

Chapter 2

Posidonius and the Star Lore of Chaldea

Once more the tides of heaven, reaching their spiritual flood, in turning, leave the shores of our planet strewn with the wreckage of selfish acquisition. And amid this debris may be found the germinating seeds of spiritual endeavor. These seeds of true comprehension have not just been brought in on the crest of the highest wave. They date back at least to ancient Atlantis and Mu. At all times there have been on earth those who grasped the essentials of spiritual verity. But it is only under conditions like the present, in which the structures erected by selfinterest fall and the margins of our earth are washed by the surge of some upper octave planet, that the seeds of wisdom have a chance to grow. Yet even when so germinated and permitted to flourish, history reveals that after a time their precious vegetation has always been turned back under the black soil of material conceptions by the ruthless plough of greed for power and lust for gold.

The sacred wisdom, which even in Atlantis was not so united to material science and mechanical invention as many suppose, cannot be forced upon anyone. Those who adopt any advanced conception must have minds sufficiently educated to understand it. History records, for instance, that Seleucus of Seleuca, a Chaldean, adopted the hypothesis of Aristarchus of Samos and advanced new arguments to support it. He showed that the sun is the center of our system, that the earth has a double motion, revolving around the sun and spinning on its own axis, and he explained the tides, which no doubt he had observed in the Persian Gulf, by referring them to the phases of the Moon. Seleucus lived in the second century B.C., when the intellectual level of the people and the interests of the aristocracy were such that he could not get his ideas accepted. Copernicus had never heard of him; yet 1600 years later he set forth the same ideas. Even then, conditions for their reception were none too favorable, as Galileo found after still another hundred years, when compelled to recant at the hands of the Inquisition.

It is not because wisdom has been absent from the earth that people have wallowed in misconceptions; but that people's minds have been closed to its reception by those in power, whom true spiritual doctrines would rob of their selfish advantages. It is probable that the skill of those more ancient, where material science is concerned, has been exaggerated. Yet we cannot, of course, determine from the excavated public libraries of Chaldea either the extent of their learning nor the opinions of the initiates.

It is the common custom, even in these United States, to remove from public libraries books which do not meet with popular approval, as many know who have donated astrological books, a month or two later to find they have disappeared. But a vast amount of material, written on bricks in cuneiform, has been unearthed and translated, mainly by Strassmaer and Kugler; and from these we are able to judge quite definitely the extent of the knowledge possessed by the official priests at different periods.

The Bible states that Abraham came from Ur, in the land of the Chaldees. The Sumerians were the earliest civilized people in the region; and only a few years ago, near the mouth of the Euphrates, was unearthed a temple belonging to the First Dynasty of Ur. It was conceded to be the oldest Sumerian temple then known. Yet from this ancient Sumerian temple has been recovered a small plaque on which is carved in relief the figure of a manheaded bull with a lionheaded eagle perched on its back. Thus at a time as old as the most ancient civilization of Egypt, we find in use the emblems of the four fixed signs of heaven.

This was the oldest Sumerian temple known up to the commencement of the Pluto period. But since 1930 and the discovery of Pluto, much further north, at Tepe Gawra, excavation has been uncovering successive occupational levels of a mound rising 70 feet above the level of the plain, the latest occupation of which is older than the time of Moses. The mound represents a total of 23 successive levels of occupation, the lowest uncovered at the time of this writing being Level 16. Level 6 down is contemporaneous with the first Dynasty of Ur and the mentioned temple and astrological emblems. Only a few feet below this marks the beginning of recorded history, signalized by the invention of writing. The structures of Level 12 down, some 1,000 years before the beginning of recorded history, were among the earliest buildings of any kind known to archaeology. At Level 13 down, which dates more than 6,000 years ago, was unearthed the oldest temple now known. It is of advanced architecture, and the pottery motives and engraved seal stamps show not merely skill, but true artistic talent.

What astounded the University of Pennsylvania professors in charge of the work was that at such antiquity there were neither mud huts nor crude methods of life. As they stated it: "Those inhabitants of Level 13 were neither primitive nor normal; they were an abnormally gifted and wonderfully balanced people. And they left ample evidence of their achievements in more than one aspect of common life." It seems probable that this advanced culture at so early a date was an inheritance from colonists who brought with them The Religion of the Stars from still more ancient Atlantis.

Some archaeologists argue that before the era of Neobassar, which adopted a precise solar calendar in 747 B.C., because the popular method of reckoning was a lunar calendar which had little to recommend it, the prediction of periodic astronomical phenomena was impossible. But the same thing might quite as well be said of our miserable Daylight Saving Time which so jumbles up present day chronology.

What the cuneiform libraries reveal, are the records and generally accepted practices of the ruling priesthood. These, backed by their armies, determined what should, and what should not, find its way into the libraries. And even in America today, while from the larger libraries a good grasp of the material sciences might be had, reference to the ancient spiritual teachings is so scant that one looking for evidence of our culture would probably pass it by unnoticed. They would conclude the conceptions of our culture were those of the prevalent orthodox religions.

The conquest of Babylon in 745 B.C. by the Assyrian, Tilgath Pilsar, who is mentioned in the Bible, seems to have broken the retarding influence of the orthodoxy of that day, and astronomical precision rapidly developed. It is from this time that the record of the eclipses began which Ptolemy used, and which are sometimes employed by men of science of the present day to test their lunar theories. One of the series is noted in Ptolemy's *Almagest* and in a cuneiform tablet. The oldest is dated March 21, 721 B.C. Another tablet, dated 523 B.C., shows the relative positions of sun and moon, the precise dates of the conjunctions of the moon with the planets and of the planets with each other, with their positions in the signs of the zodiac; all in advance. That is, there was an advance ephemeris showing planetary positions and phenomena, such as we now use.

From this date to 8 B.C., which is the latest cuneiform document known, there are some fifty documents, all of which have been deciphered, showing progress in precision of astronomical knowledge. The most perfect example dated to the end of the second century B.C., the period in which Posidonius lived. So high a degree of precision was attained that the

tables deciphered by F. X. Kugler revealed to him a mistake which had been introduced into, and perpetuated in, the calculations of modern astronomers. The old notations of the Chaldeans have allowed a correction of the canons of Oppolzer.

Commendable as such advanced knowledge of astronomy is, it is not essential to sound astrological practice. As all the major progressed aspects for the life of an individual can be ascertained by direct observation during the 100 days after his birth, and all the minor progressed aspects can be ascertained by direct observation during the 100 months after birth, the most essential data for astrology can be ascertained by such direct observation. And as revealed by the cuneiform records, astronomy then was studied solely for astrological purposes. Thus were the observed positions of the heavenly bodies, together with the events which coincided or which followed, painstakingly recorded in Chaldea for a period of at least 3,000 years.

From the earliest cuneiform inscriptions there was a constant insistence that the things which happen on earth are parallel to the movements and positions in the sky. Not later than 1500 B.C., the vast series of astrological observations made in the past were collected into the AnuEnlil (HeavenEarth) series and became the standard astrological reference library. Yet in spite of such complete records, it was not until the dominant corrupt priesthood began to lose its grip that we find the commencement of that marvelous scientific and religious advancement which culminated with Posidonius at the end of the second century B.C.

The rebellion against the priesthood that commenced with the era of Nebonassar in 691 B.C. resulted in Sennacherib of Assyria destroying the holy part of the city Babylon. His son found it expedient to restore these priests to power, and Assurbanipal brought no action against them. But Nabonidus, who followed him, sought their overthrow. The priests of Bel, however, entered into a league with the Persians, and the soldiers of Cyrus entered Babylon without a fight. In gratitude, Cyrus restored the Jews to Jerusalem and the priests of Bel to power. But the plans of these iniquitous priests went astray, as a rebellion broke forth and another Persian, Darius, who had no alliance with them, pulled down the walls of Babylon in 520 B.C.

Already I have mentioned the precision attained in astronomy at this period, as revealed by tables dated 523 B.C. But it should not be thought that the populace, so long kept in darkness by the old grafting priests, had any knowledge of this, or had greater religious freedom.

In Greece, however, there was developing that freedom of thought which, so long as it lasted, was to permit the spread of the scientific knowledge of the Chaldeans and even the spiritual teachings of the Chaldean initiates. Pericles, born about 495 B.C., led the democracy of Athens to an appreciation of knowledge and beauty. He was assisted by Aspasia, a learned woman from Asia Minor, whom Athenian law made it impossible for him to marry.

Anaxagoras, a stranger welcomed to Athens by Pericles, was saying the strangest things about the sun and stars, and hinting not obscurely that there were no gods, but only one animating spirit in the world.

Following Chaldean instructions, Thales, even before the time of Pericles, had predicted an eclipse; and Plato, born 427 B.C., in his *Epinomis*, shows clearly the influence of the Chaldean stellar religion. This Chaldean influence, even over the popular mind, was strong enough after the fourth century B.C. that the ancient Greek names of the planets were no longer used, and those of the stellar religion to the east were substituted. Religious intolerance, however, continued a menace to Pericles and to those who came later. The people still clung to their ancient gods.

In America we find evolution to be accepted almost unanimously by scientific men. Yet as late as 1925 the religious prejudices of the less enlightened made itself felt in the famous Scopes trial in which it was made illegal to teach this doctrine in the public schools of Ten-

nessee. So it was in ancient Chaldea, and so it was in even the most liberal period of Greece or Rome; that which could be given wide publicity must ever be governed by the willingness of the population to give it consideration.

It need occasion no surprise, therefore, that it was only after the conquests of Alexander that The Religion of the Stars could openly be taught. Greek savants of repute--Epigenes of Byzantium, Appolonius of Mydnus, Artemidorus of Parium, and others--declared themselves disciples of the Chaldeans, and boasted of being instructed in their schools. Pliny says of Hipparchus, taught by a Chaldean named Kinedas, and proclaimed the founder of modern scientific astronomy, who witnessed the ruin of Babylon:

Hipparchus will never receive all the praise he deserves, since no one has better established the relationship between man and the stars, or shown more clearly that our souls are particles of heavenly fire.

Babylon, captured by the Parthians about 140 B.C., sacked and burned in 125 B.C., was never to regain her splendor. No longer, therefore, could those who sought initiation find it in Chaldea. Yet the knowledge of the Chaldean initiates was not lost; and through the efforts of Posidonius, born at Apamea, in Syria, The Religion of the Stars, for a time released from orthodox suppression, was taught in detail to the Western World. This Master was born about 135 B.C. After long travels he settled in the island of Rhodes, whither his teachings attracted large numbers of Greeks and Romans. Ideas which more than 1,200 years earlier in Egypt Akhenaten had been compelled to express through poetry and the symbolism of art, because his subjects were ignorant of science, could now be set forth by Posidonius in terms of mathematics, mechanics and a philosophy suited to trained minds. It was to be expected that ultimately religious bigotry would destroy all he wrote. But rulers of the world were proud to attend his lectures, and these have preserved in writing the gist of his teachings. From Rome came Pompey and Cicero to sit at his feet.

Then, as now, there was a school of atheistic materialism. The Epicureans taught that the soul was composed of atoms and dissolved with the body. And throughout the Roman Empire the authority of Posidonius, who believed in the immortality of the soul, was set against that of Epicurus. Launching an attack against the Epicureans, he held that their materialistic doctrines were the direct result of their dissolute lives. Rebuking Epicurus for his astronomical fallacies he adds:

No wonder, for to discover the real nature of things is not the part of men devoted to pleasure, but to those whose virtuous characters make the Good their ideal, and who prefer it to the comforts of their beloved flesh.

In the science of his day, rather than by the use of electrons and the principle of radio reception, he taught each branch of The Religion of the Stars set forth in The Brotherhood of Light lessons. A historian, who is a materialist and believes that all beyond the physical is superstition, sums up the 84 years of his life in these words:

Brought up on Plato and Aristotle, he was equally versed in Asiatic astrology and demonology. He made all human knowledge conspire to the building up of a great system, the coping of which was enthusiastic adoration of the God which permeates the universal organism.

In this vast syncretism all superstition, popular or sacerdotal, soothsaying, divination, magic, find their place and their justification; but above all it was due to him that astrology entered into a coherent explanation of the world, acceptable to the most enlightened intellects, and that it was solidly based on a general theory of nature, from which it was to remain henceforth inseparable.

Mathematics was so closely related to astrology that *Mathemaisi* in Latin became the synonym for *Chaldaei*. These astrologers of the Roman Empire laid great stress upon the purity of their morals; they were not merely fortunetellers, but ministers of The Religion of the Stars. Of the Caesars, Augustus as well as Tiberius was converted to this religion, and many of the later princes adopted it. Yet human nature being what it is, it was not to be expected that the exalted doctrines of Posidonius would indefinitely remain free from the warping influence of selfinterest. The Sun, as we know, is the astrological ruler of kings. How easy, therefore, to pervert such knowledge, as in 274 Aurelian did, into official worship of the Sun as the protector of sovereign and empire; the next step, of course, being to proclaim the ruler as the authoritative representative of the Sun on earth, thus establishing the divine right of kings to rule.

Thus did the last vestige of political liberty vanish, and with it religious freedom. Diocletian persecuted the Christians. Then came the Emperor Constantine, who embraced Christianity. And following him another autocrat, Theodosius I, of whom history records:

He forbade the unorthodox to hold meetings, handed over all the churches to the Trinitarians, and overthrew the heathen temples throughout the empire, and in 390 A.D. he caused the great statue of Serapis at Alexandria to be destroyed. There was to be no rivalry, no qualification, to the rigid unity of the Church.

Posidonius, more than any other, was responsible for the spread of The Religion of the Stars from Chaldea into Europe. This was made possible by the intellectual and religious freedom of his day, an intellectual and religious freedom which it is to be hoped the whole world can enjoy in the near future. If the seeds of spiritual wisdom are to bring forth a bounteous harvest, they must be afforded a suitable soil in which to grow.

