



YOU ARE A STAR!

The awesome greatness of God is dramatically displayed in the stars He has made. How many stars are there? Anyone like to hazard a guess? Here's a quote from the *World Book Encyclopaedia*:

"A STAR is a huge ball of glowing gas in the sky... There are more than 200 billion billion (200,000,000,000,000,000,000) stars. Stars are the biggest things man knows of and we can hardly imagine the great distances that separate the stars. The star nearest the sun is more than 40 million million kilometres away from the sun. But even this great distance is only one-billionth the distance from the sun to the farthest stars known to man."

That was printed in 1980. Now they say there are 200 billion galaxies! With each galaxy having 100 billion stars!

The universe is endless, limitless, infinite, as far as we know.

Genesis 15:5 "He took him outside and said, "Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them." Then He said to him, "So shall your offspring be." In other words, a vast number.

Jeremiah 33:22 "I will make the descendants of David my servant and the Levites who minister before me as countless as the stars in the sky and as measureless as the sand on the seashore."

At that time, people were convinced there were only about 3000 stars, but Jeremiah wrote that nobody would be able to number them. And we sure can't, but God can, as we see in Ps 147!

Psalms 147:4 "He determines the number of the stars and calls them each by name."

How great is that!! But that is simple to God because after all, He made them all! They are only physical things, but He is spiritual – He exists everywhere that stars exist!

Some of the names of the stars are noted in Job 9:9 "He is the Maker of the Bear and Orion, the Pleiades and the constellations of the south."

One of the constellations of the south is the Southern Cross. Something I was reading the other day mentioned that for us in the southern hemisphere God has drawn the cross in the sky to continually remind us of our salvation. We are to be like the stars that are called the "pointers" to the Southern Cross, pointing to the cross of Jesus, as Paul did, saying that was what he would preach.

The moon and stars that are visible on a clear night are mere drops in the vast sea of the universe. In fact the Hubble Telescope relays images of galaxies as far away as 12 billion light years – that's 12 billion times 6 trillion miles! And all this from God's one-sentence command in Genesis: "Let there be light"!

It is amazing to think how big some of the stars are. You could fit one million planet Earths inside the Sun. The star Betelgeuse is a thousand times larger than the Sun! But the biggest star in the Universe is thought to be UY Scuti, which is about 5 billion times larger than the sun. The sizes, distances and numbers are absolutely mind boggling!

"If you were to walk outside tonight and knew where to look in our Milky Way you would see the Great Globular Star Cluster in Hercules. It looks like a vast shimmering ball. It is actually a million suns some 25,000 light years away (a light year is 6 trillion miles). If you travelled 2 million miles a day it would take 35 million years to get there. By cosmological standards it is in our "backyard." Focus your attention on the Andromeda Galaxy. It consists of over 300 billion suns. Our fastest spacecraft would need more than 150 billion years to reach there. Our galaxy is composed of 100 billion stars and there are millions of other galaxies."

Job 26:7 He spreads out the northern skies over empty space; he suspends the earth over nothing.

This was written at a time when it was believed that the earth was a flat disk floating on water, with the stars fixed in a type of ceiling above.

Isaiah 40:26 "Lift up your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one and calls forth each of them by name. Because of His great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing."

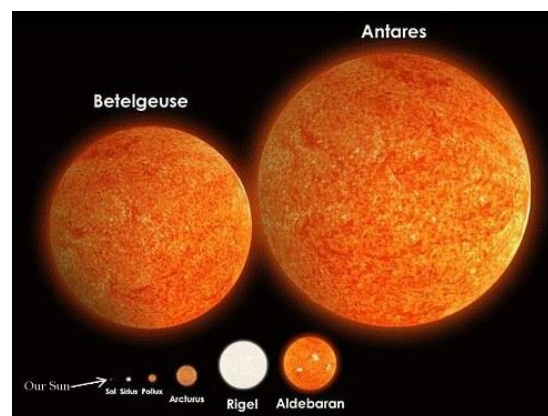
The vastness of the stars indicates the immensity of God, the greatness of His power. It helps us understand how much greater God is than we are! Infinitely greater!

Job 11:7-8 ⁷"Can you fathom the mysteries of God? Can you probe the limits of the Almighty?" ⁸"They are higher than the heavens above—what can you do? They are deeper than the depths below—what can you know?"

Job 22:12 "Is not God in the heights of heaven? And see how lofty are the highest stars!"

Psalms 92:5 How great are your works, Lord, how profound your thoughts!

We can also marvel about the small things around us. Do you know how many atoms are in a single grain of salt? We need a computer to count them, and if it could count 10 billion numbers per second, the number of atoms in a single grain of salt



would keep it occupied for 50 years! The answer is 1.2×10^{18} atoms, half of which are sodium atoms, and half chlorine atoms, or 50,000,000,000,000,000 (50 quintillion) atoms.

David reflected on the universe, and marvelled that despite His awesome greatness, God is concerned about each and every human being:

Psalm 8:3 When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them?

So the magnificence of the stars shows how great is God's power and how great God's love is:

Psalm 103:11 "For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His love for those who fear Him;" His love is as great as the expanse of the Universe!

In John 3:16 the Greek word translated "world" is *kosmos*. He loved the whole universe so much He gave His Son. So even if there is life on some other star or planet, the love of God encompasses it too!

Why were the stars created? We see the answer in Gen 1:

Gen 1:14-15 And God said, "Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years, ¹⁵ and let them be lights in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth." And it was so.

The heavenly bodies were made to serve man by measuring time and giving light. Interestingly, they wouldn't be visible if we were not located in the Milky Way galaxy. The universe mainly comprises empty space, and galaxies are precious rarities. If we were situated in deep space, far away from any galaxy, we would not see any stars at all. It would be pitch black. Isaiah 50:3 says "I clothe the sky with darkness".

The Bible compares the angels to stars.

Job 38:7 "while the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy"

The angels and the stars were called the "host of heaven" – like an army in heaven. But some angels rebelled...

Isaiah 14:12-13A "12 How you have fallen from heaven, morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations! 13 You said in your heart, "I will ascend to the heavens; I will raise my throne above the stars of God."

Lucifer was the morning star, but after his rebellion, he and the demons will be like falling stars.

Jude 13 "They are wild waves of the sea, foaming up their shame; wandering stars, for whom blackest darkness has been reserved forever."

Probably the most amazing star ever seen was the one that appeared over Jerusalem and attracted the Wise Men to Christ's birth.

Matthew 2:2, 9-10 ² "Where is the One who has been born King of the Jews? We saw His star when it rose and have come to worship Him." ⁹ "After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were overjoyed."



What was it? Here's a quote from the International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia article on stars:

"It seems safe to conclude that the narrative has been purposely left too incomplete for any astronomical conclusion to be drawn from it. One verse more, and that a short one, could have answered all our inquiries, could have told us whether the star was a conjunction of the planets, a comet, or a temporary star; or whether it was a supernatural light like the pillar of fire in the wilderness. But that verse has not been given. The score of additional words which could have cleared up the matter have been withheld, and there can be no doubt as to the reason. The star, whatever its physical nature, was of no importance except as a guide to the birthplace of the infant Jesus. The Scriptures were not written to instruct us in astronomy, or in any of the physical sciences, but that we might have life eternal."

It is fitting that a star announced Christ's birth because other scriptures show He Himself is the greatest star of all, as we see in an ancient prophecy of Jesus:

Numbers 24:17 "A star will come out of Jacob; a sceptre will rise out of Israel."

And here is a much later prophecy of Jesus:

Rev. 22:16 "I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star."

2 Peter 1:19 "We also have the prophetic message as something completely reliable, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts."

So the Bible itself is like a light pointing to Jesus Christ the Morning Star (NLT).

John 1:9-10; 3:19 ⁹ "The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and though the world was made through Him, the world did not recognise Him."

3:¹⁹ This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil."

John 8:12 "When Jesus spoke again to the people, He said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

But amazingly we are called the light of the world too!

Matthew 5:14-16 ¹⁴“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”

Jesus is the Light of the World, but so are we, because He lives in us. Are we letting his light shine out of our lives?

Hopefully our light is shining – that is our responsibility. And indeed, just as Jesus is a star, God calls each of us stars!

Philippians 2:15 “so that you may become blameless and pure, “children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.” Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky.”

We are stars! The job of a star is to shine! They generate light, from the heat of chemical reactions with hydrogen inside them. So the Holy Spirit in us should be generating lots of light. Are you shining as a star in the world?

Things like materialism, intolerance, bitterness, resentment, unforgiveness, criticism, disunity, pride – these are dust or debris (or fog or cloud) that hinder us from shining brightly.

Ephesians 5:8 “For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light.”

Some stars have planets circling around them: they are called suns. Jesus Christ is not just a star – He is a sun.

Malachi 4:2 “But for you who revere my name, the Sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its rays. And you will go out and frolic like well-fed calves.”

What would we be like without the sun? Cold, frozen, dead. What would we be like spiritually without Jesus? Dead!

A Sun and a Son! So Jesus Christ is a Sun and we are all stars or planets surrounding the sun, who is Jesus. Let’s look at Phil 2:15 again.

Philippians 2:15B “Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky.”

But even better than that – our destiny is to be brightly shining stars forever!

Daniel 12:3 “Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.”

So the stars teach us about the greatness of God, and the love of God, and about our place in the plan of God. Don’t sell yourself short! Jesus Himself said we are the light of the world. Each of us is a star! And Ps 147:4 says that God calls each of the stars by name.

So let’s shine like God’s brilliant stars!

