

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **MOSES AND THE EXODUS**

#### **Thinking About God**

THE basic error of the centuries has been the failure to think deeply enough about God,—to think out the divine nature and thence to try to live in accordance with it. No one would deny that there have been great achievements and wonderful lives in the course of the years, but there would have been less of a price to pay for them if there had been more recognition of the impersonal nature of good as based on the infinite Principle of the universe.

From time to time there are prophecies of the imminent end of civilization. Recently a winner of a Nobel Prize for literature has said: "There are no longer any problems of the spirit; there is only the question, When will I be blown up?" But the spirit of man is always potentially greater than anything he may encounter by way of obstacles. The reason why a man's spirit is often defeated rather than victorious is that he generally thinks of his sources of strength as limited and personal, rather than as infinite and impersonal (although expressed individually).

No one else can do our thinking about God for us. The fact that others before us have used their acquaintance with the compass of spiritual thought to make their way through difficult country is something that we can be very thankful for and something that we can take full advantage of, but we are never relieved of our own individual responsibility for going forward. Jesus Christ's example is, of course, the supreme one, but it is of no avail to us unless we take it as our model individually.

What part does the Bible play in our individual journey towards a realization of man's dominion, as proclaimed in the first chapter of Genesis? It provides us with an opportunity of making our thinking about spiritual truth systematic and vital, instead of haphazard and stereotyped. Then it is up to us to put that thinking into practical operation in our lives.

#### **The First Three Thousand Years of Bible History**

In this book we have traced something of the majestic story of the first three thousand-year periods of Bible history. We have seen how it illustrates the

workings of the first three days of creation—the searching light of the first day of creation exposing the dark sequence of materialistic thinking; the purity of the second day of creation demanding separation in an "ark" from the "flood" of mortal beliefs; and the definiteness of the third day of creation impelling the journey to the "promised land" of true identity as the sons of God. Abraham was forced to be definite about leaving Ur and about producing an heir by his wife Sarah; Jacob was forced to be definite in eradicating the evil elements in himself; Joseph was forced to be definite about turning every experience into a blessing, not only for himself but for others as well. Now we arrive at that great figure Moses, who sometimes seems forbidding, but whose qualities of leadership were magnificent. We shall see how his vision of God as I AM THAT I AM was the mainspring of his mission.

Moses' finest achievement was in the spiritual education of the children of Israel. He was the first of the great teachers, and had the struggles and heart-burnings of every teacher. He taught the Israelites the nature of God through the plagues, which freed them from bondage in Egypt, and later he gave them the Commandments as a further guide to their thinking and practice. He paved the way for Joshua to lead them finally into the Promised Land, the climax of the third thousand-year period.

### **The Children of Israel in Bondage in Egypt**

The Book of Exodus begins with an account of the bitter bondage which the children of Israel suffered in Egypt. The reason for this was that the Pharaoh of Egypt was afraid of them, because they were greater in numbers and in strength than the Egyptians; they were "fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them." The Pharaoh in Joseph's time had been favourable to the children of Israel, but now there had arisen a new Pharaoh, who "knew not Joseph,"—who did not remember how Joseph had been the means of averting a terrible famine in Egypt. So the Egyptians made the lives of the children of Israel "bitter with hard bondage"; but in spite of this they still multiplied.

Pharaoh then thought that the only remedy was the desperate one of killing all the male Hebrew babies. So he asked the two Hebrew midwives to see that this was done. They, however, did not do as they were directed by Pharaoh, because

they "feared God,"—that is, they trusted in righteousness and eschewed unrighteousness. As a result they themselves were blessed.

The "midwife" in each one of us is that quality of womanhood which assists the birth of ideas. When ideas first appear to us, they need much tender welcoming and loving and encouraging if they are to fulfill their mission as strong and effectual. Without that initial cherishing they may die on us before they have a chance to mature. We need to "save the men children alive."

### **The Birth of Moses**

When he found out that the midwives were disobeying him Pharaoh appealed to his people to cast every male Hebrew baby into the river. The story (told in Exodus 2:1-10) of how the child Moses was preserved is a charming legendary tale. When Moses' mother found that she had a "goodly child," she hid him for three months. "And when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid it in the flags by the river's brink. And his sister stood afar off, to wit what would be done to him." Pharaoh's daughter chanced to come down to the river with her maidens, and when she saw the ark she sent one of them to fetch it; when she saw the Hebrew child weeping, she had compassion on it. At this point Moses' sister ran up and offered to call a nurse for the child from among the Hebrew women. Pharaoh's daughter agreed, and so Moses' sister fetched their mother, who was paid to nurse her own child.

Moses became Pharaoh's daughter's son, and it was she who gave him his name, which means "drawn out;" because, she said, "I drew him out of the water." This is what we do every time we see the definiteness of some idea through our love for it.

Because Moses' mother was willing to give up her fear and to let her child go,—not unprotected, but in an ark,—she was rewarded with the opportunity to fill the office of mother still. We hide our "child" (an idea which has come to us and which we love) for "three months" when we think out its real identity according to the first three days of creation; we see it as an intelligent idea (first "month"), as a purely spiritual idea, uncontaminated by evil elements (second "month"), and as an idea which is definite and beautiful and safe (third "month"). We give up thinking of it as our own personal property, born of certain circumstances and

something for which we have personal ambitions, and instead we see it as something with an eternal life of its own. Then we put this child into a spiritual ark,—an ark of understanding of the spiritual fact as supreme,—and we put it by the river's brink,—by a sense of activity and progress. In this way the child is safe from all harm and can meet only more love and care, and we ourselves are not deprived of the joys of motherhood.

All motherhood is by reflection: it is a reflection of God's universal motherhood. A realization of this fact only makes better human mothers —less fearful, more encouraging of the good tendencies, more patient, more faithful to the spiritual ideal of sonship. A human mother is often separated from her child and therefore fears for it; but she need never fear if she sees that both she and it are inseparable from the divine Mother, who cares for all Her children with infinite tenderness.

When a wonderful idea is born to us, we mother it by appreciating to the full its perfection and completeness; that operates in human experience to give us the patience to make its appearing as unmarred by foreign elements as is possible. If we love the ideal, this gives us a quicker discernment of every approximation to it, however small, and also a quicker discernment of temporary imperfections in that approximation. The nature of true mother-love makes its effect as certain as the effect of  $2 \times 2 = 4$  to dispel all notions of any other answer. This is why real mother-love for the spiritual ideal brings out the best in everyone and everything and literally makes nothing of flaws. If a mirror is dirty, it fails to reflect faithfully the picture in front of it. The sensible person doesn't rail at the dirt, but wipes it off, so that the mirror can fulfill its true function. A real mother does the same with the faults blurring the ideal image of her child which her love holds before her—she wipes them out in her thought as transient dirt, so that the image is once again perfect. The effect of this is that the child steadily advances towards the ideal.

### **Moses Kills an Egyptian**

When he grew up, Moses became aware of the hard bondage which his countrymen were suffering at the hands of the Egyptians. One day he saw an Egyptian kill a Hebrew, so when he had made sure that there were no onlookers he slew the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. The next day he saw two Hebrews fighting and asked the one in the wrong, "Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow?"

whereupon the accused man answered, "Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian?" Moses was then afraid that his crime was known; and, indeed, when all this came to the ears of Pharaoh, he "sought to slay Moses."

So Moses fled to Midian, where he sat down by a well. The story goes on: "Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters: and they came and drew water, and filled the troughs to water their father's flock. And the shepherds came and drove them away: but Moses stood up and helped them, and watered their flock."

If like Moses we try through violent human action to free our fellows from the bondage of "Pharaoh,"—gross materialism,—we lay ourselves open to the accusation of being mere self-appointed moral bulldozers. Then we are wise if we seek the well of God's ideas, sit down there, and let there come to us a receptiveness of spiritual perfection (symbolized by the seven daughters). This receptiveness appeals to divine sources of inspiration, but needs the vigor of manhood to protect and preserve it against all attempts to deprive it of this inspiration.

In the incident of the midwives we saw that the "men children" need the help of woman qualities to keep them alive, and here we see that the receptivity of womanhood needs the strength of manhood to stand up for it. We can never do without both the manhood qualities of courage and intelligence and the womanhood qualities of acceptance and faithful love.

The priest of Midian, father of the seven daughters, was so pleased to hear of Moses' helpfulness to them that he gladly offered him hospitality. Moses lived with the priest for a time, and was given one of his daughters in marriage. She bore him a son.

### **Moses at the Burning Bush**

The turning-point of Moses' career came with his experience of the burning bush which was not consumed, as recorded in the third chapter of Exodus.

One day he had led his father-in-law's flock "to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb." Then "the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush:"—the creation of

bushes was included in the third day:—"and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt."

This experience of Moses symbolizes the point when the "desert" begins to "blossom as the rose" for us. The desert, or wilderness, is often used in the Bible as a symbol of a recurrent stage in our experience: a period when the outlook seems empty and drear and uncertain, but the doubtings eventually lead to a certainty which is deeply felt, rather than merely believed or accepted theoretically. The moment of certainty comes as we see that the eternal fact of our God-given selfhood, and indeed of everything, is indestructible, and remains intact in spite of the apparently consuming fires of sin, disease, or death.

Sometimes if we feel ashamed of things we have done or failed to do, we imagine that the good we have also accomplished is set at nought by our sins. But the truth is that our spiritual sense, which enabled us to accomplish that measure of good, is an eternal part of our essential selfhood, whereas sin is no part of it. A sense of sin is only a temporary, false view of our real identity, and that identity needs only to be discerned intact for the memory of sin or the desire to sin to disappear. The value which a coin represents remains the same even if the superscription becomes defaced or erased for any reason, and even if a new coin with the image clear once again has to be substituted for it in circulation.

Because our true selfhood remains untouched, in spite of all the nightmare storms which apparently sweep us away from it, we can always return home to it. That is why the prodigal son could be restored to his place in his father's house, in spite of his elder brother's theological sense that it was unfair that this sinner should be reinstated, although he had already suffered amply for his decision to leave home.

The well-known story in Daniel 3 of the three Hebrew young men who were cast into the burning fiery furnace, because they refused to bow down to a golden image, illustrates this same great fact. Nebuchadnezzar commanded the furnace to be heated "one seven times more than it was wont to be heated." The flames of the fire burned to death the mighty warriors who cast the three men bound into the midst of the fire, but soon Nebuchadnezzar got up in amazement and said, "Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They

answered and said unto the king, True, O king. He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God . . . And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them." The story is a marvellous symbol of how true identity remains unchanged and untouched by all the pains of sense, and of how we shall enjoy safety and a great sense of freedom if we realize this fact fully.

### **"I Am that I Am"**

God now called to Moses out of the midst of the bush, and told him, "put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." God then announced Himself as the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob; in other words, Moses began to see that he personally had not stumbled on a new God, but that the understanding of God had been the inspiration of his predecessors. Moses saw that that understanding must now free the children of Israel from their afflictions and oppression in Egypt, and lead them into "a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey,"—not into a state of material ease and comfort, but into the joy and freedom of true identity. Moses saw that divinely everything is in line, in perfect accord, with the nature of God, but that humanly this has to be proved by exchanging the bondage of "Egypt" for the freedom of the "promised land."

The next thing was that Moses saw clearly his own God-given mission, —to bring the children of Israel out of Egypt. But another suggestion intervened, "Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?" Then Moses' own sense of God answered, "Certainly I will be with thee. . . ."

Moses went on to ask by what name he should present to the children of Israel the God of their fathers. The answer came, "I AM THAT I AM." This has been translated, "I shall forever continue to be that which I am now being." It indicates the permanence of spiritual reality,—a haven from the noisy storms raised by physical sense. This great vision of God Moses elaborated through the plagues, which showed that the indestructible essence of all visible forms of good resides in God alone.

## The Three Signs

Moses objected that the people would not believe him or listen to him, "for they will say, The Lord hath not appeared unto thee." He was remembering his daunting experience with the two quarrelling Hebrews. But now he was given three "signs" (Exodus 4:2-9).

First, he was told to cast down his rod, and the moment he did so it became a serpent, so that he fled from before it. God now told him, "Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail." When he did this, it became a rod in his hand again. Moses was made to see in this incident that if he relied on his human capacities,—symbolized by the rod, which represented his shepherd's calling,—they might at any moment demonstrate the danger of this by letting him down. He had to take this "serpent" by the tail,—handle fearlessly the belief that his God-given identity and purpose was something allotted to him because of his human abilities. Human abilities regarded as personal gifts, due to accidents of birth and education, are subject to all kinds of changes and perversions. But when we recognize particular abilities as individual expressions of God in some aspect, then they cannot change or decay. When Moses had taken this insidious "serpent" by the tail, he could use the rod again,—he could use his individual gifts with a sense of power and certainty, and without fear of their deserting him, because he had seen them to be derived from God.

The second sign which Moses was to offer in evidence of his divine commission was that when he put his hand into his bosom and took it out, he saw it as leprous, and when he again put it into his bosom, it was restored to normal. This symbolizes very simply that any distressing condition, however hideous it may seem to physical sense, is nothing but the outcome of mortal mentality; the evidence of it has no foundation in truth and so it can be changed in a moment through divine influence. The sheer oppressive weight of false education is really all that impedes our seeing this proved more often; that weight has to be lifted off through showing both its powerlessness and also the glory of spiritual facts.

The third sign was that Moses should take of the water of the Nile and pour it on the dry land, where it would become blood. This is what happened in the first plague, and it represents showing the deadliness of materialism and the consequent vitalizing of interest in spiritual reality.



If we want to lead lives that are worth-while, we need to see the significance of these three signs. We need to see that our destiny is God-bestowed, not man-bestowed, and therefore cannot be perverted; that there is no substance to the mortal picture presented to the physical senses, and that it can be transformed by divine power instantaneously, as Jesus proved time and time again; and that we must have the courage to show the deadly nature of mortal mentality. So we need a right sense of our individual selves; a right sense of what it is that enables us to help our fellows; and a willingness to expose fearlessly the whole gamut of materialism. Moses thus saw the individual, collective, and universal aspects of his mission.

### **"I Am Slow of Speech"**

Moses' next misgivings were about his lack of eloquence. "And the Lord said unto him, . . . Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say." Moses' sense of God showed him what Jesus was to show to his disciples: "it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." Moses, however, was still fearful, and so God pointed out to him that he could use Aaron, his brother, as a mouthpiece.

Like Moses, we sometimes keep our Aaron, our helpmeet, who shoulders responsibilities which are really ours to our Principle, for too long, and then it becomes harmful to us, as Aaron became to Moses when he encouraged the people in their worship of the golden calf.

Moses now left Jethro and journeyed back to Egypt with "the rod of God" in his hand,—armed with the sense that he could now act "as one having authority." He and Aaron gathered together the elders of the children of Israel, and Aaron "spake all the words which the Lord had spoken unto Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people. And the people believed: and when they heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped."

### **First Encounters with Pharaoh**

Moses and Aaron now went in to Pharaoh and courageously demanded, "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness." Pharaoh made the expected reply: "I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go." Next he implied that Moses and Aaron were trying to

engineer a holiday and were preventing the people from working, and so he said, "get you unto your burdens."

The dictatorial "Pharaoh" element says, "Why should you imagine that you can be free to think about God and rejoice in God? It's nothing but an impossible Utopian dream. You've got more time on your hands than is good for you—that's what the matter is," and so "Pharaoh" imposes new burdens on us to keep our noses to the grindstone of mortality.

Pharaoh's instructions now were that the children of Israel should no longer be given straw to make brick, but that they must gather straw for themselves and yet at the same time produce the same number of bricks per day. This was, of course, impossible, and yet Pharaoh refused to lessen his demands. The officers of the children of Israel therefore blamed Moses, as they were to do many times in the coming years. Moses in his bewilderment asked God why his efforts to free his fellow-countrymen had resulted in a worse plight for them.

Moses' expostulations are not unknown to us, when our well-meant efforts seem at first to result only in an aggravation of the difficulty, and the physical burdens seem crushing. But, as with Moses, our understanding of God reassures us. The Lord told Moses to say to the children of Israel that He would certainly rid them of their bondage and save them "with a stretched out arm" and bring them into the Promised Land. The people were unimpressed by this, because of their "anguish of spirit" and their "cruel bondage." The Lord, however, still told Moses to speak to Pharaoh with authority, although Moses was now much discouraged and apprehensive. Moses was warned that Pharaoh would not allow the children of Israel to go until he was forced to do so by circumstances; in other words, the belief in materialism tries to stick to us for as long as possible. It yields only when we find ourselves forced to recognize the power and all-inclusiveness of spiritual facts, precluding the possibility of any real opposite, and this was to be the significance of the plagues.

In order to impress Pharaoh, Aaron was told to cast down his rod and let it become a serpent. But Pharaoh called in the magicians of Egypt and they did the same thing with their rods. Aaron's rod, however, swallowed up all their rods. Mere will-power can bring out "serpents" with ease, exhibit the subtleties of evil,

but it cannot get rid of them, because of its inherent powerlessness, since all power belongs to God.

But Pharaoh failed to be impressed, and refused to let the children of Israel go; the plagues were therefore set in motion.

### **The Plagues**

What was the significance of the plagues? The general view of the commentaries is that they were events explicable as natural phenomena, but that the Biblical writers, recording the events hundreds of years after they had taken place, attributed them (in line with their didactic purpose) to the God of the Hebrews acting on behalf of His chosen people. The universal spiritual meaning of the plagues, however, far, far outshines their historical significance. They give a striking symbolic picture of how the "Pharaoh" element in thought, the tyrannical materialism, fiercely resists our entering into our heritage of freedom as the sons of God,—freedom from "Egypt" and freedom to demonstrate the Science of being,—but finally is forced to yield. "Let my people go, that they may serve me" was the demand made continually by the Lord through Moses, and it is the demand which our understanding of God is always forcing upon us.

Through the symbolism of the plagues we learn what man without God can expect. We see that the I AM of all good abides in God alone, that all the things we value in human experience come from God alone, because God is, and for no other reason. The very nature of matter renders it incapable of producing lasting health, lasting happiness, or lasting good, so a materialistic life-basis is necessarily a self-destroying belief.

On one occasion Moses told Pharaoh that the plagues came about that Pharaoh might "know that I am the Lord in the midst of the earth," —the great central Principle upon which every manifestation of good depends. On other occasions the divine purpose was stated in these words: "that my name"—the identity of the divine nature—"may be declared throughout all the earth," and "that thou mayest know how that the earth is the Lord's." The earth appeared in the third day of creation and brought forth grass, herb, and fruit tree; it is "the Lord's" for this reason, that good is brought forth solely because good is of God and must appear to us continually as the expression of the true selfhood of everything.

The "Pharaoh" holds out as long as it can. It clamps down on us again just when we have won some measure of freedom from materialistic thinking, and so we have to go on to acknowledge yet more of the divine facts. The initiative may appear to lie with "Pharaoh," but fundamentally it is always the spiritual which holds the initiative and impels us on to learn more of God.

The commentaries refer to the Ten Plagues, but some of them indicate that there were seven, rather than ten, because three of them were different versions of the same plague in another document. It is thought that the lice and the flies constitute one plague, rather than two; that the cattle-plague and the boils also constitute one plague; and that the locusts and the thick darkness constitute one plague, since the locusts darkened the earth as they traversed it. Thus the seven plagues point to the basic facts first symbolized in the story of the seven days of creation,—the foundation for all spiritual education. In the previous chapter of this book we saw that Mary Baker Eddy epitomized the nature of God revealed in those seven "days" by the terms Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, and Love.

### **The First Plague: Water Turned to Blood**

The first of the plagues indicated the same fact as the first day of creation, when the divine mandate was "Let there be light." The first plague (Exodus 7:14-25) was that all the water in Egypt, whether in the rivers or streams or ponds or vessels, was turned to blood. The Egyptians were unable to drink any water; also, the fish in the rivers died, and fish was a staple food.

This plague symbolizes the great basic fact that unless thought entertains ideas of God,—ideas which partake of the nature of the divine Mind that is infinite and perfect,—it can entertain nothing but harmful illusions. We imagine that we are thinking harmlessly when we entertain the common illusions of mortality; we are really laying up trouble for ourselves, because unless our thinking has its source in what God is, it is sooner or later productive of sorrow. Materialistic reckonings and conceptions are deadly, because matter involves death. The first plague showed that without the Mind of Christ, there is only mortal (symbolized by blood) mentality, which cannot sustain man.

Human intellect is arrogant, and likes to imagine that it can "think up" on its own a good idea, but no good idea is a personal creation because it must always

have existed in the Mind which is God. That Mind expresses itself universally, and so ideas are always flowing to us in the form which is most helpful. They flash spontaneously into thought (as every creative artist knows), when we have the humility to turn expectantly to the divine Mind.

In II Kings 2:19-22 we read of how the men of Jericho came to Elisha and complained, "The water is naught, and the ground barren." Elisha asked for a new cruse with salt in it and he cast it into the spring of the waters, and then said, "Thus saith the Lord, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more death or barren land." By casting salt (a symbol of perpetuity) into the spring of the waters, Elisha symbolized that the source of ideas is unailing. The flow of ideas does not depend on a personal flair or on educational background. The infinite intelligence supplies unceasingly that which really quenches man's thirst for something which will not leave him thirsty under any circumstances.

The water of thought is forever flowing, and it flows either towards illusions or towards ideas. Jesus made it flow towards ideas when he turned the water into wine at the marriage in Cana, as recorded in John 2:1-11. He transformed thought so that from being dull it became inspired. The marriage represented a good human condition, and so when he turned the water into wine Jesus was indicating that such a thing as marriage can always be "wine" if it is seen to symbolize a wonderful and enduring and vital idea of relationship, which exists in God. Then the human condition helps, instead of hindering, the journey up to the realization that the only real marriage is between God and His man, the divine Principle and its expression.

The newspapers try daily to quench the thirst of readers with "water" turned to "blood" whenever they "sensationalize" shortages, strikes, crime, divorce, the weather, rumours of war, fear and hate of other nations, and so forth. On the other hand, they quench thirst with "water" turned into "wine" whenever they direct it on to such ideas as intelligence, courage, individuality. For instance, they gave water turned into wine when they reported this from King George VI's 1950 Christmas message: "if our world is to survive in any sense that makes survival worthwhile, it must learn to love, not to hate; to create, not to destroy. We stand at the beginning of a new half-century. Man will have to decide between these two creeds—perhaps the most momentous choice that he has had to make in his whole history. It will be made not as a result of any abstract political theory, but

through the way of life, the way of thought, that each one of us practices at home."

Reading constantly about divorce, to take another example, thought unconsciously becomes more and more educated into thinking that an enduringly happy relationship depends on two personalities chancing to stay in a certain mood, and that whilst this may happen for a short period it will probably change and may deteriorate beyond repair. On the other hand, anything which points to the fact that happy relationships and happy homes are dependent on every individual's obedience to the great Principle of home and happiness, is water turned into "wine."

Instead of turning to the one God which Moses was showing to be the I AM, the Egyptians "dugged round about the river for water to drink."

Mortals go blindly scratching around trying to build something out of illusions, when they can always appeal to the one great creative factor, the God who is Mind.

Pharaoh's heart was hardened when the magicians of Egypt also managed to turn the water into blood. The "magicians" of to-day, too, can show the power of illusion. For instance, hypnotists constantly demonstrate it, and dictators can turn thought into channels destructive of individual freedom and life. Again, if someone habitually thinks of certain people or places as characterized by unpleasantness of some kind, "water" turns to "blood" in that his thought acts as a destructive agent to destroy (so far as he is concerned) all the good elements. Any psychologist would recognize that, but what the psychologists do not generally do is to show the positive power of idea to turn "water" into "wine." It needs a Jesus sense to do that. The psychologists are so intent on investigating mortal mentality that they do not turn their attention to the study of spiritual ideas, which alone can help humanity.

"And seven days were fulfilled, after that the Lord had smitten the river"—the fact that God is Mind was made perfectly clear.

## **The Second Plague: Frogs in the Bedchambers**

Exodus 8:1-15 records that when Pharaoh refused to let the children of Israel go, a second plague came upon the land. This was an amplification of the second day of creation, when the firmament was made to divide the waters above from the waters beneath—the firmament of understanding by which to discern between the Godlike and the un-Godlike. The second plague consisted of frogs, which came out of the river and penetrated the houses, bedchambers, beds, ovens, and kneading troughs. Pharaoh was so distressed by this that he told Moses that he would let the Israelites go if Moses would remove the frogs to the river only.

This plague showed that if there is some semblance of order in human experience, it is only because God Himself is the Principle of order. Order has been defined as "a condition in which everything is so arranged as to play its proper part" (Webster). Clearly, frogs have a proper part to play in a river, but not in a bedchamber. Dr. Johnson said, "A cow is a very good animal in the field; but we turn her out of a garden."

There is no sense of order in our everyday lives if we allow our real progress—towards Godlikeness—to be interrupted at every turn by things unhelpful, by unimportant things crowding out more essential things, and so forth. Every element of good in our lives should have its fitting place. The Preacher said, "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven."

If we love the great spiritual fact of order, then we shan't allow ourselves to be "run around" by circumstances, nor shall we confuse order with the rigidity of a human programme, but we shall make circumstances servants to our highest conception of order; this always involves discerning what will bring us nearer to that which is of God. If in our lives there is a sense of divine order reflected, then there can be smooth procedure, whatever happens or fails to happen. Without order, there is always scrambling and jerking, hurrying and fussing.

The housewife doesn't put one sheet on a bed, hurry off to peel a potato, and then dash back to the sheet, but deals with the bed before proceeding to the potatoes. If she is disorderly, she fails to appreciate the best sequence of work, and so wastes time and effort. In other words, she has "frogs" in her "bedchamber." There is no real sense of home without an atmosphere of

order,—if we cannot find what we want without turning everything upside down, if we do not know whether or when the next meal will be provided, and if everybody's interests clash. Just so, there is no order in our thinking if we do not think out spiritual facts in an orderly way so that they are readily available as we need them, and so that they give us a standard by which to discern that which is best under particular circumstances.

Jesus drastically restored a sense of order and fitness to the temple when he purged it of moneylenders, sellers of doves, and suchlike. He saw the "frogs" of impurity (corrupt motives) entering "the house of God" and making it a den of thieves. If in our own consciousness we "sell doves," that means that we value spiritual truths solely in terms of what they will do for us by way of material improvement. In that way we lose a sense of the purity of the things of Spirit, uncontaminated by materialism, and so our progress is impeded. A false sense of values always confuses and retards, and this the second plague showed.

### **The Third Plague: Mosquitoes and Gnats**

The third plague (Exodus 8:16-32) consisted of swarms of mosquitoes and gnats,—as the modern translations render the "lice" and "flies" of the Authorized Version. On this occasion, as distinct from the first two plagues, the magicians of Egypt could not perform the same miracle, and they were perceptive enough to say, "This is the finger of God."

This plague symbolizes that without the impress of God as Soul in human experience there would be nothing but the belief of sensation in matter. Mosquitoes and gnats were regarded as parasites which annoy the senses and are conveyors of dirt and disease. When the dust of the earth was smitten, mosquitoes and gnats came forth, symbolizing that whenever we fear the body or accept its every report on its sensations, we are giving the power of sensation to that which is really just "dust." We make dust sentient.

As mortals we believe that we see, hear, feel, taste, and smell matter through five physical senses and that they afford us a certain amount of pleasure and a certain amount of pain. The term Soul, symbolized in the third day of creation by the appearing of the dry land, indicates the changeless identity of all spiritual ideas and also the appreciation of those ideas in full detail. Obviously one cannot



appreciate a spiritual idea through a physical sense of things, but only through a spiritual sense.

If we see ugliness and pain and sorrow around us, we are seeing materially instead of spiritually. Spiritual sense reverses the testimony of material sense and identifies the definite spiritual truth of a situation as permanent and as unchangeable into anything else.

If God were not Soul, there would never be moments when we feel free from self-centredness, from the confines of the body and its sensations, and yet we often have this feeling of being "taken out of ourselves"— for instance, when our attention is absorbed by a play or a film, by an interesting conversation or train of thought, or by a piece of music.

What we need, then, is not more acute physical senses, so much as a more accurate understanding of spiritual sense. Jesus showed that, every time he healed a blind or deaf or dumb man. He frequently spat in these cases, to show his contempt for the belief of senses in matter. Jesus knew that man has spiritual senses, which enable him to appreciate accurately the beauty of the spiritual universe, and that they are forever intact, and it was this which enabled him to reproduce the normal human sense of seeing, hearing, or speaking. For instance, with the man who was deaf and had an impediment in his speech (see Mark 7:32-35), one can see that Jesus opened and loosened that individual's thought, so that he began to use his God-given ability to listen for ideas and express clearly what came to him. This transformation of consciousness brought about a healing of what had appeared as a merely physical disability.

When the woman with the issue of blood came to Jesus (as recorded in Mark 5:25-34), she had to be healed of slavery to her body. She was seeking for healing and when she touched Jesus' garment "the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague." It was not the touch of a material thing which healed her, but the touch of the Christ-idea of man which Jesus habitually held. Those senses which she had been wrongly conceiving of as physical, and which informed her continually of pain in her body, now bore witness to the positive sense of health. Jesus felt the thought which had been reaching out and he knew that healing had taken place, but he wanted to make the woman see where her healing had really come from and the real

form it took, so he persisted in identifying her. Eventually she came up in fear and trembling, and "told him all the truth." Then Jesus said, "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague." He did not want the woman to think that the healing had come about through his personal sense of man in God's image, but through her own individual apprehension of the wholeness of man. The issue of blood symbolizes the belief of lack of creative manhood, of the draining away of vitality and inspiration. Jesus showed her that she had discerned her own manhood, and thus regained her full identity. An interesting point about the third plague is that it affected only the Egyptians, and this was true of all the subsequent plagues. If thought is safe in a sense that man's real selfhood is of the same nature as his Principle, then there is no longer victimization while errors boil over.

In order to see an end of the plague of gnats, Pharaoh agreed to let the children of Israel go three days' journey into the wilderness to sacrifice to their God, but as soon as the plague was removed he hardened his heart again. "Pharaoh" does not like us to leave the conventional tramlines of materialism and go too far afield in a definite cultivation of spiritual sense, because this denies the beliefs of mortality specifically.

### **The Fourth Plague: Cattle-Plagues and Boils**

On the next occasion that the demand "Let my people go" was refused, the fourth plague took place (Exodus 9:1-12). There were two aspects of this plague: one was cattle-disease among the Egyptian cattle, and the other was boils on Egyptian men and beasts. They both indicate the plight of man without a sense of God as Principle. Principle is that aspect of God which is elucidated in the fourth day of creation through the symbol of the sun, moon, and stars. God as Principle governs all spiritual ideas in one system and harmony; they do not have to keep themselves operating systematically and in harmony. Jesus indicated this great fact both when he said "I can of mine own self do nothing," and also when he said "I and my Father are one." Man has no underived power, but when he does his best to let the one Principle impel him, he can do "good works," because he expresses supra-personal good.

"Cattle" represent desirable moral qualities, but if such qualities are not seen as the outcome of the one universal Principle of goodness, they are liable to victimization by the so-called forces of malicious evil. Tabitha, for instance, was a

woman "full of good works and almsdeeds," but we read at the end of Acts 9 that she fell sick and died, whereupon Peter was sent for. When he arrived, he was brought into the upper chamber where the body lay, "and all the widows stood by him weeping, and shewing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them." But Peter "put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning him to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up. And he gave her his hand, and lifted her up, and when he had called the saints and widows, presented her alive." Peter's task was to show that Tabitha was not a personal generator of good, but expressed the universal and unfailing Principle of good. Jesus said, "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God." Since that divine Principle could not suffer eclipse or misfortune, its representative must also be free from the onslaughts of what are called cruel blows of fate. Because of man's failure to acknowledge this fact, people who do a great deal of human good often suffer inexplicably. There is no need for that suffering if the sense of good is impersonated.

A certain woman once cried out to Jesus, "Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked," to which Jesus replied, "Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it." The woman was tying Jesus down to a personal goodness which had its origin merely in heredity and environment—many people try to do this to-day. Jesus turned her attention to the universal availability of "good works" to anyone who is obedient to their Principle.

The boils on man and beast materialized when Moses took handfuls of ashes and tossed them up in the air so that they became small dust which produced sores breaking into pustules on man and beast. This was a very clear demonstration of the workings of evil. Evil is fundamentally nothingness (ashes), because it postulates the existence of something contrary to infinite good, but it appears to personalize itself, to attach itself to people, who thereupon are used as instruments of malicious purposes. Whereas the cattle-plague showed that the belief of personal goodness brings unnecessary penalty, the boils showed that the belief of personal evil also brings unnecessary penalty. All evil is the expression of the one liar, and if we silence that liar by realizing its fundamental impotence, then it cannot use us as a mouthpiece. In arithmetic the only thing which makes us let  $5 \times 7 = 37$  enter our calculations is our lack of understanding of the principle of arithmetic. In the same way, if we are not living in accordance

with the divine Principle of man, whether consciously or unconsciously, we let ourselves be used by miscalculation. Once we get back to working according to our Principle, however, the mistake goes and has no repercussions.

Jesus once said, "It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come!"—woe comes to anyone who allows himself to be used as a "carrier" of evil. We can be infected with evil only if we regard ourselves materialistically and not as ideas established in the divine Principle of goodness. Jesus said, "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth"—Principle loves to interpret itself to all who approach it with complete meekness and obedience, and the result is that they bring harmony into human affairs.

### **The Fifth Plague: Hail**

The fifth plague (Exodus 9:13-35) was one of thunder and hail, and fire mingled with the hail. It was a direct opposite of the fifth day of creation, in which the fact of Life was symbolized by the soaring birds and the prolific fish. This plague "smote throughout all the land of Egypt all that was in the field, both man and beast; and the hail smote every herb of the field, and brake every tree of the field." What a good symbol this hail is of the so-called inevitability of decay and death. Nothing can stand before it, so it is claimed. Mortals live "in the valley of the shadow of death" from the moment of birth. Nothing, however, can kill an idea that is eternally present in the one Being. Mortals who do not see this pay the penalty with such cheerless beliefs as old age and incurable disease.

Hail is icy cold. The sense of old age as deprivation and deterioration and loneliness is a cold and cruel thing, but it cannot come where there is a real love of life, of living spiritual values which are warm and abundant, because such a love looks forward to greater and greater good, instead of longing for the past and fearing an end of everything. One of the Proverbs is, "The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold." The real ploughman keeps his eyes well ahead and works steadily forward, in spite of the weather.

Whenever life loses for us its warmth and interest and adventure, we yield to the influence of death (even if it merely takes the form of depression). We may at some time seem to go through what is called death, but it will not bring suffering

to us or to those whom we love if we have a view of Life which is fresh and progressive and always with us. Death has no meaning, no reality, and no power for thought which is striding forward in the realm of living ideas, which looks to the everlasting "hills" and to the dawn of wonderful new ideas. Such thought is always "creating" good, and so finds more and more to love and enjoy, more and more opportunities for friendship and attainment.

In II Kings 2:23, 24 there is a story of Elisha which is incredible if taken literally, but which in its spiritual meaning is most significant. Some little children mocked Elisha, saying, "Go up, thou bald head." They were taunting him with old age, so he cursed them in the name of the Lord and there came forth two she-bears, who ate them up. Elisha saw that if we keep the idea of Life as warm as a mother-bear keeps her young, then the mocking "laws" of either old age or youth will not touch us, but will be themselves consumed.

"Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? . . . He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."

### **The Sixth Plague: Locusts and Darkness**

Chapter 10 records that when Pharaoh heard that his refusal to let the children of Israel go would lead to a plague of locusts, he tried to make another compromise, but Moses was an "all-or-nothing" leader, and so the sixth plague took its course. This counterfeited the fact of God as Truth, epitomized in the sixth day of creation by man in God's image and likeness, having dominion over all things.

Moses stretched forth his rod again, and the Lord brought an east wind, which brought the locusts. They "covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened," and they ate up every green thing. After the locusts came a plague of thick darkness, darkness which could be "felt," so that the Egyptians couldn't rise up from where they were nor see one another for three days. Meanwhile all the Israelites "had light in their dwellings."

These two plagues, or two aspects of one plague, indicate again the plight of man without God. They show that without God as Truth,— awareness of the spiritual truth of everything,—man would be deprived of full consciousness. Consciousness is a whole and includes our continual awareness of our whole universe. It is a compound thing; it includes what we understand of God, and our whole attitude to our experience, and our whole attitude to the body. If the highest level of our consciousness is without a proper realization of God, then our habitual attitude to life is adversely influenced, and our sense of our body also. For instance, if one day we think of ourselves primarily as persons with a great number of things to do, then our outlook on life is tainted by irritability and rush, and the body soon reflects this in tension or tiredness of some kind. If our overlying consideration is the fact that "God hath done all things well," then this will enter our lives as a sense of intelligence, order, definiteness, and so forth, so certain that it will regulate quite naturally our attitude to everything, and the physical will be to us merely a useful servant. When we find our moral sense becoming wrongly influenced, or jaundiced, then that is our signal for bringing our highest level of consciousness into line again with the divine ideal.

The locusts symbolize that which consumes the "green things," or vigorous elements, which form part of a healthy consciousness, and the thick darkness also indicates that which prevents our consciousness from including everything rightly. Every part of consciousness is essential to the whole, and no part is unimportant, just as every member of an orchestra must function rightly in order to produce the right whole effect.

What are these "locusts" which consume the ingredients which are essential to a healthy experience? They are such things as apathy, cowardice, selfishness, which confine the action of the divine ideal to the intellectual stratosphere, instead of seeing that it has a healing effect at all levels of consciousness and that we must demand proof of this. The "locusts" tell us that our human behaviour is of no account so long as we know the truth about the Principle of the universe, or they say that healing the sick or redeeming the sinner is of no importance because it is the spiritual fact alone which counts. It is, but we deny the wholeness of Truth if we deny that it has its effect at every level. Jesus said, "Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house,"—a sense of Truth permeates all that is included in consciousness.

The parable of the wise and foolish virgins at the beginning of Matthew 25 shows that unless we are faithful over the "few things," which serve to replenish the oil in our lamps, those lamps of spiritual understanding will go out, and we shall be left in darkness. If steadfastly and faithfully we keep the lamp burning, we enjoy the marriage with the true idea of man,—"the fullness of the stature" of God's man. And so the sixth plague indicates how to forestall the clouds of "locusts" or of darkness from obscuring our vision of that man of God's creating, who is "every whit whole."

### **The Seventh Plague: The Slaying of the Firstborn**

Pharaoh now offered to let the people go, so long as they left their cattle. But Moses refused this further compromise, and the last plague (Exodus 11; 12:1-30) thereupon assailed the Egyptians. This was the slaying of all the firstborn of Egypt—"there was not a house where there was not one dead." The seventh plague points by reversal to the seventh day, in which God rested—a symbol of God as Love, of the completeness and fulfilment of every idea in God's universe.

The angel of the Lord was to "pass over" the houses where the Israelites were, and therefore elaborate instructions were given them for seeing that their houses were adequately marked out. Each Israelite household was told to prepare a lamb without blemish, sprinkle its blood on the doorposts and lintel, and eat it with sandals on and staff in hand.

This ceremony symbolizes a willing sacrifice of a materialistic sense of things. If we make such a "sacrifice" in our thinking, then we never need fear separation from that which we love. We can give up our deep-rooted materialistic habit of reckoning only when we really appreciate the full perfection of God's ideas—the seventh day sense of things.

Only the Egyptians lost their firstborn—in other words, only that which clings to the physical can lose anything worthy of love. If we have an understanding of God as Love, we can never be without the presence of that which we can love. Such an understanding shows us that the only reason why something or someone appears lovely and lovable to us is that we are basking in the reflected glory of Love itself. This glory of Love casts a glow on something in our experience so that we rejoice in it, are grateful for it, and quite naturally express our love for it. So it is not things or persons intrinsically that we love, but that

which we love and that which loves is Love itself, and Love without a present reflection would be as unthinkable as the sun without its rays.

Human love is much intermixed with fear, which is at bottom a fear that death will overtake the person loved; the only remedy for this deep-lying fear is a greater and greater appreciation of the motherhood of God, which cares for every idea throughout eternity and at every moment.

The story of the Shunammite woman whose only son died is a wonderful illustration of this. It is told in II Kings 4:8-37. Because of this woman's provision for the man of God, Elisha, she had been able to conceive and bear a son. But one day the child said to his father in the field, "my head, my head." The father had him carried to his mother, but he" died soon after. She laid him on the bed of the man of God in an upper room, and then shut the door on him and went out. She was sacrificing her "lamb" in that she was refusing to acknowledge as truth the so-called "hard facts" of the case. She insisted on going to the man of God in spite of her husband's objection that it was "neither new moon, nor sabbath." She said to her servant, "Drive, and go forward; slack not thy riding for me, except I bid thee."

Elisha sent his servant to meet her and to ask, "Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with the child?" Her answer was, "It is well." She rested in the perfection of her family as a fulfilled fact in the sight of God, and she held faithfully to that, in spite of all the material evidence pointing to a most bitter loss and a tragic mockery of the promise which Elisha had made.

Elisha told his servant to go and lay his (Elisha's) staff on the face of the child, but the mother refused to be satisfied until Elisha agreed to come himself to the child, with the result that he was restored to her alive. She had held faithful to a spiritual ideal, and she knew that the divinity of Love embraces humanity and so allows no vacuum, no sense of bereavement, and nourishes no fear.

### **The Plagues: A Summary**

The plagues illustrate a great sevenfold process which is always going on. We may summarize them by saying that they show that

1. without the fact of God as Mind, as the infinite source of intelligent ideas, thought could entertain only mortal illusions;



2. without the fact of God as Spirit, as infinite divine order and purity, there would be nothing but disorder and confusion;
3. without the fact of God as Soul, as the changeless identity of all ideas and as infinite spiritual sense to appreciate that in full detail, there would be nothing but ever-changing corporeal sensation;
4. without the fact of God as Principle, as the basis of spiritual Science and universal harmony, there would be nothing but vulnerable personal good and a basis from which evil could operate to infect men;
5. without the fact of God as Life, as ever-present Being, decay and death would be the inevitable end for all;
6. without the fact of God as Truth, as the infinite divine consciousness aware of its own wholeness, there would be nothing but inroads on health at every level;
7. without the fact of God as Love, as the infinite perfection and completeness of all ideas, there would be nothing but fear and insecurity, and no assurance that we might not be robbed at any moment of that which we hold dear.

When we look at the record of the plagues in this light, it brings out wonderful spiritual facts in a way that is both systematic and living. Of course, that is the great achievement of the Scriptures.

### **The Departure from Egypt**

After the slaying of the firstborn of Egypt, it was Pharaoh himself who told the children of Israel to go and serve the Lord, and he no longer imposed any conditions on their departure. Before they left, the Israelites were told by their God to ask the Egyptians for gold and silver jewels and raiment. In other words, when we prove our freedom from some bondage, we go forward much richer than before,—richer in the joy of spiritual understanding and in intimate experience of its redeeming power.

The people had to leave with such speed that they were forced to take their dough with them before it was leavened. Afterwards this incident was perpetuated in an annual Feast of Unleavened Bread, lasting seven days. Paul wrote, "let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." The learning of spiritual facts through the seven days of creation may seem to us at first heavy-going, but if our desire to understand them is sincere, they soon

become to us the "food" which we love above all and which we find the most sustaining.

On their journey out of Egypt God went before the children of Israel in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night. To-day this means to us that a scientific understanding of God acts as a guide and assurance both in the "day" of unimpeded advance and in the "night" of difficulty and doubt. It never leaves us unattended, whether things appear to be going well or badly.

### **The Crossing of the Red Sea**

Chapter 14 tells the very well-known story of the crossing of the Red Sea. Pharaoh soon began to repent of having let the Israelites go, and so he hurried after them with horses and chariots and a large army, and overtook them just as they were encamped by the Red Sea. The children of Israel were "sore afraid," and complained bitterly to Moses: "Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness." Moses' reply was magnificent: "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew to you to-day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day, ye shall see them again no more forever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace."

When some form of slavery from which we thought we were finally free makes its last stand, our only course is to stand firm by the divine facts which we have accepted, but which fear has temporarily blurred for us. Those facts do the fighting, and not we ourselves. God then said to Moses, "Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward: but lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea." What does this mighty command signify to us when we are trying to cross the "Red Sea" from a situation from which there is no escape except in going forward through spiritual understanding? It points to the process epitomized in the first three days of creation. It demands that we appeal to the power of divine ideas—"lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea;" that we use our understanding of the second day of creation to discern the supremacy of those ideas over all material conditions—"and divide it;" and that we allow those ideas to become absolutely definite to us—"and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground

through the midst of the sea." When that happens, the waters become "a wall" to us on both sides—they serve only to intensify our sense of safety.

The Egyptians pursued the Israelites into the midst of the sea, but the waters came rolling back on them at the divine command, and they were all drowned—"there remained not so much as one of them."

So if we really use our understanding of God in some situation, however formidable it appears, we shall see the destruction of the whole "Egyptian army," for the same power which gives us a safe passage also destroys utterly all that would impede our freedom. Then like Moses and the children of Israel we shall "sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously."

### **Spiritual Education**

Moses' achievement of the spiritual education of the children of Israel is of vital interest to us, because the only thing which can effectually help humanity is education in spiritual facts. Many responsible people to-day proclaim that the answer to the world's problems lies in the realm of the spiritual, but very few understand what they mean, because "the spiritual" is a vague concept to them. Yet the Bible has shown for centuries beyond a doubt that spiritual things are not vague, but orderly and systematic, and that they can be learned and proved.

What Moses had to get rid of was the indoctrination of the children of Israel by "Pharaoh," and our task is essentially the same. Jesus' prayer was: "Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was"—before the misconception of being temporarily gained the stage. Our "glory" is that we are the sons of God divinely, but we have to prove, as Jesus did, that "the prince of this world hath nothing" in us. This we can do only through a positive process of education in the eternal truths of God and man,—truths more wonderful and more powerful than anything which mortality can possibly offer.