

## *Saturday "Sermon"*

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# The Blood Moon

As we approach Holy Week I'd like to tell you about one of the most amazing things that happened on the first Good Friday. It happened like this.

Several weeks after Jesus' resurrection, on the Day of Pentecost, Peter delivered a very famous sermon to a great crowd in Jerusalem. In that sermon, Peter indicated that the events of the past several weeks and of the Day of Pentecost itself were a fulfillment of prophecy.

Peter said that what they were witnessing was a fulfillment of Joel's prophecy, "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh" (Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17). But Peter also quoted these words from Joel as having been recently fulfilled, pointing out that his hearers knew the events of which he spoke: "And I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes. And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved" (Joel 2:30-32; Acts 2:19-21).

With respect to "the sun turning to darkness," the Bible tells us that a great darkness fell across the land from noon until three o'clock as Jesus died on the cross (Matthew 27:45). The ancient historian, Phlegon Trallianus, wrote that "In the fourth year of the 202<sup>nd</sup> Olympiad [A.D. 32-33], a failure of the Sun took place greater than any previously known, and night came on at the sixth hour of the day [noon], so that stars actually appeared in the sky."

But perhaps even more amazing is the moon's turning "to blood." A "blood moon" is a moon in eclipse. When the moon is eclipsed by the earth, it receives only dim light refracted through the earth's atmosphere, red-shifted like a sunset. There was only one Passover lunar eclipse visible from Jerusalem while Pilate was procurator of Judea. It occurred on April 3, 33 A.D., the Day of the Cross.

When the moon rose on the night of Jesus' crucifixion, it was a blood moon. Using computer simulations, we can tell that this eclipse began about 3 p.m. What this means is that as Jesus was breathing His last on the cross, the moon was turning "to blood."

And, because the stars and planets move in their courses according to equations determined at creation, the time of Jesus' death was built into the universe from the first moment of its birth. We kneel in awe before so great a Love.

[www.bethlehemstarmovie.com](http://www.bethlehemstarmovie.com).

A friend recently introduced me to a remarkable film produced by Stephen McEveety, who also produced Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ*. The film to which I refer is *The Star of Bethlehem*, which convincingly unlocks the mystery of the world's most famous star. The end of the film makes a powerful connection with Good Friday, and since next week is Passion Week, I'd like to tell you about this connection.

Copy error in Josephus in 1544 led to conclusion that Herod died in 4 B.C.; earlier copies of Josephus all show that Herod died in 1 B.C. – subtract two years for slaughter

Computer models of the universe and sky from any point and at any date

The star appeared at an exact time, and Herod didn't know what that was (Matthew 2:7)

1. It signified birth.
2. It signified kingship.
3. It had a connection with the Jewish nation.
4. It rose in the east, like the other stars.
5. It appeared at a precise time.
6. Herod didn't know when it appeared.
7. It endured over time.
8. It was ahead of the Magi as they went south from Jerusalem to Bethlehem.
9. It stopped over Bethlehem.

In 3/2 B.C. Jupiter, the "king" planet, appeared to move more or less in a circle (retrograde motion) around Regulus, the "king" star, not once, not twice, but three times, inscribing a "halo" around it. The King of Planets crowned the King of Stars. Not the only time, but quite rare. Began in September of 3 B.C.

This happened against the background of the constellation Leo, The Lion. The Lion is the symbol for the Jewish tribe of Judah, from which the Messiah was to come.

In June of 2 B.C., Jupiter completed its coronation of Regulus and moved forward to a conjunction with Venus, the Mother Planet. This particular conjunction was so close and so

bright that it is displayed to this day in planetaria around the world. Signifying birth; the Magi set out

The sort of thing astronomers would have noticed, but others wouldn't have

December 25, 2 B.C., Jupiter reached full stop as it entered retrograde motion; as the Magi left Jerusalem for Bethlehem, Jupiter would have appeared to stop over B

April 3, 33 A.D.

Acts 2:22 "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know"

Acts 2:19-21 "And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day. And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."