

STAR GAZERS SG 1813 – 5 MINUTE (March 16 – April 1, 2018)

(Repeat of SG 1613 – “The 13th Constellation”)

“Ophiuchus!”

DEAN: HEY THERE STAR GAZERS. I'M DEAN REGAS, ASTRONOMER FROM THE CINCINNATI OBSERVATORY.

JAMES: AND I'M JAMES ALBURY, DIRECTOR OF THE KIKA SILVA PLA PLANETARIUM IN GAINESVILLE FLORIDA. HEY DEAN... WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ABOUT THE NUMBER 13?

DEAN: WELL, IT'S THE SQUARE ROOT OF 169, AND IF YOU ADDED UP ALL THE 8 MAJOR PLANETS AND 5 DWARF PLANETS IN OUR SOLAR SYSTEM, YOU'D END UP WITH 13.

AND... OH! THIS IS OUR 13TH EPISODE THIS YEAR!

JAMES: VERY GOOD, AND I HAVE ONE MORE PIECE OF TRISEKDECA-TRIVIA FOR YOU.

DID YOU KNOW THE SUN ACTUALLY PASSES THROUGH 13 CONSTELLATIONS?

DEAN: AH, YES... THERE'S ONE CONSTELLATION IN THE ZODIAC THAT'S NOT OFFICIALLY PART OF THE GROUP, AND I LIKE THIS CONSTELLATION BECAUSE IT HAS A WEIRD NAME.

JAMES: THE 13TH CONSTELLATION WE'RE REFERRING TO IS OPHIUCHUS, AND WE HAVE A REALLY NICE

PLANET-MOON SCOOTCHIE COMING UP NEXT WEEK!

DEAN: SO WHAT ARE WE TALKING ABOUT? LET'S SHOW YOU.

(STOP AND FLY)

DEAN: THERE ARE CURRENTLY 88 OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZED CONSTELLATIONS IN MODERN ASTRONOMY.

12 OF THESE CONSTELLATIONS HAVE PARTICULAR SIGNIFICANCE BECAUSE DURING THE COURSE OF A YEAR, THE SUN, MOON AND PLANETS APPEAR TO DRIFT THROUGH THESE BACKGROUND STARS.

THE CONSTELLATIONS ALONG THIS PATH ARE REFERRED TO AS THE ZODIAC.

JAMES: ZODIAC, LOOSELY TRANSLATED MEANS 'CIRCLE OF ANIMALS' AND THE CONSTELLATIONS OF THE ZODIAC IN ORDER ARE AS FOLLOWS: ARIES, TAURUS, GEMINI, CANCER, LEO, VIRGO, LIBRA, SCORPIUS, SAGITTARIUS, CAPRICORNUS, AQUARIUS AND PISCES.

DEAN: BETWEEN SCORPIUS AND SAGITTARIUS HOWEVER, THERE'S A 13TH CONSTELLATION THAT THE SUN PASSES

THROUGH ON ITS JOURNEY.

IN REALITY, THE EARTH IS THE ONE DOING THE TRAVELING. THE SUN JUST APPEARS TO MOVE THROUGH THIS CONSTELLATION AS WE ORBIT.

JAMES: THIS CONSTELLATION IS OPHIUCUS AND HE IS OFTEN REPRESENTED AS A MAN HOLDING A SNAKE (THE NEARBY CONSTELLATIONS SERPENS CAUDA AND SERPENS CAPUT). HIS NAME IS DERIVED FROM THE GREEK FOR 'SERPENT-BEARER' AND ON ANCIENT STAR MAPS, THIS CONSTELLATION WAS NAMED 'SERPENTARIUS'.

(STOP)

DEAN: ACCORDING TO LEGEND, OPHIUCUS WAS THE SON OF APOLLO AND WAS TAUGHT THE ART OF MEDICINE BY THE CENTAUR CHIRON. OPHIUCUS WAS SAID TO HAVE KILLED A SNAKE AND NO SOONER HAD HE DONE THIS, A SECOND SNAKE CAME ALONG WITH A MEDICINAL HERB IN ITS MOUTH. THE LIVE SNAKE GAVE THE DEAD SNAKE THE HERB, RESTORING THE DEAD SNAKE TO LIFE. AFTER SEEING THIS, OPHIUCUS SNATCHED A LITTLE OF THE HERB FROM THE SNAKE AND FROM THAT POINT WAS ABLE TO RESTORE LIFE TO

THE DEAD.

JAMES: PLUTO, THE GOD OF THE NETHERWORLD, DIDN'T LIKE THE FACT THAT OPHIUCHUS HAD THIS ABILITY AND HE COMPLAINED TO

JUPITER. JUPITER SENT HIS PET EAGLE AQUILA AFTER OPHIUCHUS WITH A LIGHTNING BOLT.

THE LIGHTNING BOLT STRUCK OPHIUCHUS, KILLING HIM.

JUPITER, NOT WANTING OPHIUCHUS' KNOWLEDGE TO FADE INTO OBLIVION, PLACED THE MEDICALLY-GIFTED SERPENT-BEARER AMONG THE STARS.

(STOP)

DEAN: BEFORE BEING BROUGHT INTO THE HEAVENS, OPHIUCHUS BECAME GOOD FRIENDS WITH ORION THE HUNTER. YEARS LATER, ORION, BOASTING ABOUT WHAT A

GREAT HUNTER HE WAS, DECIDED TO PROVE HIS ABILITY BY KILLING ALL THE CREATURES OF THE EARTH. GAIA, THE GODDESS OF THE EARTH SENT SCORPIUS THE SCORPION TO STOP HIM. THE RESULTING STING FROM THE SCORPION KILLED ORION.

JAMES: OPHIUCHUS, SEEING WHAT HAPPENED AND HAVING THE POWER TO RESTORE LIFE, REVIVED ORION AND ASKED JUPITER TO PLACE ORION ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE SKY AWAY FROM THE SCORPION. OPHIUCHUS PROMISED TO

KEEP WATCH OVER THE SCORPION SO IT WOULDN'T TRY TO ESCAPE, AND TO THIS DAY, THE STAR MARKING THE FOOT OF OPHIUCHUS CAN BE SEEN JUST ABOVE SCORPIUS.

THIS STAR IS ALONG THE PATH THE SUN TRAVELS DURING THE MONTH OF DECEMBER, THUS MAKING HIM (ALBEIT UN OFFICIALLY) ONE OF THE CONSTELLATIONS OF THE ZODIAC. SO LET'S CHECK OUT WHAT'S HAPPENING NEXT WEEK WITH THE PLANETS.

(STOP)

DEAN: OK, WE HAVE OUR SKY SET UP FOR SATURDAY MORNING, APRIL 7TH SHORTLY BEFORE SUNRISE. IF YOU LOOK TO THE SOUTHEAST, YOU'LL SEE THE WANING GIBBOUS MOON FORMING AN ALMOST STRAIGHT LINE WITH SATURN AND MARS. ALL THREE OBJECTS WILL BE NEAR THE TEAPOT OF SAGITTARIUS.

JAMES: THE RINGED PLANET SATURN IS SUPER CLOSE TO THE MOON
ON THAT MORNING.

THEY WILL BE LESS THAN
2 DEGREES APART.

DEAN: THAT'S TWO PLANETS AND OUR NEAREST NEIGHBOR IN SPACE,
PLAYING A GAME OF SPACE TAG NEAR THE 13TH CONSTELLATION OF
THE ZODIAC.

JAMES: AND IT'S ALL THERE FOR YOU TO SEE IF YOU...

BOTH: KEEP LOOKING UP!
