

In chapter 22 God repeated His promise to Abraham, saying, in verse 17: "I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore. "Now," Abraham may have said, "here is a real promise! Who can count the sand that is on the seashore? If my descendants are to be as numerous as the sand on the seashore, I shall indeed have a tremendous progeny!"

More than three thousand years passed, and then the telescope was invented. Soon men were able to observe great numbers of previously unknown stars. According to the latest estimates, there are about two hundred billion stars in our galaxy alone. Within the present century it has been found that our galaxy is only one of millions of galaxies, each of which also contains great numbers of stars. It is now believed that there are far more stars in the heavens than there are grains of sand upon all the sea shores of this earth put together!

At this point a question may reasonably be asked. Are we assuming certain things about Abraham's knowledge for which we have no proof? Can we be sure that Abraham knew so much about Babylonian astronomy? Can we be sure that Babylonians had counted the stars as early as the time of Abraham? Is it not possible that Abraham actually knew very little about the stars and that from merely glancing at them he received the impression of a tremendous number and therefore considered it a marvelous promise that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars? In answer let us assume that either or both of these objections should be correct. What would it do to the argument that we have advanced?