

Beta Taurid Meteor Shower 2019

By T.W. Tramm

JUNE 28-29 marks the peak of an annual meteor shower that hardly anyone has ever seen—the Beta Taurids.

Discovered in 1947, the Beta Taurids go unnoticed by most sky watchers because, unlike the majority of meteor showers, they belong to a daytime class that peaks after sunrise. Additionally, the meteoroids in this part of the stream come at Earth from the direction of the Sun, making them even more difficult to see.

Nonetheless, the Taurids have the attention of astronomers this year as Earth is making its closest approach to this dense cloud of meteoroids in the nearly 60-year period from 1975 to 2032. Experts plan to take advantage of our proximity by searching for larger than average rocks in the swarm that may pose a future threat to Earth.

The magnitude of some of the Taurid meteors was evident in 2015 when in late October bright fireballs were noted across the world, many lighting up the sky brighter than the Moon.

Earth's most infamous encounter with the Taurids occurred in 1908 when an object estimated to be hundreds of feet across came hurtling from space to explode in the atmosphere above Siberia. The so-called "Tunguska event" leveled 80 million trees over an 800-square-mile area and was the largest impact event in Earth's recorded history.

A sobering fact is that several rocks of the abovementioned size and larger are known to be embedded in the Taurid swarm: objects 2015 TX24 and 2005 UR are both about a thousand feet, nearly a quarter mile, across.

An asteroid of this magnitude impacting Earth would explode with twenty times the energy of the largest nuclear weapon ever detonated, producing a crater over three miles wide and causing regional devastation.

REMNANTS OF ENCKE

The Taurid meteor stream is made up in part of debris from the Comet Encke, a periodic comet that completes an orbit of the Sun once every 3.3 years and approaches Earth closely every 33 years. Both the Taurids and Comet Encke are believed to be remnants of a much larger comet that disintegrated millennia ago.

SIGNS

From a biblical signs-in-the-heavens perspective, it's noteworthy that the Taurids are named after the constellation Taurus, from where they are seen to emanate in the sky.

According to E.W Bullinger, Taurus belongs to the third and final chapter of the heavenly (constellation) book that describes God's plan of redemption. The subject of the final chapter is the completion and consummation of man's redemption and depicts Jesus' return to judge the world in righteousness. Taurus, the Bull, symbolizes Christ, the coming Judge and Ruler, rushing forward in wrath, his horns set to pierce through and destroy His enemies.

PLEIADES

On the shoulder of the constellation Taurus resides the Pleiades star cluster, an unknown multitude of stars that combine to appear as seven brilliant points of light. This irradant assembly of stars, the brightest in the nighttime sky, has a biblical significance revealed in appellation and in Scripture: The Greek word Pleiades means "the congregation of the judge or ruler." The brightest star in Pleiades bears an Arabic name, Al Cyone, or "the center," causing speculation that this star cluster marks the center of the universe and the metaphorical location of God's throne in heaven.

An inferential mention of the Pleiades is found in Revelation where a glorified Jesus tells John that the "seven stars" in His hand represent the seven angels of the seven churches (Rev. 1:20).

A fascinating correlation between the heavenly Pleiades and the Church on earth is that the seven bright stars in the constellation Taurus correspond roughly to the layout and location of "the seven churches" in the province of Asia (Rev. 1:4) located near the Taurus Mountain Range in Turkey.

COMET 46P

With Taurus, the Pleiades, and Bible prophecy in view, it's noteworthy that 2018's brightest Comet (46P), which happened to be discovered in the year of Israel's prophetic rebirth, 1948, made its closest flyby to Earth in 70 years last December. On the day 46P was closest to our planet and most easily viewed, it was in a picture-perfect location alongside the Pleiades, spotlighting the group of stars associated with the Church, the center of the universe, and God's throne.

GOD'S TIMING

In view of Revelation's descriptions of earth being bombarded by fiery "hail," "star" and "mountain-like" objects during the Tribulation (Rev. 8), it's notable that our planet nears the Taurus stream twice every year, once in late spring/early summer and once in the fall.

Late spring/early summer coincides with the wheat harvest in Israel. The wheat harvest is associated with the end-of-the-age harvest of believers and other themes related to the redemption of the Church (Rev. 7:9- 14; 14:15; 1 Cor. 15:20; 2 Thess. 2:1; Ruth; Song 2; Ex 19; Acts 2).

The fall, October/November, corresponds to the biblical month Cheshvan, which is associated with the world-destroying flood in the days of Noah (Gen. 7, 8).

Seeing how God uses the material universe, namely its natural cycles, patterns, and phenomena, to fulfill prophecy and bring judgment, is it possible the biannual Taurid meteor storms may at some point play a role?

Furthermore, could this year's unusually close approach mean the time is at hand?

With so many prophetic signs and timelines converging in 2019, it's a fascinating question to ponder.

LINKS:

<http://www.severe-weather.eu/meteors/taurid-resonant-swarm/>

NOTES

The Beta Taurids meteor shower begins on June 5 and runs through July 18, peaking around June 28-29.

The later North Taurid meteor shower begins November 11-12.