BIBLICAL ASTRONOMY.

Dr. Talmage Begins an Interesting Series of Tabernacle Sermons.

THERE ARE WORLDS AND WORLDS,

But Curs Has Deen the Scene of the Darkest Human Tragedy.

HEAVEN ONLY WILL SURVIVE THE CRASH

(SPECIAL TELEGRAM TO THE DISPATCH.)
BHOOKLYN, Dec. 18.—Rev. Dr. Talmage to-day preached the first of the promised series of sermons on God in the natural world as disclosed in the Bible. The subject chosen for the initial sermon was "The Astronomy of the Bible; or, God Among the Stars," the text being from Amos 9:6: heavens." Preceding the sermon the great congregation sang Isanc Watts' hymn:

The heavens declare thy glory, Lord,

In every star thy wisdom shines. That is first-rate poetry from Amos, the herdsman. While guarding his flocks at night, he got watching the heavens. He saw stars above stars, and the universe seemed to him like a great mansion many stories high, silver room above silver room, silver pillars beside silver pillars, and windows of silver and doors of silver, and tur-rets and domes of silver rising into the imrets and domes of silver rising into the immensities, and the prophet's sanctified imagination walks through that great silver palace of the universe, through the first story, through the second story, through the third story, through the twentieth story, through the hundreth story, through the thousandth story, and realizing that God is the architect and carpenter and mason of all that upheaved splendor, he cries out in the words of the text: "It is he that buildeth his stories in the heaven."

his stories in the heaven."

Astronomy was born in Chalden. Its mother was astrology or the science of foretelling events by juxtaposition of stars. The Orientals, living much out of doors and in a very clear atmosphere, through which the stars shone especially lustrous, got the habit of studying the night heavens. In the hot seasons caravans journeyed chiefly at night and that gave travelers much opportunity of stellar information. On the first page of the Bible the sun and moon and stars roll in. The sun, a body nearly 3,000,000 miles in circumference and more than 12,000 times as large a cur, earth, the moon more than large as our earth; the moon, more than 2,000 miles in diameter. But God is used to doing things on such an omnipotent scale that he takes only one verse to tell of this stellar and lunar manufacture.

How Job Read the Signs Aright, Read on in your Bibles, and after awhile the Bible flashes with the Aurora Borealis the Bible flashes with the Aurora Borealis or Northern lights, that strange illumination, as mysterious and undefined now as when, in the book of Job it was written: "Men see not the bright light which is in the clouds. Fair weather cometh out of the North." While all the nations supposed that the earth was built on a foundation of some sort, and many supposed that it stood on a huge turile, or some posed that it stood on a huge turtle, or some great marine creature. Job knew enough of astronomy to say it had no foundations great marine creature, Job knew enough of astronomy to say it had no foundation, but was suspended on the invisible arm of the Almighty, declaring that "He hangeth the earth upon nothing." White all nations thought the earth was level, the sky spread over it like a tent over a flat surface, Isaiah declared the world to be globular, circular, saying of God: "He sitteth upon the circle of the earth." See them glitter in the striptural sky—Arcturus, Orion, the Pleiades and the "Bear with her young." While running your fingers among the leaves of your Bible, with the astronomical thought in your mind, you see two worlds stop—the sun and the moon. But what does that Christian know about that miracle who does not understand something of those

who does not understand something of those two luminaries? Unless you watch modern astronomy, put those two worlds in its steelyards and weigh them, you are as ig-norant as a Hottentot about the stupend-ousness of that scene in the life of Joshua. The sun over three hundred thousand times as heavy as our earth and going thousands of miles an hour. Think of stopping that and starting it again without the shipwreck of the universe! But I can easily believe it.
What confounds me is not that he could
stop and start again those two worlds in
Joshua's time, but that he could have made
the wheel of worlds of which the sun and moon are only cogs, and keep that wheel rolling for thousands of years—the flywheel of all eternity.

There Are Other Worlds Than Ours. But what gladdens me, and at the same time overwhelms me, is that those worlds are inhabited. The Bible says so, and what a small idea you must have of God and His dominion if you think it only extends across this chip of a world which you and I now inhabit. Have you taken this idea of all the other worlds being inhabited as human guesswork?. Read Isaiah, fortyfifth chapter, eighteenth verse: "Thus saith the Lord that created the heavens, saith the Lord that created the heavens, God himself that formed the earth, and made it; He hath established it. He created it not in vain, He formed it to be inhabited." Now, if He inhabited the earth so that it would not be created in vain, would he make worlds hundreds and thousands of times larger and not have them inhabited? Speaking of the inhabitants of this world, he says: "The nations are as the drop of a bucket." It all the inhabitants of this world are as a drop of a bucket, where are the other drops of the bucket? Arain and arain the Bible speaks bucket? Again and again the Bible speaks of the host of heaven, and the word "host" means living creatures, not inert masses, and the expression "hosts of heaven" must mean inhabitants of other worlds. The Psalmist cries out: "Thy mercy is great above the heavens." If there were no inhabitants above the heavens, what use of any mercy?

Again, the Bible exclaims: "Thy goodness is great above the heavens." What could be the use of his goodness above the heavens if there were no inhabitants to enpay it? Again, the Bible says: "He has set thy glory above the heavens." And here my text comes in with its idea of a mansion of many stories: "It is He that buildeth his stories in the heaven." Is it possible that we who live on the ground floor of this many-storied building are the only tenants, and that the larger rooms and the more gor-geously upholatered rooms and the more brilliantly chandeliered rooms above it are uninhabited? Beside this we are positively told in the Bible that two other worlds are inhabited—the world angelic and the world diabolic. These two worlds added to our own make it positive that three worlds are inhabited. Why then stop with three worlds of living beings when there are not only millions but billions of worlds?

The Heavenly Cars Well Filled. Bid Prof. Herschel and his sister Catherine in finding worlds find only worlds unin-habited and a waste? Is Ceres, which Piozzi discovered in 1801, wasted? Is Vesta, that Olbers discovered in 1807, wasted? Is Prosperine, which Prof. Luther discovered in 1853, wasted? Is Urania, which Prof. Hind discovered in 1854, wasted? Is Pandora, discovered in 1858 by Prof. Searle, wasted? Are the 15,000 stars recorded in one year in the observatory at Washington wasted? Is all except the

billionth part of the universe wasted?

My hearers, is it possible that God would run such a splendid passenger train of parlor cars through the heavens and keep it running if there were no passengers? Judging from the extent of the universe, do you think God would put all his family on such limits as this world marks? If a such limits as this world marks? If a king have a palace of 100 rooms will he put all his princes and princesses in one comparatively small room? As the highest happiness is in making others happy, is it not certain that God would occupy larger places than our small earth with beings capable of happiness? Besides this, why all the world's furthest on and furthest up covered with light? What is the use of light if there are no eyes of inhabitants to enlor and employ that light?

I admit that scientific exploration has discovered that around many worlds there is an atmosphere in which lungs like ours could not breathe, and there are heats or colds that physique like ours could not

endure.

But do you suppose that we have the only kind of lungs that God can make? Do our hodies exhaust Divine ingenuity, and must he make all intelligent creatures with our respiration or pulsation or mastication or digestion or habitude or not make them at all? Because organisms like ours cannot live in Mercury or Saturn or Jupiter or the Sun, we have no right to conclude that those globes are lifeless. Without any telescope and without any observatory and scope and without any observatory and without any astronomical calculation, I know that the other worlds are inhabited, because my Bible and my common sense

All in God's Own Image, All in God's Own Image.

It has been estimated that in the worlds belonging to our solar system there is room for at least 25,000,000,000,000 of population. And I believe it is all occupied or will be occupied by intelligent beings. God will not fill them with brutes. He would certainly put into those worlds beings intelligent enough to appreciate the architecture, the coloring, the grandeur, the beauty, the harmony of their surroundings. Yea, the inhabitants of those worlds have capacity of locomotion like ours, for they would not have had such spacious opportunity for of locomotion like ours, for they would not have had such spacious opportunity for movement if they had not powers of motion. Yea, they have sight, else wny the light, and hearing, else how get on with necessary language and how clear themselves from advancing perils. Yea, as God made our human race in his own image, he probably made the inhabitants of other worlds in his own image; in other words, it is as near demonstration as I care to have it, that while the inhabitants of other worlds have adaptation of bodily structure to the par-

while the inhabitants of other worlds have adaptation of bodily structure to the particular climate in which they dwell, there is yet similarity of mental and spiritual characteristics among all the inhabitants of the universe of God, and made in his Image they are made wonderfully alike.

Now, what should be the practical result of this discussion founded on Scripture and common sense? It is first of all to enlarge our ideas of God and so intensify our admiration and worship. Under such consideration, how much more graphic the Bible question which seems to roll back the sleeve of the Almighty and say: "Hast thou an arm like God?" The contemplation also encourages us with the thought that if God made all these worlds and populated them, it will not be very much of an undertaking it will not be very much of an undertaking for him to make our little world over again. and reconstruct the character of its popula-lations as by grace they are to be recon-

I thank God that we have found out that our world is not half-way between heaven and hell, but is in a sisterhood of light, and that this sisterhood joins all the other sis-terboods of worlds, moving round some great homestead, which is no doubt heaven, where God is, and our departed Christian friends are, and we ourselves through par-doning mercy expect to become permanent

One Hard Question Answered.

Furthermore: I get now from all this an answer to the question which every intelli-gent man and woman since the earth has stood has asked and received no answer. Why did God let sin and sorrow come into Why did God let sin and sorrow come into the world when he could have prevented them from coming? I wish reverently to say I think I have found the reason. To keep the universe loyal to a Holy God, it was important in some world somewhere to demonstrate the gigantic disasters that would come upon any world that allowed sin to enter. Which world should it be?

Wall the smaller the world the better, for win to enter. Which world should it be?
Well, the smaller the world the better, for
less numbers would suffer. So our world
was selected. The stage was plenty large
enough for the enactment of the tragedy.
Enter on the stage Sin, followed by Murder, Pain, Thett, Fraud, Impurity, Falsehood, Massacre, War and all the abominations and horrors and agonies of centuries.
Although we know comparatively little Although we know comparatively little about the other worlds lest we become completely dissatisfied with our own, no doubt the other worlds have heard and are now hearing all about this world in the awful experiment of sin which the human race has been making. In some way interstellar communication is open and all worlds, either by wing of flying spirits or by direct communication from God are direct communication from God, are learning that disloyalty and disobediede doom and damn everything they touch, and the spectacle practically says to all other worlds: "Obey God, keep holy and stay in the orbit where you were intended to swing, or you will suffer that which that recreant world out yonder has been suffer-ing for thousands of years."

It is no longer to me a mysters why so

It is no longer to me a mystery why so small a world as ours was chosen for the tragedy. A chemist can demonstrate all the laws of earth and heaven in a small laboratory, ten feet by five, and our world was not too small to demonstrate to the universe the awful chemistry of unrighteousness, its explosive and riving and con-suming power. I do not believe there is a world that has been in existence from the time when Copernicus, the astronomer, knocked on the door of heaven, to the world that last week came within sight of the observatory at Greenwich, but has heard of our terrific terrestial experiment, and the awful object lesson has thrilled the multi-millions of stellar population, espec-ially when they heard that in order to arrest the disaster of centuries the World Maker and the World Starter and the World Upholder must give up His only son to assassination to expiate and restore and save the victims of the planetary shipwreck. The Earth Mirrored to Distant Worlds.

On the Tower of Pharos, Egypt, a metal-lic mirror was raised which reflected all that occurred both on land and sea for a distance of 300 miles, and so Egypt was informed of the coming of her enemies long before their arrival. By what process I know not, but in some way this ship of a struggling earth I think is mirrored to distant a struggling earth I think is mirrored to distant sounds. tant worlds. Surely this one experiment of a world unloosing itself from God will be enough for all worlds, and all eternities. But notice that as the other worlds rolled into the first book of the Bible, the Book of Genesis, they also appear in the last book of the Bible, the Book of Revelation. They will take part in the scenes of that occasion which shall be the earth's winding up and a tremendous occasion for you and me personally. My father was on the turn-pike road between Trenton and Bound Brook, N. J. He was coming through the night from the legislative halls, where he was serving his State, to his home, where there was sickness. I often heard him tell

about it. It was the night of the 12th and the morn-ing of the 13th of November, 1833. The sky was cloudless and the air clear. Suddenly the whole heavens became a scene never to be forgotten. From the constella-tion Leo meteors began to shoot out in all tion Lee meteors began to shoot out in all directions. For the two hours between four and six in the morning it was estimated that 1,000 meteors a minute flashed and expired. It grew lighter than noonday. Arrows of fire. Balls of fire. Trails of fire. Showers of fire. Some of the appearances were larger than the full moon. All around the heavens explosion followed explosion. Sounds as well as sights. The air filled with uproar. All the luminaries of the sky seemed to have received marching orders. The heavens ribbed and interlaced and garlanded with meteoric display. From horizon to horizon everything in combustion and configuration

horizon to horizon everything in combus-tion and confiagration.

Many a brain that night gave way. It was an awful strain on strongest nerves. Millions of people fell on their knees in prayer. Was the world ending, or was there some great event for which all heaven was illuminated? For eight momentous hours the phenomenon lasted. East, west, north, south; it looked as though the heavens were in maniae disorder. Astrono-mers watching that night said that those mers watching that night said that those meteors started from 2,200 miles above the

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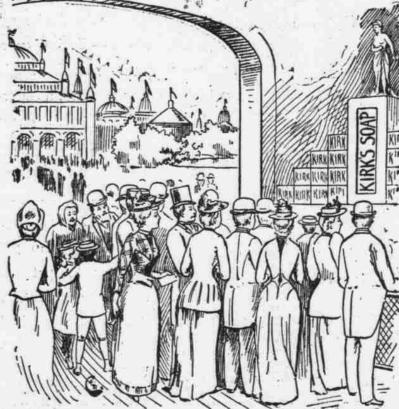
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with such a scene of falling lights, not only fidgety meteors, but grave old stars. St. John saw it in prospect, and wrote: "The stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casts her untimely figs when she is shaken of a mighty wind. What a time that will be when worlds drop. Rain of planets. Gravitation letting loose her grip on worlds. Constellations flying apart. Galaxies dissolved. The great orchard of the universe swept by the last hurricane letting down the stars like ripened fruit. Our old earth will go with the rest, and let tree for it will have existed long enough it go, for it will have existed long enough to complete its tremendous experiment. But there will be enough worlds left to make a heaven out of, if any more heaven needs to be built. That day finding us in Christ, our nature regenerated, and our sins pardoned, and our hope triumphant, we will feel no more alarm than when in September 1 and will feel no more alarm than when in September, passing through an orchard, you hear the apples thump to the ground, or through a conservatory and you hear an untimely fig drop on the floor. You will only go upstairs into another story, a better lighted story, a better furnished story, a better register ventilated story, a better pictured story, and into a story where already many of your kindred are waiting for you, and where proposts and apostles and martyrs will pay you celestial visitation, and where, with a rapture beyond the most radiant anticipation, you shall bow before Him that "buildeth His stories in the heaven."

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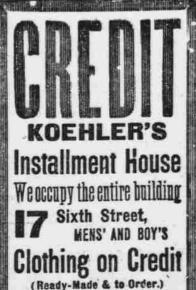
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