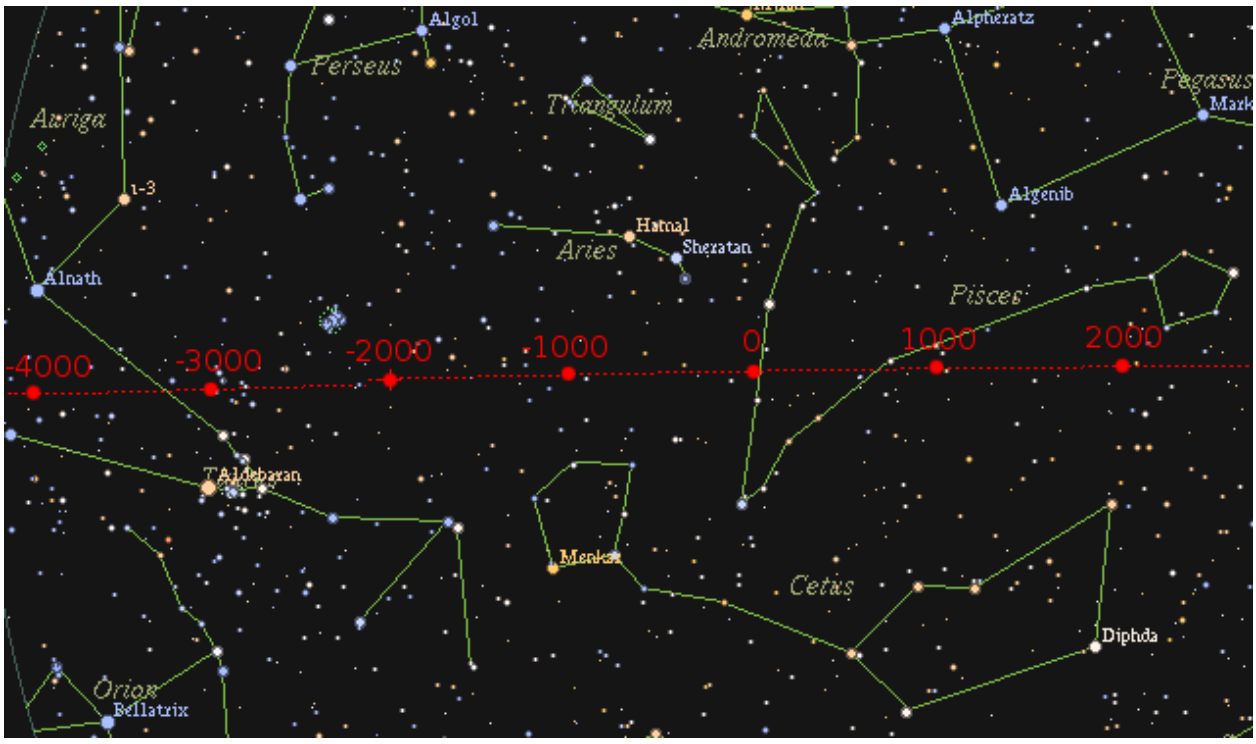


*Fig 2. The path of the vernal equinox sunrise, as it courses through the constellations. In 1750 BC it moved from Taurus to Aries, while in about AD 10 it moved from Aries to Pisces. *3*

Torah shepherds

But how does all of this fit into the biblical storyline? Where does the Torah mention the vernal equinox or the zodiac? Well, this is where the researcher has to look critically and laterally at what the Torah was trying to say originally, before it was badly transcribed or translated. And the first clue to biblical astrology being a reality, is that the biblical patriarchs of this very same era (1800 - 1700 BC) became known as 'shepherds' just as the Great Month of Taurus (bulls) ended and the Great Month of Aries (sheep) began. Was this change in name merely a coincidence, because these people were poor shepherds who looked after a few sheep? Actually, no, and we can be confident of this answer because the change in terminology was both widespread and consistent throughout biblical history. We also know this because Abraham, the first of these biblical 'shepherds' was hardly a poverty-stricken nomad with a few flea-bitten goats. The Torah and Josephus Flavius' accounts of this era say of Abraham:

> *And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, who numbered three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan. Gen 14:14*

> *And what did ... our forefather Abraham do? Did he avenge the insult by force of arms? Yet he had three hundred and eighteen army officers under him and an immense army under each of them. Jewish War 5:9:4*

So the biblical and historical records say that Abraham had an army led by 318 commanders; and so if each commander was a centurion then Abraham's army numbered 31,800 men. Now that is quite an army for a poverty-stricken shepherd with a few flea-bitten goats, as the patriarchs are often portrayed. So why does the Torah have accounts that conflict so strongly with the popular view that is promulgated by the Judaeo-Christian priesthood? The most likely answer is that the true history of the Israelites was not exactly as the priesthood imagine it to be, or would like it to be. It is much easier to sell a story of persecution by the horrible Egyptians, than admit that your forefathers being tyrants themselves, who lost a civil war in Egypt.

The Hyksos

The historical reality is that in addition to the biblical patriarchs being shepherds, the Hyksos pharaohs of Egypt were similarly known as shepherds - the Shepherd Kings. And since Abraham was a 'shepherd' who controlled a vast army some 30,000 strong, it is highly likely that he was

actually a Hyksos king - especially since the Hyksos were one of the few peoples in this era that could have afforded such a large standing army. Some Egyptologists have questioned whether 'Hyksos' does indeed mean 'Shepherd', and thus questioned the obvious connection between the Hyksos pharaohs and the biblical Patriarchs. This translation was originally made by Manetho, a 3rd century BC Egyptian historian, and yet we can be fairly sure that Manetho was correct because 'Hyksos' is spelt with the shepherd's crook.



Fig 3. The hieroglyphs for Hykau Khasut (Kings of the Foreign Lands), which Manetho transliterates and shortens into 'Hyksos' (the Shepherd Kings). The second word in this title may have been derived from the Shasu, a Semitic people.

In addition to these historical 'shepherds' we have many other conversions to sheep veneration within this age or era - kings who were born during the Great Month of Aries. These include Alexander the Great and Pharaoh Ptolemy III, who both wore the horns of a ram (Aries) in their hair. They did so not because a ram is a masculine animal, but because they knew that they had been born in the Great Month of Aries, and were therefore Kings of Aries (or Shepherd Kings). This transposition in cosmic veneration, from Taurus-bulls to Aries-sheep, was also why Gilgamesh, the great Sumerian hero-figure, killed the Bull of Heaven (Taurus). But that is another story and another article.



Fig 4. Alexander the Great (above) and Pharaoh Ptolemy III (below) both wore ram's horns, in recognition and celebration of the Great Month of Aries. They also wore a 'diadema' headband, tied behind the head, that represented the circular course of the Sun through the constellations.

The reverse of Alexander's coin shows an image of 'Britannia', the same symbol that has been embossed onto many British coins throughout the centuries, but the image is actually of the goddess Athena. The bust of 'Ptolemy' shown here is actually Ptolemy in the guise of Hercules, and the ram's horn is cleverly disguised just above the central hole. Note also that this coin of Ptolemy displays a Christian Chi-Rho symbol, between the legs of the eagle, but do remember that this coin was struck in the 3rd century BC.

Joseph and pharaoh

So what further evidence do we find in the Bible, that the early Judaic priesthood venerated the precessional zodiac? Surprising as it may seem, we may well have a verbatim description of this change in the Great Month, from Taurus to Aries, in the Torah story of Joseph (the patriarch who wore the coat of many colours). The period in question is just after the historically attested Exodus of the Hyksos Pharaohs of Egypt, who were evicted from Egypt in about 1570 BC. Remember that the Hyksos were known as the Shepherd Pharaohs, and it will be a frequent assertion in this and later articles that these Hyksos peoples were related to or allied to the Israelites, which is why the Israelite patriarchs were known as 'shepherds'.

In the Torah's account of these events, Joseph went down into Egypt and became both the Prime Minister of Egypt (the Vizier) and the High Priest of Heliopolis. Joseph then invites his brothers down into Egypt; but he has a warning for them and says to them:

> *And it shall come to pass, when Pharaoh shall call you, and shall say, What is your occupation? You shall say, "Thy servants' trade has been about cattle from our youth even until now, both we, and also our fathers" .... for every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians. Gen 46:33*

However, while this sentence is quite clear it makes absolutely no sense in agricultural terms, for the Egyptians had no proscription against eating sheep. Quite the reverse, in fact, for it was the bull that was sacred in Egypt, much as it is in India to this day. But this warning makes every sense in terms of precessional astronomy, and its attendant veneration or religion. What Joseph actually meant by this warning was:

> *And it shall come to pass, when Pharaoh shall call you, and shall say, What is your religion? You shall say, "Thy servants' religion has been to venerate the Apis-bull (Taurus) from our youth even until now, both we, and also our fathers" ... for every Hyksos Shepherd (venerator of Aries) is an abomination unto the Egyptians. Gen 46:33*

Well of course the Hyksos Shepherds were an abomination to the (Upper) Egyptians, because they had only just waged a prolonged and very bitter civil war against the Hyksos and kicked them out of the country. Thus this particular Torah verse is probably a word-for-word account of a meeting between Joseph and the Upper Egyptian pharaoh. In other words, the Torah does contain valid and very interesting historical information, if we know how to interpret it, and much of that information points towards precessional astrology being a central component of the early Judaeo-Christian belief system.



Fig 5. Joseph and his brothers meet with pharaoh. In reality, Joseph was said to have been the prime minister of Egypt and the high priest of Heliopolis, and so his 'coat of many colours', would have been rather more luxurious than the white tunic depicted here. In fact, it would have looked rather like the flamboyant robes worn by the modern Archbishop of Canterbury.

The Galilee zodiac

But the centuries passed, and the Earth continued to wobble or precess on its axis, in its predictable fashion, and the Great Month of Aries finally drew to a close at the turn of the first century AD. In its wake we then witnessed the rise of the Great Month of Pisces, and the simultaneous rise of the New Testament accounts. And it is in the Nazarene creed of Jesus and James that we find further evidence for the veneration of astrology in the Bible. And the first evidence for this comes from the recent archaeology of the region. Six very early synagogues have been excavated in Judaea and Jordan in the last decades, and strange as it seemed to the

archaeologists and rabbis alike, all of them had a mosaic zodiac on the floor. The following example is the magnificent zodiac at Hamat Teverya, on the Sea of Galilee, which is worth looking at in some detail.

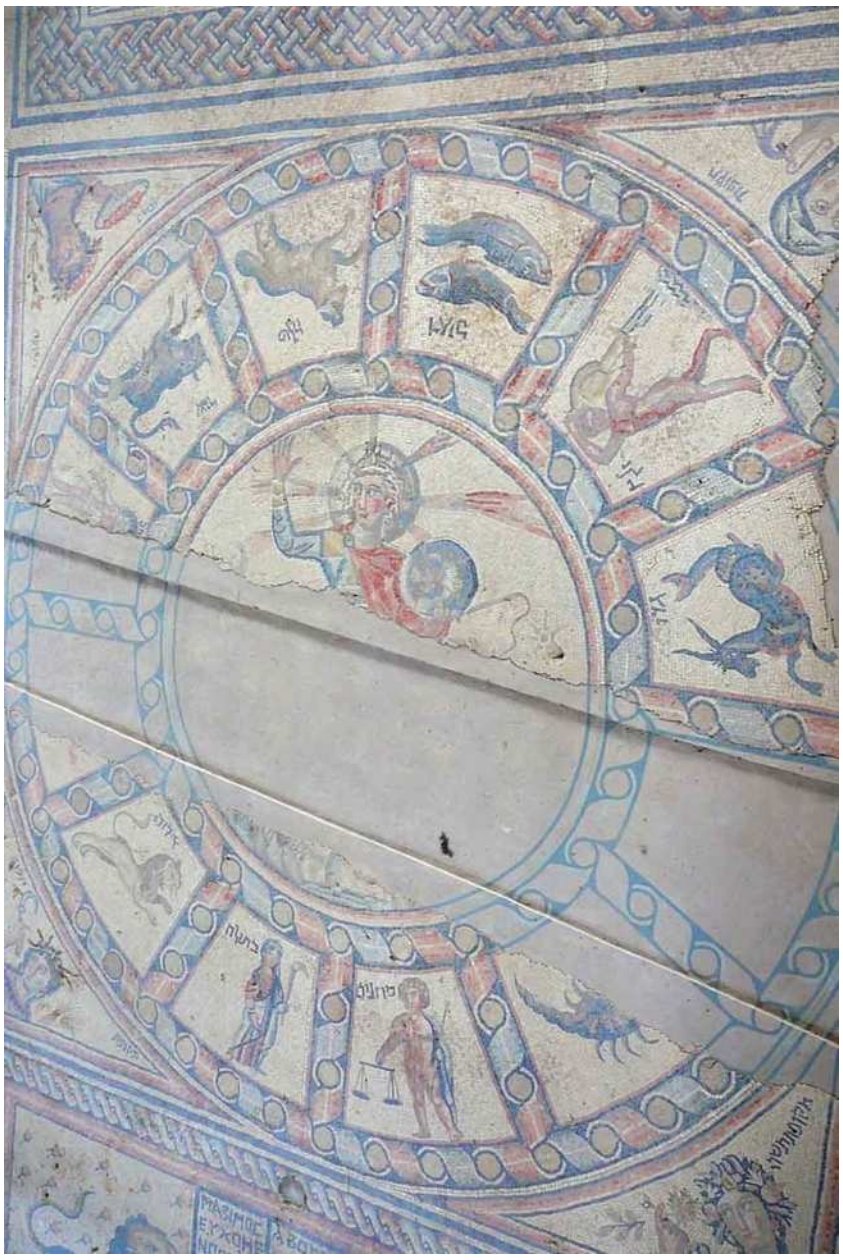


Fig 6. The zodiac on the floor of the synagogue excavated at Hamat Teverya. The 'Jesus-figure' wearing a halo in the center of the zodiac is Helios, the Sun-god. Thus the Sun is surrounded by the twelve constellations, just as it is on a planisphere.

As we are beginning to see, all these early religions were Sabaean (ie: celestial and astrological), whose priests studied the Cosmos and the Solar System; and yet despite our recognition of their expertise, this zodiac still contains some remarkable and unexpected surprises. Firstly, it confirms that early (Nazarene) Judaism was tracking the precession of the equinox, because the head of Helios (the Sun) has been deliberately arranged in this zodiac to point at the conjunction between Aries and Pisces - i.e. Helios is pointing at a precessional date of the early 1st century AD, the very era when when the Great Month of Aries gave way to the Great Month of Pisces. Thus the artist or priest who designed this zodiac clearly knew about precession, and no doubt he depicted this conjunction because this mosaic was constructed at this very time.

Note also that Helios, the Sun-god, is holding a blue spherical Earth. Remember that this is a 1st century mosaic, and yet the artist knew that the Earth was spherical and looked blue when viewed from space. Interesting is it not? This explains the reasoning for Copernicus being called charlatan, in masonic circles, because he was merely recording what was already known in the Enlightened and Illuminated world, for everyone knew that the planets were spherical and the Solar System was heliocentric.*4 But it has to be said that the predominance of blue seas on this particular spherical Earth Earth is definitely a bonus in this particular imagery, as it is suggestive of a deep understanding of our world.

So Helios in the center of the Hamat Teverya zodiac is pointing to the precessional conjunction between Aries (sheep) and Pisces (fish), which occurred in the early 1st century AD. And this very same conjunction is why Jesus was recorded as being born as a Lamb of God (Aries) but becoming a Fisher of Men (Pisces). And so the image of Helios on this zodiac most probably represents Jesus himself, as the Son or Sun of God. In the clearest possible terms, then, the gospels are spelling out the true astrological basis and nature of Jesus' Nazarene Church, by referencing lambs and fish in the correct astrological context and era.

This overt link to the Age of Pisces is why the gospels made such an issue about Jesus fishing on the Sea of Galilee, and so when Jesus lowered his nets into the lake to catch 'fish' he was in reality catching converts and followers who understood that Aries had turned into Pisces. The same is true of the 'loaves and fishes' story. In reality, thus these so-called biblical 'miracles' were actually a record of pious evangelism, and catching more adherents to the Nazarene Church's veneration of Pisces.



Fig 7. Jesus goes fishing for converts to the veneration of the Age of Pisces . Mosaic from the Church of St Apollinare, Ravenna, Italy.

End of an Age

But this is not all. Just as we saw with the Old Testament example earlier in this article, the New Testament likewise contains verses that clearly relate a knowledge and veneration of precessional astrology. And just as with the previous example, the English translators appear to have done their best to cover up these cosmic and astrological allusions. Take this verse, for instance:

> *And as (Jesus) sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him, saying: 'Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming and of the End of the World?' (Math 24:3)*

But this is not a very enlightening translation of this verse, because the word being used here is not *kosmos* (meaning 'world'), but *aion* (meaning 'age'). The word *aion* actually refers to an 'age', just as it still does in English to this day, and so a much better translation of this verse may well be:

And as (Jesus) sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him, saying: 'Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the End of the Age?' (Math 24:3)

So what 'Age' was ending in the early 1st century AD, that Jesus could enlighten his disciples about? The answer is more than obvious for the 'End of the Age' being discussed here is the end of a precessional sign of the zodiac - the end of the Age of Aries in about AD 10. In other words this verse contains a double conundrum, for here we have the twelve disciples, who represent the twelve constellations, asking a question about the ruling constellation of that era. Undoubtedly this was a deliberate literary device by the gospel author, that only the Enlightened and Illuminated were supposed to understand; although it has to be said that many of the disciples are regularly portrayed as not understanding any of the occult (hidden) aspects of the Nazarene creed, so perhaps some of them were just a bit dim.

But we might be able to make a further translation of this verse, for what does it mean by 'sign'? It is worded to appear to be an event, but the Greek word is *semeion*, which literally means a 'mark' or 'token'. Thus we might reasonably re-translate this verse once more, and derive:

And as (Jesus) sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him, saying: 'Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of the constellation at thy coming, and the sign of the constellation at the End of the Age?' (Math 24:3)

Thus we are now in a position to answer the disciples' questions, and we could advise them that: "Jesus was born at the conjunction between the Age of Aries and the Age of Pisces, and this new era will not end until we reach the Dawning of the Age of Aquarius - these are the Signs and Ages you must understand and pass on to future generations."

The Fisher Kings

But in addition to tracking the path of the constellations, the Sabaean-Nazarene priesthood were always looking for a special monarch who was born at the start of the next Age, the next Great Month. And Jesus was that special christ or king ('christ' simply means 'king'), which is why he was hailed as a messiah and became so influential. So Jesus was not simply the King of the Jews, he was also the first King of Pisces. However, this Enlightened and Illuminated celestial creed of Nazarene Sabaeanism was all but extinguished by the creed of Simple Judaism (Christianity) that followed it. Yet this celestial knowledge was not entirely extinguished, as much of it went underground, which is why the later Arthurian legends continually spoke of a line of semi-mythical Fisher Kings - the continuing line of kings who were born during the Great Month of

Pisces and understood and venerated this Piscean symbolism. Just like Alexander and Ptolemy, who displayed the ram-horn symbolism of Aries, the symbol of the Merovingian kings of Gaul was the fish.

So Jesus became the first King of Pisces, the first of the Arthurian Fisher Kings. And this is, of course, why the symbolism of early Christianity was the fish, and the primary Christian monogram was ΙΧΘΥΣ, which referred to *ichthys* the Greek for 'fish'. (Readers may see this symbol and monogram being used as a bumper-sticker for born again Christians.)

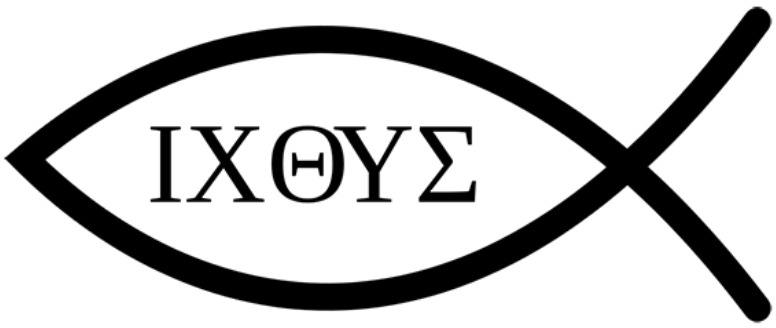


Fig 8. The modern ΙΧΘΥΣ *fish symbolism for Christianity, often displayed as a bumper-sticker on cars.*

As readers can perhaps now see, early Judaeo-Christianity was originally a Nazarene-Sabaean stellar cult that looked to the stars and the planets; and the motions of these stellar bodies not only determined future events, they also tracked and documented the lives and reigns of the various monarchs and monarchies. If a monarch is known to have been the third king of the Age of Aries, the date of his reign can be established with some precision and confidence, because his reign is marked and delineated in the movements of the heavens above. In fact, we use the very same chronological system to this day, for the year zero in our current calendar was not set to mark the birth of Jesus, rather it was set to honour the start of the Age of Pisces. So at the time of writing, we are now in **year 2013 of the Age of Pisces**.

Conclusion

The evidence presented in this article is interesting on many levels. Firstly, it potentially demonstrates that the events of the Torah and Gospels were recording the knowledge and

veneration of the precessional zodiac, which was one of the primary foundations of the Judaeo-Christian creed. But if readers accept this argument, they also have to accept that this veneration has been deliberately obscured, presumably for religio-political reasons, to portray the zodiac's symbolism as being agricultural. It also means that the Greco-Egyptian zodiac that we are familiar with today, was established in its present form in at least the early second millennium BC. There is also the possibility, contained within the Torah accounts, that the biblical authors were recording verbatim discussions between Joseph and Pharaoh, which is an interesting thought.

And finally, there is evidence that this knowledge of the precessional zodiac has been lost, not only to modern religions, but also to the historical fraternity too, who do not appear to understand the ram's horn symbolism for Alexander the Great and Ptolemy III. But this knowledge was not lost in the 1st century, and in the next article we shall move on to the Middle Ages and Arthurian Legend, and see convincing evidence that the precessional zodiac was known about and fully understood even in this late era.

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This article was extracted from the books:
Cleopatra to Christ
King Jesus
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Jesus, King of Edessa

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References:

*1 Ancient Egyptian Literature, Miriam Lichtheim.
*2 Dates gathered from International Astronomical Union (IAU) data.
*3 Chart from Voyager 4 planisphere software.
*4 The opening credits of the Black Adder series, for instance, calls Copernicus the of greatest liars.