

the day, and My covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; then may also My covenant be broken with David My servant. . . . If My covenant be not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth; then will I cast away. . . . David My servant, and will not take of his seed to be rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."

In default of having our modern instruments for noting the lapse of time, the Hebrews were largely dependent upon their observation of the movements of the heavenly bodies. Being more dependent upon, they were more studious of and therefore more familiar with the movements of the stellar world than we. As the north star with them, as with us, was the symbol of stability, so the rise of Jupiter or the setting of Venus became the symbol of precision. Astronomical science rests upon the granite solidity and fixedness of God's ordinances of the heavens. Hence the force to an Oriental mind, in Jeremiah's day, of the symbolism he employed when he made God's covenant of the day and night to find its equivalent in his covenant with the believing household in imperial exactness. Our artificial time-keepers—clocks, watches, and chronometers—however ingeniously contrived and admirably fabricated, are but a transcript, so to say, of the celestial motions. The moment we move with them east or west they fail us. They are of incalculable value, but must themselves be regulated by "the eternal clock-work of the skies." Few minds are so devoid of sensibility as to be unaffected by the fact that the ordinances of heaven are so sure and true that the astronomer can announce with mathematical certainty that an eclipse on the meridian at Washington will take place a thousand years hence, beginning at a given second. Modern astronomy has in its possession data in an eclipse of the sun that tell us that a certain battle, recorded by Herodotus, took place on

September 30th, 610 years B.C. With equal certainty it tells us by an eclipse of the moon that Alexander crossed the Tigris before the mighty battle of Arbela, on September 20th, 331 years B.C. Astronomy makes these events at these dates to be as certain as though they had happened yesterday.

Edward Everett says: "For all the kindreds and tribes and tongues of men—each upon their own meridian—from the Arctic pole to the equator, from the equator to the Antarctic pole, the eternal sun strikes twelve at noon, and the glorious constellations, far up in the everlasting belfries of the skies, chime twelve at midnight; twelve for the pale student over his flickering lamp; twelve amid the flaming wonders of Orion's belt, if he crosses the meridian at that fated hour; twelve by the weary couch of languishing humanity; twelve in the star-paved courts of the empyrean; twelve for the heaving tides of the ocean; twelve for the weary arm of labor; twelve for the toiling brain; twelve for the watching, waking, broken heart; twelve for every substantial, for every imaginary thing which the speech or thought of man at the given meridian refers to the lapse of time."

Well spoken; but let the eloquent orator give place to the inspired prophet Jeremiah, saying, Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, if these ordinances which bring forth Mazzaroth in his season, and that guide Arcturus with his sons; if these ordinances depart from before me; if any power can break My covenant of the day and night, that there should not be day and night in their season, then (pointing to a family circle in Israel) may also My covenant be broken with David my servant, and I will not take of his seed to be rulers.

We are familiar with the biblical doctrines of ordinances. They are Divine commands and appointments; rules which God has ordained for the government and direction of men in private