



The Constellations: Myths of the Stars

By Errol Jud Coder

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Did you know that Canis Minor is actually a "fox", and not a "dog"? Did you know that the ship of the Argonauts stretches across the sky? Did you know that Pisces is actually representing the Greek Gods Aphrodite and Eros? Have you ever wanted to know why and how the constellations came to be? Most ancient cultures saw pictures in the stars of the night sky. The earliest known efforts to catalog the stars date to cuneiform texts and artifacts dating back roughly 6,000 years. These remnants, found in the valley of the Euphrates River, suggest that the ancients observing the heavens saw the lion, the bull, and the scorpion in the stars. The constellations as we know them today are undoubtedly very different from those first few--our night sky is a compendium of images from a number of different societies, both ancient and modern. By far, though, we owe the great debt to the mythology of the ancient Greeks and Romans.

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