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Tammi(kuu) = Gemini (?)

(Tammikuu 'January' [kuu 'month, moon']

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In Genesis (chapter 5, verses 21-24) we read:

[21] And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: [22] And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: [23] And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years: [24] And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him. (King James Version)

In the third or second century B.C.E. this text inspired an unknown Jewish author to write a book where he described what has happened to Enoch when he walked with God. Nowadays this book is called *1 Enoch*. In chapters 72-82 Enoch tells in details about the movements of the sun, moon and stars. At the same time he claims that the length of the year is 364 days and presents a 364-day calendar, its structure and the names of its parts. During the many centuries that elapsed from the time the book was written, certain sections of the original book had been lost and for this reason several parts of the description of the calendar are missing.

Enoch wrote:

In the beginning of the year Melkejal rises first and rules, who is named Tamaini and sun, and all the days of his dominion whilst he bears rule are ninety-one days. And these are the signs of the days which are to be seen on earth in the days of his dominion: sweat, and heat, and calms; and all the trees bear fruit, and leaves are produced on all the trees, and the harvest of wheat, and the rose-flowers, and all

the flowers which come forth in the field, (82: 15-16) [Translation: R.H. Charles, 1906]

From this text it is clear that *Tamaini* is the beginning of the spring. There is no general agreement concerning the meaning of this word. The word *Tamaini* reminds me the Finnish word *tammi(kuu)* ‘January’ (*kuu* ‘month, moon’). I suggest that the origin of the word *Tamaini* is the Aramaic word *teomin* ‘Gemini.’

Fragments of *1 Enoch* were found in Qumran. From them it was established that the book was written in Aramaic. In his book *The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments of Qumran Cave 4* (1976), the Polish priest and biblical scholar Józef Tadeusz Milik, one of the most known researchers of the Dead Sea Scrolls, argues that verse 9 of chapter 82 means, among other things, “to their zodiacal periods.” In the image below there is Milik’s reading of verse 9-13 of *1 Enoch* (p. 295).

4QEnastr^b 28—En. 82: 9–13 (Pl. XXX)

למעדיהון לחדשיהון לדגליהון ¹⁰ו[אלן שמהת

וכש]לטנהון לכל מסרתהון ¹¹אר[בעת

ן ראשין ד[א]ל[פין

מפ[רשין בי]ומין

וא[לן שמהת] ¹³ 5

[⁹. . . with regard] to their Zodiacal periods, their new moons, their (daily) signs. ¹⁰And [these are the names . . . and according to] their authority with regard to all their stations. ¹¹Four [leaders . . . and for three hundred and sixty-four days there are] chiefs of thousands [. . .] dividing the days [. . . .] ¹³And] these are the names [. . . .]

Milik’s reading of *1 Enoch* 82: 9-13

In 1928, while cultivating their land, members of kibbutz Hefziba found archaeological remains. They invited to the place archaeologists from Jerusalem and from that time on several excavations were conducted there. The archaeologists have concluded that the remains are of an ancient synagogue. Nowadays the site is called the Beth Alpha ancient synagogue. The floor is covered with mosaic and one part of it depicts a zodiac. The Gemini sign is at the of the winter period, in the place of the month Adar.



The Zodiac at Beth Alpha mosaic

In the zodiac found at Sepphoris Gemini sign appears in the spot of Tishrei, the beginning of the fall. In my opinion the zodiac at Beth Alpha follows the calendar of *I Enoch*.

In the second poem of the Kalevala we read about a giant oak [in Finnish *tammi*] that covers the skies, which has appeared in the beginning of time when the world was created and shaped. The oak masked the moon and the sun and the world became dark.

In his book *Sana sanasta kaksi parhaasta* (1995) Y.H. Toivonen wrote that Uno Harva brought forwards the idea that the big oak of the poems originally meant the stars of the galaxy. In his article *Vintergatan* (Budkavlen, 1945 [in Swedish]) Harva, according to Toivanen, indicated that in earlier time the Finns imagined the galaxy to be a giant tree (Toivonen 1995, 129). In my opinion it is possible that the meaning of word *tammi(kuu)* can be associated with the stars.

In his book *Vuotuinen ajantieto* Kustaa Vilkuna wrote that “the name of the month *mätäkuu* is the only ancient part of the twelve sign of the zodiac that in Finland was also adopted into folk tradition and which is frequently mentioned. The ‘official’ sign of *mätäkuu* is lion and during its time people live as if they are under its influence (Vilkuna 1992: 201).”

In Finnish *mätä* means ‘rotten.’ Folk etymology maintains that the name comes from the assumption that due to the heavy rain during that month, the end of the Finnish summer around July-August, everything is rotten. In Swedish the name of this month is *rötmånad* and it carries the same meaning.

Vilkuna writes that in his researches from 1932 Hugo Suolahti had shown that the source of the Finnish *mätäkuu* and the Swedish *rötmånad* is the Low German name *rodendage* which does not mean ‘rotten’ (*mätä*) but ‘dog days’ (Vilkuna 1992: 201-202).

Vilkuna writes:

You see, the dog from which many languages received the Dog Day name, is not a regular four-legged dog, but a heavenly star, the brightest star, Sirius, whose other name is Dog, Big Dog, Orion’s Dog. And this is exactly this star which rises at the beginning of *mätäkuu*, that is the beginning of Dog days. We in the Nordic countries do not really see the heliacal rising of Sirius, but in the Mediterranean countries, Egypt and the Land of the Two Rivers, long time ago it was considered as the most important day of the year (Vilkuna 1992: 204).

From this example one can conclude that the names of months in the Finnish calendar may be associated with the zodiac and the stars.

The Big Bull appears in the poems of the Kalevala as a giant bull. The meat of the bull was needed for feasts. Toivonen wrote:

From ancient time the mythical bull was seen in the heaven as part of the zodiac. For example, its name in Sumerian is *guanna* 'heavenly bull', in Akkadian *šuru*, in Hebrew *šor*, in Latin *taurus* 'bull' etc. From the several examples mentioned here, comes to mind to ask whether it is possible to explain the nature and the origin of our poems only from the perspective of our homeland, without at all considering those comparable examples from far away (Toivonen 1995: 156).

In the Finnish language there are words that had originated from Hebrew. Most of them had arrived through the bible and are used in connection with it, for example *halleluja*, *aamen*, *Sebaot*, *sapatti*, *Aatami*, etc. *I Enoch* was very well known among Jews and early Christians, but already in antiquity it was abandoned and gradually forgotten. The church of Ethiopia still considers the book to be holy and is the only church that has preserved the whole book, in its Ge'ez translation.

I suggest that although *I Enoch* was forgotten, ideas from it have survived into present time. Jews do have their own calendar which is based on the moon movement around Earth. The author of *I Enoch* did not consider this calendar to be a true materialization of the biblical text and instead suggested a calendar that was based on a 364-day year, 52 weeks. In such a year each holiday is attached to a certain day of the week. Jews were not interested in this calendar, except possibly those sectarians who lived in Qumran.

A 5th century Church historian tells us that from the second to the fourth century there was in Asia-minor a Catholic sect known as Montanist that used a peculiar calendar. Examining their calendar, it was noticed that certain features of it remind the calendar described in *I Enoch*. The sect disappeared but I maintain that basic features of its

calendar can be detected for example in the Church year of the Finnish Lutheran Church.

The main holidays of the Church year are Christmas and Easter. No matter what day of the week Christmas occurs, the Church year starts on First Advent Sunday, the fourth Sundays before Christmas, and ends on Saturday before the next First Advent Sunday. The Church year last 52 weeks, 364 days, and every five or six year an intercalary week is added. First Advent Sunday occurs as early as November 27th or any day after it, no later than December 3rd.

Christmas is celebrated on the same day the Roman marked the winter solstice. In my opinion it is possible that this day was chosen so that the Church year would be anchored to the solar year. Although December 25th is no longer the date of the winter solstice, it is still a holiday that is tied to a certain fixed date and it acts as an anchor. In this manner the Church year does not 'move' but is always tied to the Earth's orbit around the Sun.

I suggest that the Church year follows a 364-day calendar, materializing its main feature – each holiday is tied to a certain weekday. Easter is celebrated on the first Sunday after the full moon following the spring equinox. That means that the date of the holiday is not tied to the Gregorian calendar and is different every year. The Friday before Easter is Good Friday. Palm Sunday is a week earlier than Easter. Shrove Tuesday is marked on a Tuesday seven weeks before Easter. In the Finnish Catholic church the fasting period starts at Ash Wednesday 40 days before Easter and ends at the beginning of the evening mass of Holy Thursday. Ascension Day is celebrated on a Thursday 40 days after Easter. Pentecost is celebrated on a Sunday seven weeks after Easter, 10 days after Ascension Day. Since the beginning of the Church year depends automatically on the date of Christmas, the result is a fixed calendar in respect to the solar year.

There are still two more holidays. Epiphany is celebrated 12 days after Christmas and St. John Day, Midsummer Day, on the day of Summer Solstice or close to it. Nowadays in Finland and Sweden it is celebrated on a Saturday between 20th and 26th of June,

inclusive. In Finland until 1954 and in Sweden until 1952, St. John was celebrated on June 24th. On this day Christian communities mark the memory of John the Baptist.

In the calendar of *1 Enoch* the year is divided into 4 parts. In each part there are 91 days: 3 months each of 30 days and an extra day every third month. The Tora spells accurate instructions as for when the holidays should be celebrated. For example:

[4] These are the feasts of the LORD, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons. [5] In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD's passover. [6] And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread. (Leviticus 23: 4-6)

The Tora does not tell us what kind of calendar should be employed. The author of *1 Enoch* developed such a calendar structure that enabled the fulfillment of the instructions set up in the Tora and, at the same time, saw to it that each holiday would be celebrated every year on the same certain day of the week. Since Christians do not celebrate Jewish holidays, they need not preserve the month structure in their Church calendar.

From the Jewish point of view the 364-day calendar is fully kosher. One has to remember that the book was written while the calendar used by the Jews had not received its final form yet. At least formally, the decision concerning the beginning of each month depended on the observation of the appearance of the new moon. The ideas presented by the author of *1 Enoch* were a legitimate contribution to the ongoing discussion concerning the nature and shape of the Jewish calendar. However, the Jews were not interested in this calendar. The calendar Jews have been using received its final form by the sages of the Talmud several centuries later.

Philologists call the Finnish language a linguistic 'ice box' because this language preserves and uses loanwords that have disappeared from those languages from which they were adopted. In many languages the original names of the months of the Julian

calendar are used. In Finland the Roman calendar is used as in other places, however the names of the months are different.

I suggest that 'tammi(kuu)' and possibly other names of months in the Finnish calendar have their origin in the calendar of *I Enoch*. The word *tammi* and possibly others may have spread north along the 364-day calendar.

Still 150-200 years ago in Finland and Karelia one could have listen to ancient oral tradition and folkloristic traditions. A systematic gathering of this material was conducted, starting around 1830. The retrieved material has been sorted and is kept in the archives of the Finnish Literature Society. I believe that in this material there are entries that may strengthen my proposals. The Finnish language and tradition are a window to antiquity.

Nowadays people often talk about a global village where knowledge spreads very fast. In truth, the world has always been a village. The only difference is that the spreading of knowledge was slower then, and it may have taken centuries to lore to reach remote corners of the world.

More information:

David Landau (2005). The Montanists and the Jubilees Calendar. *Oriens Christianus: Hefte für die Kunde des Christlichen Orients*. Vol.89, 103 – 112.

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