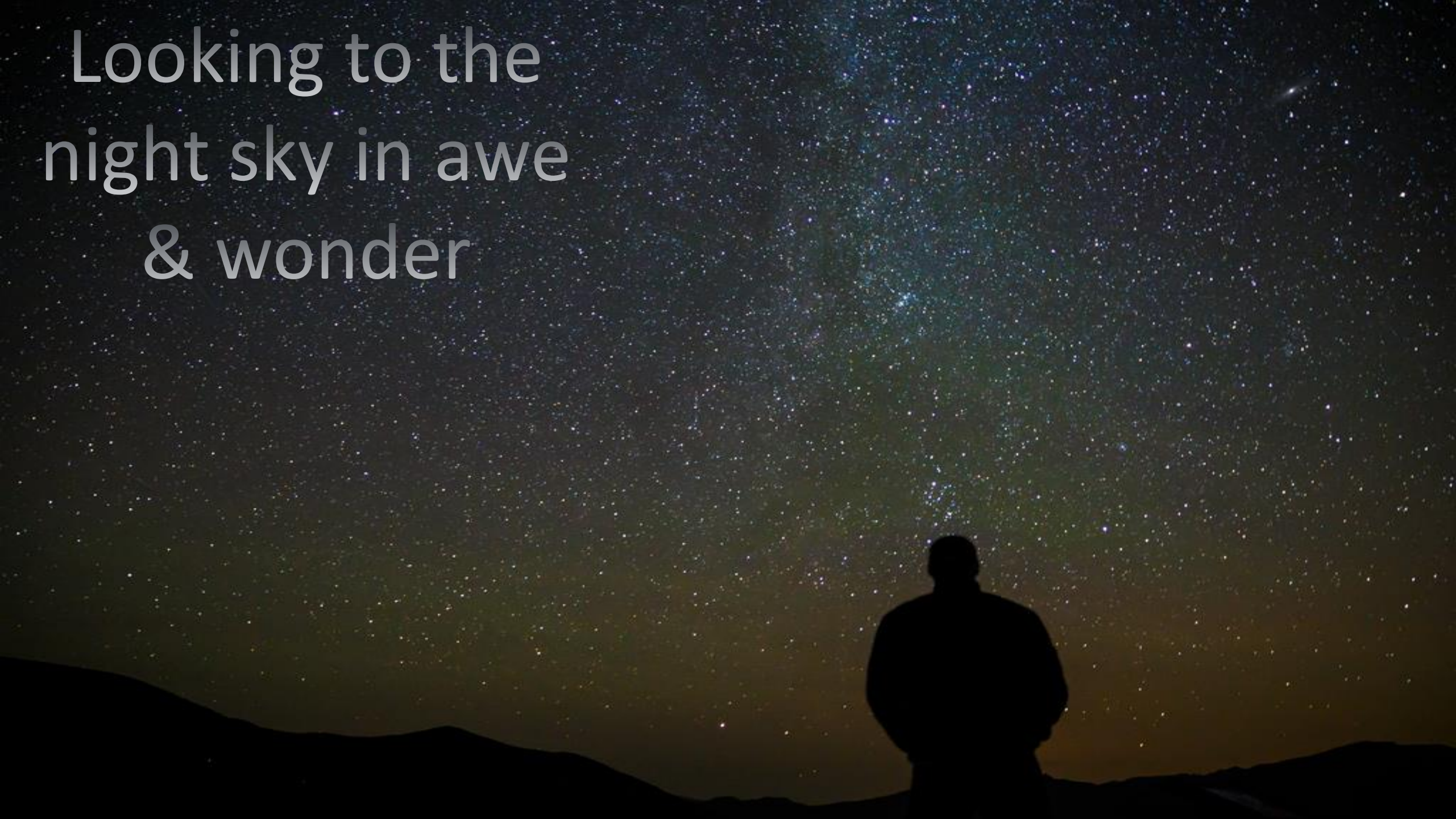




Harran (Carrhae) City of an Ancient Cult

Looking to the
night sky in awe
& wonder





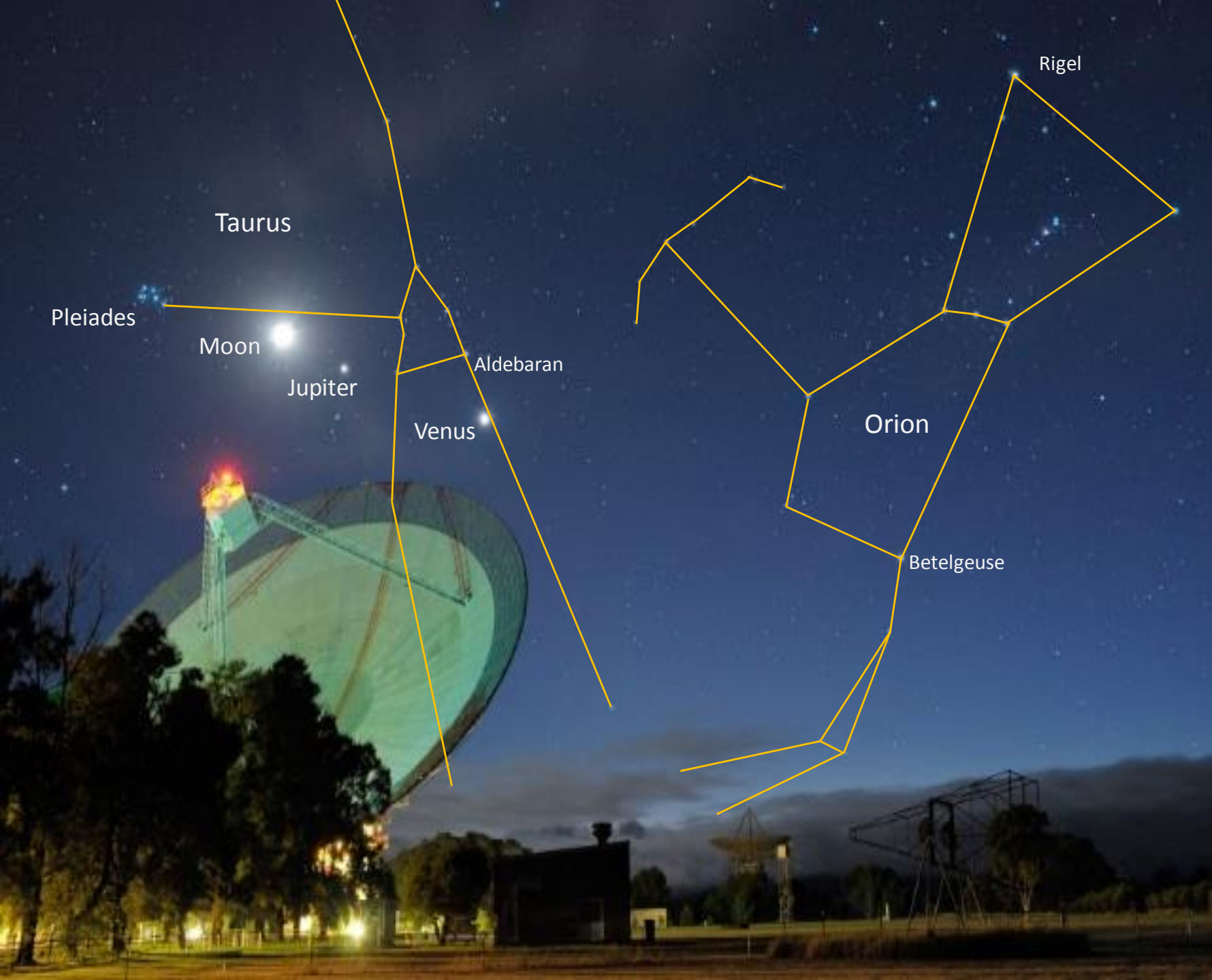
The Venus and Jupiter conjunction is seen from France this March 28, 2012- Venus-Jupiter conjunctions are fairly common.



Both the Moon and Venus are bright enough to be seen during the day, and both are quite capable of showing a crescent phase. To see Venus, which appears quite small, in a crescent phase requires binoculars or a telescope. In the above dramatic daytime image taken from Budapest, Hungary, the Moon and Venus shared a similar crescent phase a few minutes before the Moon eclipsed the larger but more distant world. About an hour later, Venus reappeared.



Pictures in the Sky



Wandering planets Venus and Jupiter were joined by an old crescent Moon near the eastern horizon on July 15, 2013. This serene southern skyview of the much anticipated predawn conjunction includes the lovely Pleiades star cluster and bright stars Aldebaran and Betelgeuse in the celestial lineup.



A young crescent Moon shares the western sky with sister stars of the Pleiades cluster in this pretty, evening skyscape recorded on the March equinox from San Antonio, Texas. In the processed digital image, multiple exposures of the celestial scene were combined to show details of the bright lunar surface along with the Pleiades stars.

Astronomical images of the well-known Pleiades often show the cluster's alluring blue reflection nebulae, but they are washed-out here in the bright moonlight. Still, during this particular night, skygazers in South and Central America could even watch the 5 day old Moon occult or pass in front of some of the brighter Pleiades stars.



Stonehenge, four thousand year old monument to the Sun, provides a setting for this snapshot of the Sun's children gathering in planet Earth's sky. While the massive stone structure dates from around 2000 B.C., this arrangement of the visible planets was recorded on the evening of May 4th, 2002. This photogenic and slowly shifting planetary grouping will be joined by a young crescent Moon beginning Monday, May 13.



The Moon



Earthlight illuminating the Moon's night side. Taken on Nowruz, the March 20, 2012 equinox, from Esfahan, Iran, planet Earth, this telescopic image captures strong Earthshine from an old Moon. The darker earthlit disk is in the arms of a bright sunlit crescent. When the Moon appears in Earth's sky as a slender crescent, a dazzlingly bright, nearly full Earth would be seen from the lunar surface.



The moon occults Jupiter the “King star”. Here it took about 80 seconds for Jupiter to disappear behind the moon.



Harran (Carrhae)



Geographic Location

7000-6000

Sumerian influence on Babylon

4000

Beginnings of Cuneiform

2500-2300

Decline of the political power of the Sumerians

- Babylon raised to a position of pre-eminence among the cities of the land
- Semitic population in the country had gained a complete ascendancy over their ancient rivals, whom they gradually absorbed.
- From this time onwards the city of Babylon maintained her position

2000

First dates assigned to the settlement of Harran

669-625

Ashur-bāni-pal one of the last kings to occupy the Assyrian throne, he made strenuous efforts to preserve the ancient literature of Babylonia and Assyria.

612

Fall of Nineveh.

Between half a million and two million cuneiform tablets are estimated to have been excavated in modern times, of which only approximately 30,000– 100,000 have been read or published. There is much to learn, yet.

An Ancient Past (B.C.E)

2000 B.C.E to ~34 C.E.BCE

Assyrian-Babylonian period

~34 C.E. – 1000 C.E.

Islamic Period

1000 C.E. – current

Harran Theological & Historical Timeline

2000 B.C.E to ~34 C.E.BCE

Assyrian-Babylonian period

Merchant Period:

- 1900 BCE: Situated along a trade route between the Mediterranean & the plains of middle Tigris

Assyrian Period:

- 1800-1000 BCE: Controlled the point where the road from Damascus joins the highway between Nineveh & Carchemish

Median Period:

- 610 BCE: Falls to the Medians & Babylonians; becomes bastion for the moon god Sin much to the consternation of Babylon (Marduk primary deity)

Persian Period:

- 600 BCE: Falls to the Persian Achaemenid dynasty. Becomes part of the province Athura;
- 331 BCE Alexander the Great conquers the city

Seleucid:

- 323 BCE Alexander dies; becomes part of the province called Osrhoene, ruled by Seleucus I Nicator; becomes buffer state between Parthian and Seleucid kings.

Harran Theological & Historical Timeline

~34 C.E. – 1000 C.E.

Islamic Period

Classical Period: Roman times known as Carrhae;

- 53 BCE battle between Parthians and Roman army under Crassus- who dies;
- 217 CE Caracalla is murdered here;
- Galerius was defeated nearby by Parthians in 296 CE;
- 651 CE Sassanid's fall to Arabs
- Populace named themselves “Sabians” so as not to convert (allegedly).
Becomes Harranian Sabians
- 800-900 CE: Becomes center for translating works of astronomy, philosophy, natural science & medicine to Arabic

Harran Theological & Historical Timeline

1000 C.E. – current

Third Period

Mandaeans

- 1032 or 33 CE: temple of the “Sabians” destroyed and urban community extinguished by starving ‘Alid-Shiite population
- 1059 CE: Temple rebuilt as fortified residence of the Numayrids

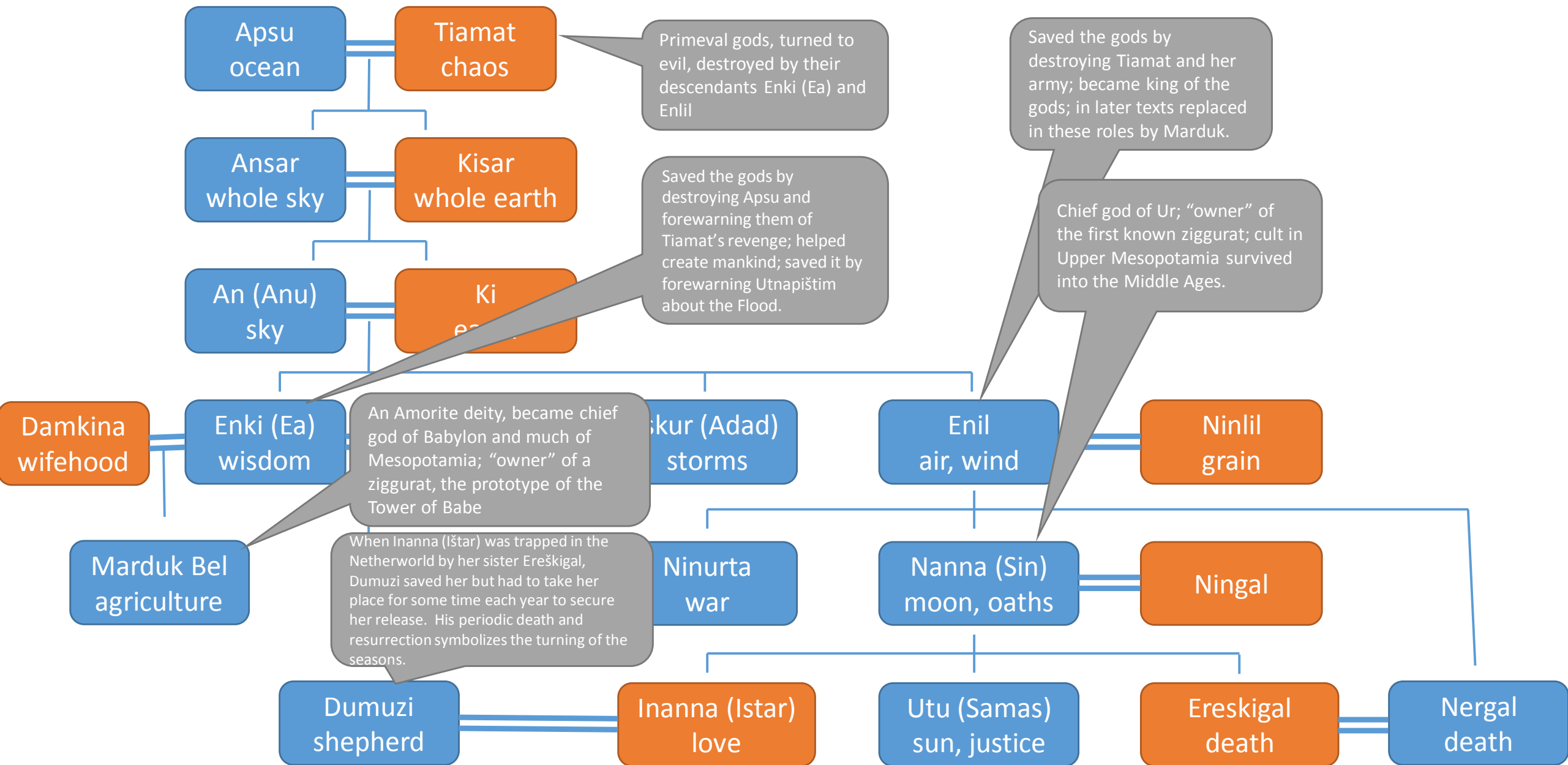
The Crusades

- 1104 CE: Battle of Harran: Baldwin of Bourcq captured by Seljuq Empire
- 1260s: The city is completely destroyed and abandoned during the Mongol invasion of Syria

Harran Theological & Historical Timeline



The Moon Cult and Pantheon



Nanna/Su'en

Moon

Ningal

Utu/Shamash

Inanna/Ishtar

Sun

“Star”

Venus





Iconography
of Nanna /
Su'en / Sin





SELEUKID KINGDOM. Seleukos I Nikator. 312-281 B.C. AR Tetradrachm (16.92 gm; 24 mm). Carrhae mint. Struck in the name of Alexander III, ca. 310-290 B.C. Head of Herakles right, wearing lion's skin headdress / Zeus seated left, holding eagle and scepter; in left field, monogram; below throne, monogram. SC 41; HGC 6, 12a. Struck on a nice compact flan. Reverse a bit off-centered.



ALEXANDER III, 336 - 323 BC. Tetradrachm, Carrhae, 315 - 305 BC. (16.92 g, 25 mm). Head of Herakles right / Zeus enthroned left. Rare mint. Price 3800





Marcus Aurelius, Æ24 (ø 21-22 mm / 7,07 g), Carrhae, 161–180 AD.,
 Obv.: [AY]TOKP KAIC MAP - AY[PHAI OYHPOC] , laureate head of Marcus Aurelius facing r.
 Rev.: KAP[HNWN ΦΙΛΟΡΩΜ(EWN?)] , crescent on filleted globe surmounted by six-pointed star.



Caracalla & Geta. Mesopotamia, Carrhae Mint 209-211 AD. Obverse: ANTWNEIN C GETAC CE, laureate, draped, and cuirassed bust of Caracalla right, facing bare-headed and draped bust of Geta left. Reverse: KΛWNEI MHTROPOL KARR, crescent and one star. BMC: 45, Mionnet 29 Rare. Size: 20mm, 3.93g.



Commodus, AE16 of Carrhae, Mesopotamia. 180-192 AD. Crescent and star.

Introduction of Mithras to Rome
from Persia ~200 C.E.
And



MACRINUS, AR, Tetradrachm, 12.7g, 25mm, Carrhae. 217-218 AD.

Obverse: ΑΥΤ Κ Μ ΟΠ CEOΥ ΜΑΚΡΕΙΝΟC CE.

Laureate, draped and cuirassed bust right seen from behind.

Reverse: ΔΗΜΑΡΧ ΕΞ ΥΠΑΤΟ C. Eagle seen from front, wings spread, head right, laurel-wreath in beak, standing on facing long-horned bull's head. Prieur 826.



PHRYGIA, Stectorium. Civic issue. Time of Marcus Aurelius (circa 161-180 AD). Æ 15mm (2.36 gm). ΦΛΑΔΙΚ-ΙΝΝΙΑΝΟΥ, draped bust of Serapis right, wearing modius / CΤΕΚΤΟ-ΡΗΝΩΝ, bucranium surmounted by crescent; two stars above. BMC Phrygia pg. 383; SNG Copenhagen -; SNG München -. EF, dark green-brown patina.



PHRYGIA, Eucarpeia. Pseudo-autonomous issue. 3rd century BC. Æ (15mm, 2.72 g, 12h). Pedias Secundis, magistrate. Bust of Hermes right, with winged caduceus over shoulder / Two stars above crescent set on facing bucranium. BMC 4



Caracalla, AE18 of Carrhae, Mesopotamia. AVT K M A(NTWNEINOC), laureate head right / KAPKO MHTPIIOΛ, Crescent, horns upwards with pendent fillets, placed upon base; eight-pointed star between the horns. BMC 10; cf Lindgren 4452



Elagabalus, AE16 of Carrhae, Mesopotamia. AYT ANTΩNEINOC, radiate head right / KAP KOΛ M Π, crescent and one star on globe and serpents. Mionnet V, 31a



Caracalla AE22 of Carrhae, Mesopotamia. AVT KAI M ANTΩNEINOC, youthful, laureate head right / KAP KOΛ MHTPOPIIOΛ, star in crescent, globe and serpent below.

Septimius Severus, AE26 of Carrhae, Mesopotamia. 193-211 AD. CEPTIMIOC CEOVHPOC, laureate head right / (AIA on left), K-A above, KOΛ(ΩN) on right, temple showing four columns; wreath in pediment, between the central columns a conical baetyl surmounted by crescent, in the wings of the temple, two standards with triangular banners, each in a distyle shrine surmounted by a crescent. BMC 4; Hunter III, 2.





Harran is famous for its traditional "beehive" adobe houses, constructed entirely without wood. The design of these makes them cool inside, suiting the climatic needs of the region, and is thought to have been unchanged for at least 3,000 years. Some were still in use as dwellings until the 1980s. However, those remaining today are strictly tourist exhibits,



Septimius Severus, AE 24, Carrhae, 193-211 AD.

Av.: ΣΕΠΤΙΜΙΟC [CE]ΟΥΗΡ[...], laureate bust of Septimius Severus right, undraped and bearded.

Rv.: ΛΟΥΚ ΑΥΡΗΛ ΚΑ[ΡΡ ΚΟΛ], front view of a tetrastyle temple, the temple of the moon god Sin, in the middle a conical baetyl (sacred stone) on tripod, on top of stone: crescent, standards (with crescents on top) on both sides inside the building; another crescent in the pediment.

ΛΟΥΚΙΑ ΑΥΡΗΛΙΑ ΚΑΡΡΑ, a name from the campaign of Verus against the Parthians 163-166 AD.



Septimius Severus, AE16, Carrhae, 193-211 AD.

Laureate head right / ΚΑΡΡΑ (...), Simulacrum of Aphrodite, surmounted by crescent moon and star.



Caracalla, Mesopotamia Carrhae Æ19 198-217 AD

Obverse: Laureate head of Caracalla right

Reverse: Turreted and veiled bust of Tyche right

Size: 19.35 mm

Weight: 4.44 grams



This could represent the crescent moon or the horn of the bull that represented the God Sin



What
about
the Stars



L. Lucretius Trio AR Denarius. Rome, 74 BC. Radiate head of Sol right / Crescent moon surrounded by seven stars, TRIO above, L. LVCRETI below.



SEPTIMIUS SEVERUS. 193-211 AD. AR Denarius (18mm - 3.51 g). Emesa mint. Struck 194-195 AD. IMP CAE L SEP SEV PERT AVG COS III, laureate head right / SAECVL FELICIT, crescent and seven stars.

Septentrion

The term septentrional, actually the adjectival form of the noun septentrion, itself refers to the seven stars of the Big Dipper asterism (aka "Septentrion" or the Plough)



HADRIAN. 117-138 AD. AR Denarius (3.09 gm). Struck 132-134 AD. HADRIANVS AVGVSTVS, laureate head right / COS III, seven stars above crescent moon.

Morning and Evening Star

The two stars can represent the Evening Star and the Morning Star. Together they can represent new beginning or resurrection.





Two Stars

Morning and the Evening stars

MOESIA INFERIOR, Nicopolis ad Istrum. Julia Domna. Augusta, AD 193-217. Æ (17mm, 3.71 g, 7h).
 Draped bust right / Crescent between two stars. H&J
 Markianopolis 8.17.48.1 var. (one star and rev.
 legend); Varbanov 2848 var



Gaius (Caligula), with Divus Augustus. AD 37-41. AR Denarius (18mm, 3.77 g, 7h). Lugdunum (Lyon) mint. 1st emission, AD 37. C • CAESAR • AVG • GERM • P • M • TR • POT COS, bare head of Gaius (Caligula) right / Radiate head of Divus Augustus right, flanked by two stars. RIC I 2; Lyon 157; RSC 11; BMCRE 4-5; *BN* 3-8.



Justin II. 565-578. AR Third Siliqua (13mm, 0.67 g, 7h). Ravenna mint. Struck 567-572. DN IVSTI NVS PP A, diademed bust right, wearing robe ornamented with row of pellets / Staurogram set upon small globus; star to left and right; all within wreath. DOC 215; MIBE 41; Ranieri 424; SB 413.



Justin II. 565-578. AR Third Siliqua (13mm, 0.62 g, 7h). Ravenna mint. Struck 567-572. DN IVS[TI] NVS PP (AV)I, diademed bust right, wearing robe ornamented with row of pellets / Staurogram set upon small globus; star to left and right; all

The two stars can represent the Evening Star and the Morning Star. Together they can represent new beginning or resurrection.



Justin II. 565-578. AR Third Siliqua (13mm, 0.74 g, 6h). Ravenna mint. Struck circa 567-578. DN IVSTI NVS PP AVC, pearl-diademed, draped, and cuirassed bust right / Staurogram; star to left and right; all within wreath. DOC 215; MIBE 41; Ranieri 428; SB 412. EF, toned.



URBS ROMA. 330-335 AD. Æ Follis (2.55 gm).
Siscia mint. Struck 330-333 AD. URBS ROMA,
helmeted and mantled bust of Roma left /
She-wolf suckling Romulus and Remus; two
stars above; GSIS. RIC VII 222.



JULIAN II. 361-363 AD. Æ 29mm (8.22 gm).
Cyzicus mint. D N FL CL IVLI-ANVS P F AVG, pearl-
diademed, draped, and cuirassed bust right /
SECVRITAS REIPVB, bull standing right, two stars
above; CVZA. RIC VIII 127; LRBC 2511.





Philippopolis, Thrace. Septimius Severus, 193-211.
Assarion (Bronze, 19mm, 3.85 g 7). AY K Λ C
CEVHPOC Laureate head of Septimius Severus to
right. Rev. ΦΙΛΙΠΠΟΠΟΛΕΙΤΩΝ Crescent with nine
stars above and two below. Varbanov 1275



HADRIAN. 117-138 AD. AR Denarius (3.09 gm). Struck
132-134 AD. HADRIANVS AVGVSTVS, laureate head
right / COS III, seven stars above crescent moon.

Other Examples



PISIDIA, Antioch. Julia Domna, wife of Septimius Severus.

Augusta, 193-217 AD. Æ 21mm (4.80 g). Draped bust right / ANTIOC-H MENSIS COL, Mên standing facing with left foot on bucranium, head turned right, holding sceptre and Nike on globe; cock in left field, column in right. Krzyzanovska II/5; SNG France 1133 (same dies); SNG Copenhagen 39. VF, dark brown patina.





Gordian III AE 28mm of Carrhae in Mesopotamia. AVTOK K M ANT GORDIANOC CEB, radiate, draped & cuirassed bust right, viewed from behind / MHTR KOL KARRHNWN, turreted, draped & veiled bust of Tyche left; small figure on column before. SNG Cop 187.



Gordian III, AE 27 of Carrhae, Mesopotamia. AVTOK M ANT GORDIANOC CEB, radiate, draped and cuirassed bust right / MHTR KOL KARRHNWN, crescent, six-rayed star within. BMC 61; Thomas Coll. 2520



**Syria, Seleucis and Pieria. Antioch. Gordian III. Billon
Tetradrachm, EF**

Syria, Seleucis and Pieria. Antioch. Gordian III. Billon
Tetradrachm 27 mm, 11.2 gm Struck AD 242. Obv: Laureate
bust right, slight drapery Rev: Eagle standing facing, head and
tail right, holding wreath in beak; between legs, crescent above
ram leaping left. McAlee 877; Prieur 291A, EF.