

Aaron's Answers (A'sA): The conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter, also known as the Great Conjunction, is an astronomical event in which Saturn and Jupiter align with each other and look to be a "superplanet." This event occurs approximately every 20 years. Other planets have been known to form similar alignments with each other, and the Great Conjunction is called such because it is the rarest conjunction that can be seen with the naked eye. The rarest that astronomers can see with a telescope is the alignment of the planets Neptune and Uranus. (excluding Pluto) The alignment of Neptune and Uranus is the rarest conjunction because they are the slowest moving planets in our solar system. The most common alignment would be the conjunction of Uranus and Mercury, because Mercury is the fastest moving, and Uranus is the slowest.

The original theory of the universe was that the Earth was the center of the universe, and all the other celestial bodies revolved around the Earth. This theory was referred to as the geocentric theory of the universe. Ptolemy was the inventor of this theory. Ptolemy was a mathematician, astronomer, natural philosopher, geographer and astrologer, who was born in the year 100 in Alexandria, Egypt, and died in Alexandria.

Aristotle also believed in the geocentric theory, and he believed that the sun, stars, and other planets were all perfect spheres, and revolved around the Earth in perfect circles. Copernicus however, came up with the heliocentric theory of the universe. He believed that the sun was the center of the universe, and that the Earth was one of its many satellites. He also figured out that Earth revolved around an axis.

In the year 1609, Johannes Kepler published his first 2 laws of planetary motion. Kepler came up with the idea that planets and moons didn't orbit the sun in circles, but in ellipses. The final important astronomer on the subject of the shape of the universe was Galileo. He also believed in the heliocentric theory, however his ideas of planetary motion differed slightly from Copernicus' ideas, mainly because he had more technology to use for his studies, due to the fact that he lived later than Copernicus. He published a book on astronomy, and was later placed under

house arrest for going against the teachings of the church. Prior to his house arrest, he was forced to claim that his ideas were false and that he was misled. It was many years before the scientific community accepted his ideas.



Jupiter and Saturn moving together (top) The Star of Bethlehem (bottom).

(Editor's note: Didn't Aaron do a brilliant job with these challenging questions I posed for him? Well done and thank you very much!)

