

The Heavens Declare the Glory of God

By REV. D. B. MARSH, S. C. D., F. R. A. S. Holstein, Ontario

THAT great ceiling fretted with gold, and ornamented with quivering points of light, supported without pillars, without abutments or foundations; that stately canopy, bedecked with stars, and sufficiently spacious to form a covering for suns innumerable, and their planetary companions, has from all time been the study of him who is made like unto his God.

From time unknown, man has sought to learn the great book open before him. To know something of those mighty orbs that roll along the space of the sky and to trace the Creator's steps in yonder starry plains, has been the desire of thoughtful man from time immemorial.

As the glories of spring give us a view of the work of the great artist, as the stores of nature reveal the beneficence of the bountiful provider, as the mid-day sun gives us a ray of his eternal brightness, so surely the caverns of stellar space introduce us to the mysteries of the perfections of the Almighty.

The Bible reveals God's love and mercy. The book of nature presents His wisdom and His goodness; but yonder starry vault with wide-open pages displays His power, and His glory.

The sun with his radiant honors, the moon with her pale light of molten silver, the planets in their unutterable silence, the stars like thousands of golden tapers fixed in their sockets, all pouring out their light, tell the story of His Omnipotence.

Looking upward to the sky on a clear moonless night, shining points meet the eye in every direction. As I gaze upward to that gilded roof with those celestial lamps glittering through the gloom—Stars, methinks you beckon me! Eternal lamps, your splendor inspires me! Divine monitors, I understand your meaning, and I, even I, also will strive to obey Him who said: "Let your light so shine among men."

To inquire into the mystery of those countless orbs circling through never-ending time in limitless space, to lift the curtain of nature and to inquire into the great cosmos, has been the effort of man now—and will be for all time to come. With all the knowledge of centuries at his feet, with the best instrumental equipment that the world to-day can provide, with the spectroscope—that subtle thing of recent invention by which light waves are measured and classified—the sensitive plate, the climax of the chemical laboratory—the telescope—the fruit of man's genius, by which he can pierce the gloom far beyond the pall of earthly night—with the faith of the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs to stand upon; yet with all this, man is able only to spell but a syllable of His eternal name, and catch but a glimpse of His Glory.

As the mysteries of the love of God to the world can never be fathomed, as the secrets of nature upon the ocean wave, on the mountain top, in the flower of the field, or in the bowels of the earth can never by man be understood, neither can man ever know the mysteries concealed in the depths of space.

Contemplating the star-strewn heavens, the poet Shelley wrote: "Pelow stretched the universe there,

Far as the remotest line That bounds imagination's flight, Countless and unending orbs In mazy notion intermingled, Yet each fulfilled immutably Eternal nature's law. Above, below, around, The circling systems formed A wilderness of harmony; Each with undeviating aim, In eloquent silence, through the depths of space, Pursued its wondrous way."

The abyss of this immense concave, radiant with millions of constellations, tinged with shades of infinite color, surely is a wondrous sight, and mocks all human grandeur.

"Say proud arch; built with divine ambition. Built in disdain of limit. Built in the taste of heaven Vast concave: ample dome; Wast thou designed a meet apartment for deity?" Is it by this, Thy Power and Glory to God is revealed?

On a clear night about four

thousand stars are visible to the unaided eye. With a large telescope, such as the Lick or the Yerkes, about one hundred millions can be seen. By the aid of the photographic plate, one thousand millions are revealed. But these are not all. For only from the vestibule of His great house are these photographs taken. The poet, caught up by the Spirit of God, wrote:

"Come forth, O man, yon azure round survey, And view those lamps that yield eternal day.

Bring forth thy glasses, clear thy wandering eyes, For millions beyond the former millions rise.

Look farther: millions more ablaze from remoter skies." Surely the view is profound! Suns and worlds intermingled float between suns and worlds, in the unlimitable depths of ether

What an extent of creation! What numbers! What variety! What velocity of motion! Who but God could fashion them? What but the power of the Almighty could bowl them through the circuit of the heavens with such accuracy? God rounded in his palms those ponderous bodies. He kindled those bright fires that fill the firmament with mysterious light. He weighed them in the balances of His might, and by the breath of His nostrils they sweep to the shores of eternity, returning only as His laws direct. "For ever singing as they shine, the hand that made us is divine."

Ye winds that howl in the stormy blast, or whisper in the breeze of summer; ye waves that wash the beach of coral strands, join in the chorus. Ye lightnings blaze to His honor. Thunders sound His praise. Oceans, roll the anthem. Minutest creation, display His meekness. Ye planets that roll in your primeval glory, take up the strain. Great Suns, address your homage to Him who kindled your fires! Majestic dome, gilded roof, azure canopy, what a display of the Power and Glory of the Almighty.

THE WOMAN'S NATIONAL ANTHEM

The following letter was recently received by a resident of Montreal, who does not care to have his name published, but for whom our informants can vouch:

"While in London recently I came in touch with a little incident which I think will interest you.

"I attended, one day, at noon, a recruiting meeting in front of the Mansion House. A great crowd of men and women listened to the recruiting sergeants, all of whom had 'done their bit' at the front.

A lady with a magnificent voice sang patriotic songs, which perhaps were more effective than the speeches of the recruiting sergeants. At the close of the meeting it was announced that after singing 'The King,' the lady would sing 'The Woman's National Anthem.' Then in splendid voice she sang:

"God save our splendid men, Send them safe home again, God save our men. Keep them victorious, Patient and chivalrous, They are so dear to us, God save our men"

As she sang, every man stood, uncovered, and with bowed head, and there were not many dry eyes.

"I think it would be a good thing if the women of Canada would learn this as 'The British Women's National Anthem,' for surely it is the prayer of every loyal British woman.

"After the meeting I went up to the singer, handed her my card, and asked her for the words she had just sung. When she saw that I was from Montreal she said, 'Oh, I sang in Montreal, and I will be glad to send the words to the women of Canada.'

"She wrote them on the back of the blue envelope which contained my passport."

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SUNDAY SCHOOL.

THE INTERNATIONAL SERIES.

Lesson VII.—Fourth Quarter, For Nov. 14, 1915.

Text of the Lesson, Dan. i, 8-20—Memory Verse, 15—Golden Text, 1 Cor. xvi, 13—Commentary Prepared by Rev. D. M. Stearns.

I am very glad to have the privilege of writing a lesson on Daniel, even though it be what is called a temperance lesson, for we shall find much more in it than appears on the surface. He is mentioned in Ezek. xiv, 14, 20, with Noah and Job as noted for their righteousness. He is mentioned by the Lord Jesus in Matt. xxiv, 15, in connection with the great tribulation at the end of this age immediately preceding the return of the Lord in His glory, to which Daniel also refers in chapters ix, 27; xii, 1. We recently saw a little captive maid glorifying the God of Israel under very trying circumstances, and in this lesson we see four captive young men glorifying the God of Israel under difficulties. The Lord permitted this oppression and captivity because of the sin of Judah and gave Jehoiakim and some of his people and some of the vessels of the house of God into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and among the captives were these four young men of royal blood, who were chosen to stand in the king's palace and to be taught the learning and tongue of the Chaldeans that they might stand before the king (verses 3-5).

They were to have a three years' course of preparation for their calling, and as to their food they were nourished from the king's table daily the same meat and wine which he ate and drank. At least that was the provision made for them. It was humiliating for an Israelite to be a captive. It was humiliating to have their beautiful Jewish names, each of which had in them a suggestion of the true God of Jehovah, changed to names suggestive of idols (verses 6, 7). But this they could bear without any sin on their part. Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself was taken prisoner, bound and led by His captors as they pleased. They also called Him a devil and Beelzebub and said that He was beside Himself. So in these two particulars they were foreshadowing the sufferings of Christ.

When we suffer in these ways we have fellowship with Him in His sufferings. When it came to eating and drinking that which had been offered to idols Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself, and no doubt he had prayed to his God about this. He asked permission of the prince of the eunuchs that he and his friends might be excused from receiving the food from the king's table and be given very plain fare, which had not passed that way, asking that they might be proved for ten days. The same God who permitted them thus far to suffer for His sake now gave them favor in the sight of this man, and he consented to prove them. At the end of ten days they were fairer and fatter in flesh than those who did eat the portion of the king's meat, so it was kept from them, and they were given the plain fare, which had not been offered to idols. See Deut. xxxii, 37, 38. If this is a temperance lesson the same principle applies to food as to drink.

To my mind it is a lesson on the necessity of keeping one's self wholly for God in every particular and of being willing to submit cheerfully to difficult circumstances for His sake. In chapter x, 2, 3, Daniel says that for three weeks he did without pleasant bread or flesh or wine, while he mourned and waited upon God for a special purpose, implying that he did not always see the necessity of denying himself food that could have the blessing of God. As to the sin of intemperance or self-indulgence in any matter, the teaching of scripture is very plain, and the filthiness and beastliness of strong drink could scarcely be more vividly described or condemned than in Isa. v, 11, 12, 22, 23; xxviii, 7, 8. The only remedy is in Christ Jesus, who alone can forgive sin and give the sinner a new nature and such a purpose to keep one's self wholly for Him as Daniel had.

Though he stood before the earthly king in a place of honor, he stood more consciously before the King of kings, for whose sake he in his old age went to the lion's den rather than dishonor him by any fear of man, for whose sake his three friends went to the fiery furnace rather than bow down to any image which man might set up. No doubt Daniel and his friends were prayerfully diligent in their Chaldean studies, but God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom, and He gave Daniel understanding in all visions and dreams, so that these young men were ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers in the whole realm (verses 17, 20). On three different occasions related in this book, when all the wisdom of Babylon's wise men failed, Daniel did not fail once because his God never failed him. Any believer who is willing to pay the price by self-denial and indifference to what others say or think of you and a purpose of heart to see no one but Jesus only and covet only His approval may know the power of God as others cannot. The whole cost of salvation fell upon Jesus Christ, and we receive freely what He so fully provided and paid for. But to be His faithful witnesses we must have the devotion, self-denial and continuance of Daniel.

Honor Roll

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—J. M. C. Welie, Teacher.

LETTERS FROM THE BOYS IN KHAKI

A CAMEL RIDE IN EGYPT

Continued from page 2

ousi, that desert tribe who descend on the caravans, murder the traders and steal their goods and camels. They have caused the police a lot of trouble and worry lately.

"Our camels started to trot as soon as we left the barracks and the feeling we green riders experienced I am sure we will never be able to fully describe. You have absolutely nothing to grasp to hold on with, no stirrups, no nothing, but sit with your legs crossed in front over the camel's neck, look pleasant, and hope when he finally shakes you off, to fall the nine long feet into some soft sand, out of reach of his feet and mouth.

"The motion of a trotting camel can be compared only to that of a ship in a short, choppy sea, but a hundred times worse, and it sometimes gives the rider a feeling of nausea similar to seasickness. Only one of our party was

sick but rapidly improved after the camels walked for about a mile.

"We trotted along over a desolate looking waste of sand, interspersed here and there with sand dunes almost as high as the camels. After the first few miles we all felt much better and had become fairly accustomed to the motion, so that we increased our pace till we seemed to be going at terrific speed. We finally halted, called in the scouts ahead, and sat down on the sands to a lunch consisting of dry black bread, some dried dates, all washed down with luke warm water, tasting very strongly of the waterskins. After a few minutes' rest, we tried the difficult feat of mounting successfully, and started once again at a swinging trot, but oh, what a difference! Our rest had allowed us to stiffen up slightly and find the sore spots, and the pleasure of the camel trip was over. Your back and neck seem to want to part company, while your shoulders and legs ache in unison. But still we pushed on at a fairly fast trot, as we found it was less painful to ride fast than slow.

"Before we left the caravan track and struck off across the sands in the direction of the post we were going to, we had a rather novel experience, but which relieved us for a few minutes from the torture of the ride. One of the scouts galloped back and snook quickly in Arabic to the officer with us, who translated for us that a body of people mounted on camels were coming

toward us along the caravan route and as they were not sure who they were, we had better dismount and prepare to receive them if they chanced to be Senousi. The other scout was called in and the camels made to kneel in a circle, and their heads secured by ropes to their knees to prevent them rising, and we proceeded to wait, the soldiers ready with their rifles in case there was trouble. After a considerable wait they came very close and the officers classified them as a wandering Bedouin tribe. We all felt much relieved and after the usual salaams and palaver with the sheik, or head man, we started away again, but the last part of the journey is better left undescribed, as it was agony untold, and we gladly welcomed the sight of the red flag waving over the police barracks at Behg, our destination. We tumbled off, more dead than alive, and walked over to the railway station, which is only a few minutes' walk from the barracks.

"We had ridden from Hamam to Behg, some 42 miles, so the police officer informed us, and we all know it was some distance today, as my back, and whole body in fact, is so stiff I can hardly move, and it is almost impossible to bend over. I certainly am pleased I had the opportunity to take a trip into the desert on a Bisherin trotting camel, but my one hope is that they don't turn our unit into a camel corp, as I feel much safer and more comfortable on the back of my own horse."

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