

he had a vivid realization of the greatness of God's promise. It was easy to understand this figure. The next one must have been much more difficult to comprehend.

Most people today do not know a great deal about the stars. This is due mainly to our use of artificial lighting. We scarcely notice the individual stars, and few of them stand out with sharp individuality in our minds.

A century ago, if a new comet appeared there was great excitement. Everyone was aware of this new dot of brightness in the heavens. People would begin to ask whether it meant the approaching end of the world. Papers and magazines were filled with discussions of it. Today, if a new planet appears, most people know nothing about it, unless they happen to read a small reference to it in a newspaper. We are no longer conscious of the stars, since our eyes are blanketed by the great amount of artificial light upon our streets. Our thoughts are upon other things and we hardly notice the constellations. Except for the few people who make a hobby of it, most of us have no idea of more than two or three principal constellations.

It was quite different a century ago, and even more so in the time of Abraham. As he sat in front of his tent in the cool of the evening and looked at the stars, with no artificial light to blind his eyes or to tempt him to spend his evening reading, the constellations must have become like friends to him and to thousands of others. Many of these constellations still retain the names that people gave them thousands of years ago. Through the centuries, until recently, most people would recognize the few dozen main constellations as if they were old friends.