

"The Sun, Moon, and Stars"

The Present Truth – December 14, 1893

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"And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years; and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth; and it was so." Gen. 1:14, 15.

How bright, and sparkling, and beautiful! Did you ever wonder how they got up in the sky, and what makes them so bright?

The Bible says that God placed them there on the fourth day. You remember that He made light on the first day, but on the fourth day He placed the sun, moon, and stars, in the sky, put the light upon them, and took them to hold it for Him; and ever since then they have been God's light-bearers (light-carriers) for the earth.

The moon does not really have a light for itself, but it reflects the light that the sun shines upon it, just as a looking-glass reflects the light that the sun shines upon it. Because the sun is so much larger and brighter than the other lights, and rules the day, he is called the King of day. Because the moon is a lesser light and rules the night, she is called the Queen of night, and the stars her attendants.

Besides holding the light to warm the earth, to cause things to grow and ripen, and to make it pleasant that we may see, God says that He placed these lights in the firmament to divide the day from the night, to tell us when the days, weeks, months, years, and seasons begin and end, and to be for signs.

Men say that the days begin in the middle of the night, when people are asleep, but God makes everything so plain that there is no need of making a mistake. He says that every time the sun goes down in the west, a new day begins (Lev. 23:32; Deut. 16:6). What a wonderful clock to be placed in the sky! It never goes too fast nor too slow, and all the people in the world can tell by it just when their old day ends and their new day begins!

The earth, you remember, is round like a ball, therefore the sun cannot shine all over it at once. It shines on this side of the earth, and then the earth turns on and allows it to shine on the other parts of it. The sun and moon look as though they come up in the east and pass over us and set in the west; but they do not. The earth turns round so fast that it makes the sun, moon, and stars look as though they were passing us, when we are really passing them, just as the railway trains go so fast when we ride upon them that it makes the trees and houses look as though they were passing us instead of our passing them.

The sun, moon, and stars were to be for signs. You know what a sign is. The shoemaker puts a large wooden boot in front of his shop, or boots and shoes in his window; this is a sign that he has boots and shoes for sale. A little green bud comes on your rosebush; and you know that it is a sign that a rose is coming. The leaves come out on the trees, and we know that it is a sign that summer is coming. Jesus hung out in the heavens the sun, moon, and stars for

His signs. He says that when the sun and moon are darkened, and the stars fall from heaven that it is a sign that He is soon coming to this earth the second time, and that His coming is near, "even at the doors."

Now we know that He has not yet come the second time, for we read that this time when He comes, "every eye shall see Him" (Rev. 1:7). "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." (Matt. 24:27.)

How earnestly, then, ought we to study the sun, moon, and stars, for they show us not only the glory and wonderful handiwork of the great Creator, but they tell us when to look for His second coming, not the day and hour to be sure, but when it is very, very near. And this time He comes not to suffer and die, but to receive all who are ready, and take them to live with Him in His beautiful home.

What a dreadful thing it would be if we were not ready! He is waiting now for us to get ready (2 Peter 3:9), but when He finally comes He can wait no longer, and if we are not already and looking for Him we shall have to be left behind.

And we have not long in which to prepare, for the stars have already fallen, many are now living who saw them fall [remember, this was written in 1893]; the sun and moon also have been darkened, you could read about it in many different books and papers. We therefore know that the Lord is coming very soon.

Those who are ready when Jesus comes will not have a single spot of sin about them (2 Peter 3:14). They will have given themselves to Jesus, and will have allowed Him to come into their hearts by His Spirit and take away all their naughty habits, and use them to do good instead of evil. They will be kind and gentle and helpful and lovely like Jesus. They will be washed in blood from all their sins, and clothed in His purity and righteousness.

Oh, shall we not now, before it is too late, ask Jesus to cleanse us and clothe us and help us to get ready?

1. Have you learned anything more about the grass and trees and flowers this week?
2. In what way are we like the grass?
3. Then have we any reason for being proud?
4. What should we always remember when we look at the lily?
5. In what way are we like fruit-trees?
6. What kind of fruit does Jesus love best? Kind words, loving acts, etc.
7. What does the grape-vine teach us?
8. Has the sun always shone upon the earth?
9. When did God first make the sun, moon, and stars His light-bearers for the earth? Gen. 1:14-19.

10. Where did He tell them to stay while they held the light for Him? Gen. 1:17.
11. What do we sometimes call the sun? The moon? Why?
12. Can you count the stars? Who can tell the number of them, and call them all by their names? Ps. 147:4.
13. Do they shine only here where we live? Ps. 19:4-6.
14. Where do they always appear to rise? Where do they go down?
15. Do they really rise in the east and pass over our heads and go down in the west?
16. What makes them appear?
17. How do we know when every day begins?
18. Then how do we know when to stop work and begin to keep the Sabbath? Lev. 23:32; Deut. 16:6.
19. For what else are the heavenly lights good?
20. Did you ever see a shoemaker's sign? What is a sign of summer?
21. What wonderful signs has Jesus hung out in the sky?
22. When the sun should be darkened and the stars should fall, of what did He say that would be a sign?
23. Has the sun ever become dark? Yes, on May 19, 1780.
24. And have the stars fallen? Yes, on Nov. 13, 1833 in the Western world, and in 1866 in the Eastern world.
25. Then of what may we be sure? That Jesus is in coming. Matt. 24:29, 30.
26. For what is He coming? Heb. 9:28; 1 Thess. 4:13-18.
27. What must be we do to get ready? 2 Peter 2:14; Rom. 13:11-14.