

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

STATE CHURCHES IN DISRUPTION

The State Churches—religious institutions supported by the general government—owed their beginning to the theories of antichrist, when Satan, the great deceiver who beguiled mother Eve, in the third century beguiled the majority of those who believed in Christ. The deceptive theory by which he accomplished this was that the church had misunderstood the teachings of the Lord and of the apostles respecting the second coming of Christ and the establishment of the kingdom of God at that time. Satan's new theory was that God had laid this responsible work upon the shoulders of the church now—not waiting for the second coming of Jesus; that it was the duty of the church to convert the world, and that then Christ would come and approve the work. The theory further was that this conversion of the world at the hands of the church was to be accomplished by a vice-gerent of Christ—that is to say, that the Lord would select from amongst the clergy one who would represent Jesus and reign in his stead; and others (cardinals, bishops, etc.) would represent the apostles and faithful of the "little flock," who were promised a share in the kingdom. The theory gradually developed, and in the fourth century the Bishop of Rome was recognized as the head of the church and Christ's vicegerent or reigning representative in the world, and to himself about that time he gathered the "Sacred College," or "little flock," composed of cardinals.

From that time on, quietly, the people were instructed to regard the Pope as the king of the world, God's representative, Christ's vicegerent, and the head over all kings and princes. As this idea prevailed amongst the people they were taught to look to the popes for their approval of kings and princes and laws, until finally a wonderful power was built up, and any king or prince out of accord with the Papacy could very easily be dispossessed of all authority. Another, having the papal sanction, would make war upon him; and the people, believing that the papal sanction meant the divine sanction, would support the papal decree. It was under these conditions that the public government was required to set aside from the public revenues money for the support of Roman Catholic churches and ministers throughout their domains.

This custom, once universal throughout Europe, received a severe shock, a set-back, in Reformation times. But the kings and princes supporting the Reformation movement, wishing to have some religious or spiritual approval to sanction their authority in the minds of the people, voluntarily accepted the Reformers and their approval as instead of the papal sanction. Thus it was that Reformed churches in Great Britain, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland were organized and became Protestant state churches as thoroughly as they had previously been Roman Catholic state churches. The principle was the same—it was merely a different church which was now supported. Roman Catholic dominion still prevails in Italy, Hungary, Spain, Portugal and, until very recently, in France. These governments, authorized by the Papacy, supporting the Papacy financially, have been known as Christian governments, and they in turn have inscribed upon their coins and in their official documents that they reign over the people by the grace of God (indicated to them through the Papacy). Similarly the Protestant countries above named, carrying the state church idea with them, are known as kingdoms of God, and they also on their coins and in their official documents declare that their kings and princes reign by the grace of God, as indicated through their recognition by the Reformers and by their support of the church.

In some countries, particularly in Germany, all religions are recognized by the State, and a provision made for salaries to pastors and teachers, whether Lutheran, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist, Jews, or what not—so long as a congregation of German people, recognized by the government as a denomination, desire such ministers.

Now, however, we are coming to a time of general disruption along these lines. The people are getting awake to the fact that the kings and princes are reigning under a law of selfishness instead of under a divine code and authorization. They are learning, too, gradually, that a majority of ministers are preaching and teaching as a matter of business, and with a view to getting as much as possible of the butter of honor of men and salary along with their daily bread. Popular government is consequently tending more to the thought that those who believe certain doctrines should pay for them, and that the public should not be taxed for its religion, which

should be free and should be provided by those in accord with the promulgated tenets. This is the program followed in the United States, and the progress of this country in every way has been a wonderful lesson to the people of other countries, who in various ways are seeking to copy our methods, thus corroborating the thought set forth by Bartholdi's Statue of Liberty, that personified in this nation Liberty is enlightening the world.

Word comes from various quarters of Europe to the effect that church and state union is threatened with dissolution. In Great Britain, in Sweden, in Switzerland, in Spain, the matter is being actively discussed, and the indication is that the accomplishment will not be far off, while in France there is a great turmoil through the dissolution of the Roman Catholic Concordat or agreement with the French government by which now the French are free from all State support so far as Roman Catholic and all other religious systems are concerned.

THE SITUATION IN FRANCE

At the time of the French Revolution all the church property of France was confiscated, but in 1801 Napoleon Bonaparte entered into an agreement with Pope Pius VII., long known as the Concordat. It is this Concordat or agreement that has just been dissolved in France, and which returns to the care of the people all of the church property, which is presumed to be theirs because it was built at their expense.

Under the terms of the Concordat the French government became responsible for the maintenance of the clergy and the churches, and the clergy were recognized as civil servants of the French nation. French bishops and others of the Roman Catholic clergy could be appointed only by the approval of the government. Thus the Catholic Church was completely under state control. The Papacy, naturally enough, did not very highly appreciate this arrangement, which placed her interests so much in the hands of the French government, and consequently there was continual friction, the clergy striving in various ways to ignore their responsibility to the government, and the Papacy seeking more and more to maintain the control of the clergy and to oppose any and every interest and matter in the French government that seemed to be inimical to Roman Catholic interests. The light of our day upon every subject strained this relationship more and more, and the intriguing on the part of the Jesuits against the Republic and in favor of a monarchy—esteemed to be more desirable for the Papacy's interests—had the effect of leading the government in 1881 to endeavor to expel the Jesuits and to control other Roman Catholic orders, with a view to the protection of the interests of the Republic, the foes of which they were realized to be. The movement was only partly successful because of the blindness of the people to the real situation. Not until the beginning of the present century did the government have a sufficient support from the people to take its stand—to resent papal influence in its affairs.

On December 11, 1905, the French Congress passed a bill which provided for the separation of church and state, but giving one year during which the churches could make their arrangements for conforming to the law. Meantime inventories of all the church paraphernalia were made, and everything was prepared for the proper taking over of the property for the state on December 11, 1906. The essence of this law set forth that the state should no longer provide for the salaries of the clergy nor for the expenses of religious services, and that thenceforth the use of the church edifices and equipments would be for the people—that no foreign religious power such as the Papacy would be recognized. On these terms all who desired to use the church buildings were invited to organize congregations, whose representatives or trustees would be dealt with by the government, and receive the right or permission to use the buildings for religious purposes. These trustees would be answerable to the government for the proper use of the buildings. Thus the churches of France would have been put practically on the same basis or footing as the churches in the United States, except that here the title-deeds may be in the name of the Pope, while a congregation not in harmony with the Pope or head or the holder of the title could be legally expelled; whereas under the new laws of France each congregation is independent and cannot be expelled from the church edifice or by order of presbyteries or synods or bishops or the Pope, since the title deed is in the government, by which the possession is guaranteed to the congregation. This feature of the law really places religion in France upon the most independent plane imaginable, permitting the con-

gregation to formulate its own creed, and if desirable to change the same from time to time.

The law provided that if its terms were not met by December 11, 1906, the churches should be closed and the property confiscated to the state. After this law was framed, about a year ago, the Pope condemned it, but gave no positive instructions as to procedure; and matters standing thus, the French government, just before the law went into effect, to avoid a conflict with the Papacy, announced that regular services might be continued another year if the congregations would comply with the law of 1881, which required application to the police department for the privilege of holding services, and a declaration of loyalty to the government. But just before the law was to go into effect the Pope precipitated matters by issuing an encyclical instructing all the priests and church-wardens to abstain from any declaration or application to the authorities.

This was esteemed by the French government an attempt on the Pope's part to intermeddle with its affairs and an endeavor to black the laws of France—an incitement of the French people to rebellion against the laws of their country. Consequently the government took prompt steps, and in resentment of the interference deported the papal representative at Paris, and gave orders that bishops or priests or others who attempted either by word or act to interfere with the execution of the law should be placed under arrest. Thus the dissolution of church and state arrangements in France was effected without special disorder, though the Pope and his representatives in a quiet way, so as not to become amenable to the law, are seeking still to arouse the people to resentment against the government by refusing to perform various acts and functions which Catholics are led to believe are all important and to be performed only by the clergy, viz., baptism, rites for the dead, etc., etc. Evidently the time when the Pope could overthrow governments by giving a hint to the people through the clergy is about past.

It is high time that these unscriptural unions of church and state come to an end. They were built upon fraud to begin with, and have prospered through frauds continually. As God never authorized the Pope to be the vicegerent of Jesus, never authorized his reign upon earth over kingdoms and peoples,

never authorized him to set prince against prince and to cause awful bloodshed for the maintenance of papal influence, and never authorized the governments recognized by Papacy to call themselves Christendom (Christ's kingdom), and as the Protestant unions of church and state had no more authority than the papal, it is well that all of these human institutions go down, that the shackles of superstition should be broken, and the people should be the better prepared to learn that all the kingdoms of this world are man-made and selfish in origin and practice, and that the kingdom of God's dear Son, the Millennial kingdom, which will shortly be inaugurated, will be the only rightful spiritual empire to have control of all the affairs of the world of mankind. Its control of human destinies will be to the advantage of every creature—to lift them up, to set them free from superstition and by restitution processes to bring back into harmony with God and into the divine likeness all who will obey the great King of that day. O Lord, thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE TRUTH IN FRANCE

At this distance it would appear that the present crisis in religious affairs in France would be a most favorable opportunity for the presentation of the truth amongst the people of that land. While Protestants there are very few, undoubtedly there are many Catholics who are generally enlightened and now being set free from their superstitious reverence for Romanism. These as well as the Protestants should be ready for the glorious message of the Millennial kingdom and the better government, spiritual and temporal, which the Lord is providing and which shortly will be established. We would like to encourage the dear friends of the truth under such conditions to be vigilant for the use of every opportunity—to go forward in the name and strength of the Lord with holy courage, to lift high the light and the royal banner. Similarly conditions are growing more favorable in Italy and Austria and Hungary. He that reapeth receiveth wages, and each one desiring to reap should first see what lies nearest to his hand and in which department of the service he could most effectively and most economically enlist his talents. "He that reapeth receiveth wages and gathereth fruit unto life eternal."—John 4:36.

FILTHINESS OF FLESH AND SPIRIT

"Having therefore this promise, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord."—2 Cor. 7:1.

We are not to understand the Apostle here to mean that we are to cleanse ourselves from the condemnation of original sin. Time and again the Apostle Paul and all the writers of the New Testament reiterate in various forms the declaration that by the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified in God's sight. This signifies that nothing that we can do can enable us to live perfectly, even if original sin were cancelled for us; hence it would be a still greater impossibility for us not only to live perfectly now but to accumulate a merit which would cancel for us our share in the original transgression. On the contrary, the Scriptures with united voice declare that only by the shedding of blood could there come a remission of original sin—that only "by his stripes are we healed;" that the "Lord laid on him [Jesus] the iniquity of us all," "He died the just for the unjust that he might bring us to God," and that by virtue of his sacrifice for our sins we are made acceptable with God, and the condemnation against us as members of Adam's race is set aside that we may have a new start. (Heb. 9:22; Isa. 53:5, 6; 1 Pet. 3:18.) Not only so, but knowing that in our fallen flesh dwelleth no perfection, the Lord has graciously arranged to cover all our blemishes that are of heredity and not of intention, not of our willing. Thus we have what is Scripturally known as justification by or through faith in the great atonement which God has effected through the death of his Son.

It is this class, already justified "through faith in his blood" (Rom. 3:25), that the Apostle addresses in the words of our text—urging them to cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and the spirit. What does he mean? If we were cleansed by faith in Christ why address us thus along the line of works of our own for our own cleansing? We reply that our justification by faith was granted to us as the basis for our consecration to God as disciples of Jesus, as "followers of the Lamb." None were thus accepted unless in their hearts they turned from sin, desiring to be in harmony with God and his righteousness. Their consecration to God on the basis of their justification signified that they had not only turned from sin but that they had united their hearts and lives with Jesus—that they had enlisted under him as the

Captain of their salvation, to fight the good fight against sin in its every form, within and without, under his guidance and direction. Should these now after enlisting rest content and do no fighting against sin, either in their own mortal bodies or in their surroundings, it would be an indication that they had not the spirit of Christ, which calls to mind the declaration of the Apostle, "If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his."—Rom. 8:9.

"FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT"

We see then that it is God's will concerning us that we should do more than renounce sin in our minds—we are to give our hearts to the Lord, desiring fellowship with him: we are to be imbued with his spirit of opposition to sin, so that as new creatures we will fight the good fight of faith against the adversary and the world's spirit of selfishness, and against the weaknesses and blemishes and sinwardness of our own mortal bodies. These were the conditions of our enlistment, the conditions under which we were accepted of the Lord, and we must fight this fight of faith, as the Apostle says, if we would lay hold upon eternal life—if we would ever get the great reward of glory, honor and immortality with our Captain. Our text does not relate to our resistance of the adversary and the world, but confines itself to our dealings with ourselves, which certainly is our chief concern, our chief battle—he who rules his own spirit, his own mind, is a greater soldier, a greater hero, than he that captures a city in literal warfare. This is the Lord's estimation of the matter, and hence should be ours.—Prov. 16:32.

The Lord requires such a demonstration on our part—of activity against the motions of sin in our flesh, in our minds, as a demonstration that the new creature is alive to the responsibilities of its conduct as a soldier of the cross, and additionally because he has decreed that none shall be of the little flock of joint-heirs with his Son who do not in these respects of loyalty to the Father and to righteousness and opposition to sin demonstrate their heart-likeness to Jesus. The Apostle affirms this, saying that we are "predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son." (Rom. 8:29.) Whoever refuses or neglects the development of such a character-

likeness or copy of Christ's mind, disposition, is refusing or neglecting the only terms and conditions on which he may hope to make his calling and election sure to a place in the kingdom class. In view of this how zealously we should strive to fulfill the urgent admonition of the Apostle—to demonstrate and to increase to fervency our love for righteousness, for truth, for all the ways of the Lord, by opposition to sin, especially in our own bodies, cleansing ourselves of all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit (mind).

FILTHINESS OF THE MIND

The cleansing of our minds is far more important than the cleansing of our flesh, because we might succeed measurably in cleansing the flesh while the mind might still be impure. In such a case we would remember the Pharisees whom the Lord rebuked, saying, Ye make clean the outside of the cup or platter, but within are full of all manner of uncleanness, impurity. (Matt. 23:25.) Out of the mind proceedeth evil thoughts, as the Apostle declares, and these evil thoughts, these wrong conceptions, have to do with all the filthiness of the flesh. It is mainly, therefore, to the mind that the Lord appeals throughout his Word during this Gospel age. He invites us first of all to set our hearts right, our wills, and then having done this to allow the new will to rule our minds, and thus the new will through the cleansed mind institutes a rule and order and purification of the flesh.

Were we perfect there would be little difficulty in ruling our minds and our bodies as soon as the will had been fixed for righteousness; but six thousand years of falling from the image and likeness of God have wrought great havoc in us all. Hence, as the Apostle declares, "In my flesh dwelleth no perfection;" and again, "We cannot do the things that we would;" and again, "The spirit [here the new creature, the will] indeed is willing, but the flesh [the old nature, mental and physical] is weak." (Rom. 7:18; Gal. 5:17; Matt. 26:41.) This discrepancy between the new will, the new mind, and the mind of the flesh and the flesh itself, both reckoned as dead but really quite alive, requiring continual vigilance to restrain them and keep them in line with the new creature's intentions, means quite a fight, and success in this fight means a victory, and victory in this fight is what the Lord proposes to reward with the special honors and blessings proffered during this Gospel age. It is quite unnecessary here to detail the various forms which this filthiness of the mind may assume—all of them selfish, all of them more or less degraded, all of them tending downward, and hence in opposition to the resolutions and covenants of the new mind, the new creature. A part of this filthiness of the mind is selfishness, which frequently is so mean as to be ashamed of itself, to seek to hide itself under various pretexts of generosity, etc., and by outward ostentation, gifts, etc. Other features of the filthiness of the mind are jealousy, covetousness, ambition. These various forms of selfishness are all to be recognized, as the Apostle declares, as of evil origin, works of the flesh and of the devil. Lasciviousness or sensuality is a further part of this filthiness—another form of selfishness or love of self-indulgence. With all of these conditions of the mind, the new creature should be in opposition to the extent of despising them, fighting against them, destroying them.

"FILTHINESS OF THE FLESH"

Although, as our Lord's words intimate, an outward cleansing of the flesh and making clean of the outside of the cup would not prove a purity within of the mind, of the heart, the proposition is reversely true that outward filthiness does indicate a filthiness of the mind, because the mind controls, and if it were purified the result would be a cleaning up of the outside. Indeed we may be pretty sure that the love for the approval of others would lead almost everyone to keep his externals, seen by men, fully up to the standard of his mind if not above it. It is easier to cleanse the flesh than to cleanse the spirit, the mind. The Apostle's urgent exhortation is that all who are the Lord's people should cleanse themselves of all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit.

A brother once said to us, "How does it come that the reading of MILLENNIAL DAWN affected my outward life as nothing else ever did? I used to drink in moderation, I used to smoke immoderately, occasionally I played a game of cards with the rector of the Episcopal Church to which I was attached, I chewed tobacco, and occasionally used strong language, of which I am now ashamed. My friends gave me tracts and booklets on smoking and on the use of intoxicating liquors, but they had no weight with me. I replied, in substance, 'Mind your own business, I am able to take care of myself.' But after reading MILLENNIAL DAWN a change took place. I gave up all those things of which before I had not been ashamed. They all appeared in a new light—as unworthy

of me as a son of God and follower of the Lamb. Now the strange thing to me is this: I looked all through the DAWNS to see what I had read there that had influenced me thus, and to my surprise I could find no condemnation of the things I had renounced. Now my question is, How does it come that the book which says nothing on this subject has had such a powerful influence over me, while the other books which said much on the subject had no influence?"

We replied, "Brother, the DAWN is merely a restatement of the Bible itself and puts matters in the Bible way. Hence it did not ask you as a new creature to lop off some of the unsightly branches of your fallen disposition, but it did hand you the axe of truth and suggest to you that you cut down the whole tree, branches and all, pointing out to you that the new creature would live and flourish and finally be perfected only as it would master the old nature and thus become "more than conqueror," and be counted worthy of a share in the kingdom, because of its character-likeness to our Lord.—Luke 3:9.

THE CLEANSING POWER

Does some one say that it requires great strength of character, great power of the will, to cleanse our minds and our flesh? We answer, Yes, and that is exactly what the Lord seeks to develop in us. All of his joint-heirs in the kingdom will be found to be strong characters, and that because of the development of character in the present time in the conflicts with the flesh. Does some one else suggest that with the cravings of the flesh such a victory is impossible? We reply that the Apostle's words do not indicate that the flesh will be made absolutely pure and perfect. His suggestion is that it may be cleansed of its filthiness—so that everything coarse, rude, slovenly, dirty, filthy in thought or in deed, in mind or in person, would be reprehensible to us, offensive. Moreover, we gain this desirable and glorious condition not suddenly but gradually. The cleansing process must begin at once, but it will continue until our latest breath, for although we can and do quickly become pure in heart, pure in intention, pure in our wills, it certainly does require time to accomplish the purification of the mind and the flesh. The power which begins this cleansing, which continues it acceptably in the Lord's sight, is the new will; and this very fight against sin and uncleanness strengthens the will so that each victory makes it more ready and more capable for the next conflict. By use our wills grow stronger. Hence the necessity not only of a thorough consecration at the beginning, but the necessity also for keeping this in memory, that the will may always be firm, prompt, unflinching as respects loyalty to God, righteousness, truth, holiness, love.

"GOD WORKETH IN YOU"

The Apostle elsewhere declares along this line, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure." (Phil. 2:12, 13.) We have just been considering how we should work out our salvation, that the new will must hold its dominating influence over the fleshly mind and body (reckoned dead) in order to gain our ultimate victory. But now we inquire, How does God work in us to will and do his good pleasure? We answer that he strengthens our new minds, our consecrated wills, by revealing to us more and more clearly the significance of the exceeding great and precious promises of his Word. Thus is the power of God exercised toward all those who are his through his Word, through his providences, through the brethren in whom he has already worked, and a part of whose business it is as his representatives to build one another up in the most holy faith, and to assist one another in the cleansing of the flesh and the spirit.

This thought is brought out in the context. We quote, "What part hath a believer with an unbeliever, and what agreement hath a temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God, even as God said, 'I will dwell in them and work in them: and I will be their God and they shall be my people.' Wherefore come ye out from among them [the untrue, the unbelieving, the unclean] and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you and will be to you a father. And ye shall be to me sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."—2 Cor. 6:15-18.

Now notice the Apostle's argument—"Having, therefore, this hope, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves." Ah, yes! there is a promise in these words, "the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth"—the power of God that, in proportion as it is received into good and honest hearts, will work in them not only to will aright but also to do aright, thus leading to the cleansing both of the mind and of the flesh. Whoever can comprehend what it is to be a member

of God's holy temple class, must realize the holiness, sacredness, purity that would properly attach to any and everything connected with it. As the Apostle again says, referring to these gracious hopes and promises, whoever has such a hope in him will purify himself even as he is pure. (1 John 3:3.) The thought of being accepted as the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty must be impressive to every heart in proportion as it is appreciated. Few are so gross as to suppose that God would have any fellowship with that which is unclean and impure. And when we see that the divine arrangement through Jesus' sacrifice covers all of our unintentional blemishes and weaknesses, surely we cannot ask for more—that it should cover from the divine sight intentional weaknesses, intentional blemishes or even slackness on our part in putting away all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit.

PERFECTING OUR HOLINESS

While we are reckoned of the Lord as perfect, as holy from the moment we are accepted as members of his family, covered by the precious robe of Christ's righteousness, he expects of us, as we have seen before, a manifestation of energy in the vanquishing of the motions of sin in the flesh, and in the perfecting of holiness in our lives. God has but one standard, and that standard is perfection of holiness. His direction to us is, "Be ye perfect, even as your father in heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5:48.) At the same time our Lord knew well that in the present life, under present conditions, and acting through our present mortal bodies, it would be an absolute impossibility for any one of his followers to ever attain perfection in the sense or degree that the Father is perfect. Nevertheless it was proper that our Lord should give the perfect standard or pattern just as the school-book sets before the child a copper-plate engraving showing the perfect, the desirable standard of writing, not with the expectation that

the child will ever succeed in exactly copying the engraving, but with the desire that the child shall improve itself by attempts at copying. So the Lord wishes us to be continually attempting to copy his perfection and to recognize no inferior standard. Hence our text's declaration respecting our perfecting holiness can mean no more than that we shall do our best to reach the standard of perfection in holiness to the Lord—come as near to the standard as is possible, a little nearer every day we live.

Our text declares that this perfecting of holiness is to be attained through a reverence for the Lord—an appreciation of his greatness, his perfection. The Christian who according to the flesh is deficient in veneration will have greater difficulty along this line of perfecting holiness than one who has naturally large veneration. A great deal of reverence for God and holy things is surely a great aid in our appreciation of the Lord's wonderful greatness and wisdom, power, justice, love; and the greater our appreciation of him, the higher our esteem of the pattern set before us, the better undoubtedly will be our success in the copying of it. A person who has naturally little of reverence for God and holy things, and who is naturally coarser and more self-centered and self-satisfied, has correspondingly a harder work before him if he would make his calling and election sure. He will the more need to remember his deficiency, and to cultivate reverence for the Lord and to humble himself—"He that humbleth himself shall be exalted; he that exalteth himself shall be abased."—Matt. 23:12.

In view of these things we urge upon all of the Lord's consecrated people a fresh determination to follow the counsel of the Apostle, and to allow the divine promises and prospects to work in our hearts to the cleansing of our minds and our flesh from all filthiness, to the perfecting of our new natures in holiness, in the reverence of the Lord.

A LESSON ON DIVINE PROVIDENCE

Exodus 2:1-15.—MAY 26.

Golden Text—"And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds."—Acts 7:22.

Of the greatness of Moses the renowned Gladstone said:—"We have in the history of Moses a great and powerful genius, an organizing, constructing mind. Moses belongs to the great class of nation-makers; to a class of men who have a place by themselves in the history of politics, and who are among the rarest and highest of the phenomena of our race."

Another says:—

"He was great as a lawmaker and organizer, a general, a historian, a poet, an orator, and a saint who walked with God. It is not too much to say that our modern civilization is built upon his work. And his greatness is enhanced enormously when we remember that his only material was a disorganized horde of emancipated slaves, encamped in a desert. Probably the majority of thinkers would rate Moses as the greatest man of earliest history."

FOREORDAINED OF GOD A LEADER

The proper view of Moses' career must surely take into account that he was a special servant of God and under special divine providence. While this view may not commend itself to the world, it surely does increase the interest of all who are in heart accord with the teachings of the divine Word. We shall see that all of the Lord's providences regulated the affairs of this wonderful man from his earliest infancy; and some of us may see still further that there was an interposition of divine providence in respect to the development of the babe even before its birth. Saint Paul, who was another of those remarkable characters whose interests were superintended by divine power, said of himself that the Lord "called me from my mother's womb." The inference we draw from this statement is that the Apostle recognized that certain traits of character and disposition were his from the moment of his birth—traits and dispositions which specially prepared him for his subsequent work as a minister of the Gospel. Applying this principle to Moses, we may well attribute much of the fineness and breadth of character and the extreme humility of this "meekest man in all the earth" to prenatal influences.

He was born so: God had him in mind as a suitable one for his purposes, and equipped him with those qualities so necessary to one whom he would so largely use in so great a work as the deliverance of his people from the bondage of Egypt. Nothing in this implies a divine interference with free moral agency. As it was possible for the Apostle Paul to have declined to preach the Gospel, and even to have repudiated the Lord and be a "castaway," so also it was possible for Moses to have repudiated his mission and to have chosen the

pleasures of sin for a season. Had either of these men taken the wrong course we may be sure that the divine plan would not have been interfered with, so diverse is the wisdom and power of God. Another could have been raised up to do the work of the Apostle or the work of Moses, and divine providence could have so arranged for their instruction and development that the divine plan would have suffered no loss. Nevertheless, so complete, we may be sure, were the arrangements of God in respect to Saint Paul and Moses, that it was more natural for them to take the course which they chose than to have taken the opposite one.

HIDDEN IN THE BULRUSHES

As we begin to look for divine providence in the affairs of Moses we find them standing out at every juncture. He was born at that particular time when Pharaoh Rameses II. had laid commands upon all the Hebrew parents that their male children should be promptly strangled at the time of birth, under dire penalties upon themselves and the child they would permit to live. We know not how long this law remained in effect, but it served in this particular juncture to introduce Moses into the royal family by a most remarkable chain of circumstances. Miriam, his sister, was born about nine years before, and Aaron, his brother, in time to escape this law; and when Moses was born his mother "saw that he was a goodly child, and hid him three months." Apparently there was something extraordinary in the appearance of the child, not only in the eyes of its own parents but also in those of the princess who subsequently adopted him. Stephen says of him, "He was exceedingly fair,"—margin, "fair to God," (Acts 7:20)—and Josephus recounts that as a man he was so handsome that passers-by would turn to gaze after him, and even laborers forgot their tasks in the spell of his rare beauty.

To hide the child for three months must have been quite a task, especially when the law respecting infants was known and probably a reward offered for the detection of those evading it. At last it was necessary for the mother to part with the babe, and the ark or basket made of bulrushes was prepared and overspread on the outside with pitch to keep it dry. With the babe therein it was placed near the bank of the river amongst the rushes, which would prevent it from floating down the stream and hide it from the curious. The spot was selected, too, somewhere near the royal palace, and near that portion of the river set apart for bathing for the use of the royal family, and at a time when the princess was

known to take her daily bath. The location was on the river Nile. Rawlinson says:—

"The capital of Egypt, the abode of the royal family at that time, was most probably Memphis, occupying nearly the site on which now stands the great city of Cairo. The household of Amram dwelt under the shadow of the three great pyramids, those 'artificial mountains,' the most impressive monuments that have ever been raised by human hands."

BROUGHT FORTH—FROM THE WATER

In harmony with the expectation Pharaoh's daughter took her usual bath on the day in which Moses was placed in the ark amongst the rushes, and at an opportune moment the babe cried. The princess is said to have been a married woman but childless, and we may well imagine the interest and curiosity aroused in her heart and the hearts of her maidens in attendance when the cry of the babe was heard. An attendant brought the ark and opened it before the princess, and the weeping babe excited the compassion of the womanly heart. At once she guessed the truth, that this must be a Hebrew child, whose parents, unwilling to strangle it, had disposed of it in this manner, perhaps in hope.

Watching at a distance, little Miriam, Moses' sister, then about nine years of age, following her instructions, ran to see the find and to promptly propose to the princess that she might get one of the Hebrew women to act as a nurse for the child. This was approved, and of course Miriam called the mother. The princess gave direction that the nurse should take full charge of him and receive pay for so doing. Thus the family fortunes were helped, and at the same time full protection assured, for the child was recognized as the adopted son of the princess. It is supposed that about seven years elapsed before Moses was brought to the princess, and that meantime he enjoyed the care and instruction of a godly mother. Meantime, we know not just when, the princess gave the child the name Moses, which signifies, "delivered from the water." Some translate the word to mean, "born from the water," supposing that the princess probably meant by this to signify that she had borne Moses as her son, borne him from the water.

To those who have eyes of faith to see it, there is a great chain of providential circumstances here; to others, who have no such eyes, these were merely accidents and happen-sos. Each one of course will be strongly convinced of the correctness of his own view, but in this case as in many others truth is stranger than fiction, and all these things were, under divine providence, working together for the accomplishment of the divine purpose in connection with that child, with that man, and with the nation which God intended he should subsequently lead out of bondage as the typical people of God. Dean Alfred expresses this thought beautifully in the words,—

"The bark is wafted to the strand by breath divine,
And on the helm there rests another hand than mine."

"MIGHTY IN WORD AND DEED"

Our golden text from Stephen's discourse reminds us that "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was mighty in words and deeds." What a wonderful preparation that wonderful boy needed in order to make of him the great Captain of the Lord's hosts. Egypt at that time had two great universities, one at Heliopolis, the other at Hermopolis. Moses is said to have been instructed in the former, situated about twenty miles north of Memphis. Geike describing it says: "Shady cloisters opened into lecture rooms for the students and quiet houses for the professors and priests, in their many grades and offices." Another writer says: "A splendid library was at his disposal. The library of the Rameuseum at Thebes—a structure built by Rameses II.—contained 20,000 books."

It seems almost a miracle that the boy Moses could pass through such experiences as he had in the palace and in the school without being seriously injured by the vain philosophies prevailing and honored in these places. Evidently, however, he was not only well born as respected his religious instincts, but the influence of his mother, his nurse, undoubtedly had much to do with shaping his child mind and holding him firm in the faith of the Hebrew—the faith in the Oath-Bound Abrahamic Covenant, to the effect that his race at some time would be blessed by the Lord and made very great, influential in the world, and thus be the divine channel for the blessing of all the families of the earth. At all events we have every indication that Moses was not only not spoiled by his education, in the sense of having his faith overthrown, but that his natural modesty, humility, meekness, continued with him to manhood's estate.

WHEN MOSES WAS GROWN

This date according to the Scriptures was his fortieth year, for the life of Moses was divided into three distinct parts of

forty years each. An eminent writer says, "According to Josephus, the Ethiopians made an incursion into Egypt and routed the army that was sent to resist them. Panic spread over the country, and Pharaoh trembled at the approach of the swarthy savages. The oracles, well aware of his remarkable abilities, advised that the command be entrusted to Moses. He immediately took the field, surprised the enemy, defeated them with heavy slaughter, drove them back into their own territory and followed them up so hard, capturing one city after another, that they found no asylum until they reached the swamp-girdled city of Meroe. Moses is said to have returned from this campaign the most popular man in the kingdom, having also learned thoroughly the weakness and strength of the people and of Pharaoh."

MOSES THE PATRIOT

The favor enjoyed as the adopted son of the princess in the palace and throughout the land did not quench the sympathy and patriotism of Moses' heart. He perceived the injustice heaped upon his brethren, and in his sympathy for one of them he smote a taskmaster so that he killed him. He buried him in the sand, thinking that nothing further would come of this, that his brethren the Hebrews would be helped to that extent, and that they would surely keep the secret of his favor and defence. In this, however, he found himself mistaken, for when endeavoring to correct a dispute between two Hebrews the fact that he was the murderer of an Egyptian was flung in his face by the one who was at fault. Soon the word reached everywhere, even to the king, who began quietly, as the Hebrew word signifies, to seek an opportunity for slaying Moses—not so easy a matter, however, as the latter was very popular; but in fear Moses, beginning the second fortieth year of his life, fled into the land of Midian, where he remained for forty years, returning for the deliverance of his people when he was eighty years of age.

We cannot say as some might that each child, each youth, each man, by giving attention to the divine guidance, might become a Moses. Very few are prepared by nature and providence for so exalted a position, and generally there are comparatively few opportunities for them. Israel did not need more than one Moses. We can, however, say that divine providence has a general charge of all the affairs of his people. If it is not in our province to be a Moses, it is a part of the Lord's providence to be one of his people, to be cared for by the Lord through a Moses, through a Deliverer. We cannot all be reared in palaces and educated in great institutions of learning nor become mighty in word and deed, but we should each look for the leadings of divine providence in our own experiences and be glad to fill any position marked out to us therein, assured that,—

"God's providence is kind and large;
Both man and beast his bounty share.
The whole creation is his charge,
But saints are his peculiar care."

But while we cannot occupy so prominent a place in earthly affairs as did Moses, let us look to the divine providences in the affairs of our lives, and let us note that still greater privileges, opportunities and honors are ours through Christ.

If the adoption of Moses by Pharaoh's daughter was a remarkable matter, much more wonderful is our own experience in that God first of all redeemed us by the precious blood of Christ, and then without our consent and upon our consecration adopted us into his family as the bride of his son, to be "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together." (Rom. 8:17.) There is nothing in all the novels and romances in the world that in any degree compares with the marvels of this glorious grace of God bestowed upon consecrated believers of this Gospel age. Do we really believe it? So surely as we do the effect will be manifested in our words and thoughts and doings. Imagine a young peasant woman invited to become the bride of a king of a prominent earthly throne: would not the thought of her espousal and the coming honors and blessings and privileges fill her heart almost to the exclusion of every other subject? Would not the preparation for the wedding day be to her and to her friends the all-absorbing topic of interest, engaging time, talent, influence, attention, in every sense of the word? And yet all this would be to a view of an earthly honor that might be very fleeting, with a prospect of earthly happiness; or it might prove bitterly disappointing, and at the very most, and considered from the most advantageous standpoint, could only be a blessing for a few years.

Compare this with the glorious prospects that are set before

the Lord's espoused virgin church—glory, honor, immortality, eternal life with him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood and with the Father. Truly those who really believe this message, who recognize of a truth that they have been begotten to the new nature and have received the spirit of espousal—surely these could have no greater power and influence operate in their lives to sanctify them and separate them from the world, and to bring them into close fellowship of spirit with their Redeemer. Another thought: As Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and proved himself mighty in words and deeds, so those whom the Lord is now selecting for joint-heirship in the kingdom of his dear

Son are required to learn lessons in the great school of experience, in the school of Christ, and they are required to manifest character and be overcomers—strong in the Lord and in the power of his might—mighty in words and in deeds for the Lord and for the truth. And thank God, however humble our speech, or insignificant our station, he is reckoning these matters to us according to our attitude of heart; and the smallest word or act done through loyalty to him and to principles of righteousness is counted as mighty through God to the pulling down of the strongholds of error, and to the establishment ultimately of the kingdom of God under the whole heaven.

ASSUREDLY GOD WAS WITH HIM

Exodus 3:1-14.—JUNE 2.

Golden Text—"And he said, Certainly I will be with thee."—V. 12.

Undoubtedly God's providences had to do with the general character of Moses, even before his birth, as well as with his educational training for the great work he was intended to perform. Nevertheless we see it would be quite contrary to all divine usages for the Almighty to have coerced his free moral agency. The natural trend of character being developed, it was necessary for Moses himself to decide respecting its use. The central feature of this lesson is that, with all the preparation and all the fitness of the man Moses for the great work of delivering Israel from Egypt, the secret of his success lay in the fact that God was with him—God was the Deliverer of Israel; Moses was merely his servant and representative in connection with the work, as the Lord himself declared—"I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt and out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

LONG YEARS IN PREPARATION

When we consider the eighty years of Moses' life, in which he was in preparation for the great work of the Lord, it helps us to appreciate better the fact that our God is never in haste—"Known unto the Lord are all his works from the foundation of the world." He has no need for haste; he knows the end from the beginning, and every feature of the divine plan is properly timed. Thus 4,000 years and more passed before Jesus was born, and yet the Scriptures assure us that it was in due time that God sent forth his son, born of a woman. (Gal. 4:4.) This thought should give us great confidence in the certainty of the development of the Lord's plans at the proper time. He is not a man that he should err in judgment; he is working all things according to the counsel of his own will. In this thought all his true people may rest in confidence; whether matters seem to culminate rapidly or slowly, each feature will be in its "due time." Although so much time was consumed in preparation for the deliverance of Israel, yet when the appropriate hour was come, in that one morning the whole nation started to move. Let us all learn the lesson more and more to wait on the Lord, and then to be ready to move promptly when he indicates that his appointed time has arrived.

EIGHTY YEARS OF SCHOOLING

The life of Moses is divided into three parts of equal length. The first forty years brought him to ripe manhood and made him familiar with all the learning of the Egyptians. The second forty years began when he fled after killing the Egyptian and had found that his brethren were not prepared for deliverance nor willing to accept his assistance as their friend and brother, and ended when he returned to Israel, under the divine direction, and successfully led them forth from Egypt. The third forty-year period of his life, beginning with the exodus, terminated with his death at the end of the forty years in the wilderness, just as the people of Israel were about to cross over into Canaan. The period of Moses' life from forty to eighty years of age was spent as a shepherd in the service of his father-in-law Jethro, otherwise called Ruel. We may be sure that in that long period of time this meek man, who was ready to do with his might whatever his hands found to do, had large opportunities for learning lessons of patience.

Doubtless like David, the shepherd, Moses learned to think of the sheep and his care over them, and to consider God the great Shepherd of his flock, and probably often wondered why, after giving the gracious promise to Abraham, God had left his flock, the children of Abraham, in apparently hopeless bondage. Doubtless, too, he thought of his own endeavor to help the people, and how they had shown such a spirit of discord as made it impossible for him to aid them as he would. Doubtless he had thought many times of how it would have advantaged his own earthly interests had he followed the

course marked out for him by his fostermother, Pharaoh's daughter, and remained a member of the royal family of Egypt and a sharer in the honor and dignity of those who oppressed his people. Doubtless he thought of how he had apparently blighted his entire life and spoiled all of his earthly prospects by his desire to do good to his brethren—his desire to serve their best interests. Doubtless he thought of their ingratitude and failure to appreciate him, their resentment of his kindly-meant assistance, saying, "Who made thee a ruler or judge over us?"

Probably in the mind of Moses the matter resolved itself in the thought that he had done his duty, the best he knew how to do, although the entire matter had resulted in failure; and it is probable he was more or less despondent respecting the future, as a meek, humble-minded man would be apt to feel. Meantime under the Lord's providence he went hither and thither with his flocks and herds to the very land in which later on he was to lead the people of Israel. In those forty years he must have become very familiar with the vicinity of Sinai and lower Palestine. Little did he know the value of the teachings he was then learning. The lesson in all this for us is faithfulness to God and to duty as he gives us to see it, leaving all the results with him. Another lesson is that present experiences, trials and difficulties may be fitting and preparing us for a future useful service for the Lord and his people, even though at the time we see no relationship or connection between the two.

THE BURNING BUSH

Here our lesson opens, showing Moses at eighty years of age shepherding his flock on the rearward side of Mount Horeb, called Mount Sinai, where subsequently the law was given. As Moses looked, behold a bush burned near him, supposedly a thorn-bush, which sometimes grows to quite a height and quite a thickness in that country, and is known as shittim wood—the kind of wood used in the construction of the Tabernacle. As Moses looked at the flame he perceived that the bush was not consumed, and considering this a most remarkable phenomenon he turned aside and drew near to it to observe the matter. It was then that the Lord spoke to him from the midst of the burning bush, and Moses at once knew that what he had witnessed was a miracle by which the Lord would attract his attention with a view to communicating some important lesson.

God usually has a symbolical meaning in every miracle, and in this one the representation is supposed to be Israel in the midst of tribulation, yet not consumed. Later on, in Reformation times, the Church of Scotland appropriated this burning bush as its emblem on its banner, because its experience had been similar in that it had passed through severe afflictions and distresses and trials, yet had not been consumed. And is not the burning bush a good illustration of the experience of Christ and all of his members? Are they not indeed surrounded by fiery trials? and do they not emerge from these unscathed, uninjured?—on the contrary, blessed, developed, strengthened, made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light?

Well do the Scriptures declare that the fear, reverence, of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. We greatly deplore the growth of irreverence in our day, and urge upon all of our readers for themselves and for their families the cultivation of this proper attitude of mind, so helpful to our preparation for the life that now is and that which is to come. Liberty and independence, while excellent qualities, are always to be valued and conserved and protected, are never to become license, never to lead in any degree to irreverence. This is the more necessary to us for two reasons: (1) Because of the growing irreverence of the world about us, born of a declining faith in God and everything supernatural; (2) be-

cause of our growing enlightenment in the truth, by which we see that the fears of an eternity of torture were groundless, there is a danger of losing that proper reverence for God which belongs to and is an integral part of love.

The Prophet David writes, "Keep thy foot when thou goest into the house of God"—take heed to your standing, take heed to your walk, take heed to your conduct. Whether the house of God be a great temple, as in past times, under divine direction, or whether it be the temple of God, which is the church of Christ in the flesh, we should realize that reverence is befitting to us in connection with everything that is holy and consecrated. We should realize that whoever neglects the cultivation of reverence in respect to these matters is making his own pathway slippery and dangerous. He who reverences little and is careless is much more likely to stumble, to fall, and be utterly cast down. If even Moses, the "meekest man in all the earth," needed from the Lord as his first instruction a lesson of humility, shall we not suppose that such a lesson is necessary to us? Yea, verily!

Let us honor the Lord in our hearts, in our outward demeanor. Whether we bow to give thanks for our daily bread, whether we bow our knee night and morning in acknowledgment of divine care and providence, or whether we meet with those of like precious faith, let us see to it that reverence marks our conduct and our words as well as rules in our hearts. Let us, too, take off our shoes, let us lay aside the ordinary conduct of life by which we are in contact with the world, and in all our ways acknowledge him, especially when we hearken to his voice in the study of his Word as his people.

**"SEEN THEIR AFFLICTION"—"HEARD THEIR CRY"—
"KNOW THEIR SORROWS"**

With these words the Lord informed Moses briefly that he had not been negligent of the interests of Israel. By these words he allows him to understand that not until this time had the appropriate moment come for interference on behalf of Israel. And this thought of the divine knowledge, sympathy and care, and waiting for a due time, would give Moses all the more confidence in the Lord's ability to do according to his own good purposes when his time had come. And so it is with us: If we look back over the 1800 years and more of this Gospel dispensation, and perceive how the Lord's cause has been permitted to be overwhelmed by the forces of evil during the "dark ages" and even yet, we stand amazed, and might be inclined to say, "Does God not know? does God not care? that he allows his own name to be dishonored and his truth to be trampled under foot and his faithful people to suffer?"

The Lord assures us, too, that he knows all about these matters and is very sympathetic, far more so than we, and he is both able and willing to grant the deliverance needed at the appropriate time. What confidence it gives us now when we look back and behold that spiritual Israel has been preserved through all these centuries! that notwithstanding the fiery affliction and adversity that burned against them, they have not been consumed! How it comforts and cheers us now to hear the Lord's voice telling us of the deliverance that is just at hand, and sending by us his messages of love and power to all those who have and are to hear, and who are desirous of having liberty from the power of the world, the flesh and the adversary. O, yes! we occupy holy ground, we hear the holy voice, our eyes are opened to see the wonderful things. The Lord be praised! Let us give heed to his Word.

"THOU MAYEST BRING FORTH MY PEOPLE"

First of all the Lord informed Moses, "I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians," etc.; then he adds, "Come now, therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh that thou mayest bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt." It is to be noted that God expressly declares himself to be the Deliverer, and had Moses been then disposed to boast of his own powers and doings we presume that the Lord would not have used him, but would have found some one else for the work. Whenever the Lord sends us on any special mission, we may be sure that he does not wish us to undertake it as our own mission, nor to claim the honor of the success attending it. He merely deigns to use us as his instrumentalities, whereas he could do the entire work much easier, we might say, without us. How wonderful it seems that God throughout all his dealings, past and present, has been willing to use his consecrated people. Telling them on the one hand that they are unworthy, he assures them on the other hand of his willingness to use their imperfections and to overrule and guide in respect to their services for him and his cause.

The prime essentials evidently in the faithful performance of such a commission would be reverence for the Lord and humility as respects our own talents and abilities. It was so with Moses, the "meekest man in all the earth." Not stopping even to tell the Lord of his appreciation of the facts that he had been chosen for and had undertaken this great work, Moses was overwhelmed with the thought that the Lord would deign to use him as a messenger, and he promptly disclaimed any special qualifications therefor. Indeed, he evidently felt, as well as said, that there were others much more capable of the work than himself. But was it not this very appreciation of his own unworthiness that helped to make him suitable for the Lord's business? And so with us: we may be sure that when we feel strong then we are weak, and when we feel weak in our own strength then we are best prepared to be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might and to be used of him as his instruments. It was so with the great Apostle; it must be so, we believe, with all whom the Lord will deign to use and acknowledge in any part of his service.

Overwhelmed with a realization of the responsibilities of the work suggested, Moses protested to the Lord that he had not the qualifications, and the Lord's answer was that this was true, but that his weakness would be perfected in the Lord's strength—"Certainly I will be with thee." And this being true, how could the mission be a failure? It is equally true with us today: if the Lord be for us and with us, who could be against us? How could the work fail? Many of the Lord's people are being called out of Babylon and its confusion and darkness, its oppressions and its bondage, to creeds of the "dark ages," and its social boycotts, etc., to worship the Lord in spirit and in truth, to give their hearts, all that they have, to him and his service.

And all the members of the body of Christ, the anti-typical body of Moses, are permitted to have a share, as the Lord's representatives, in this work of declaring the fall of Babylon, the presence of the king, and the gathering together unto him of all who have made a covenant with him by sacrifice. While feeling our unworthiness of so great an honor, and our inability as respects so great a work, let us remember that the Lord himself is with us, and that since it is his work it will go onward and accomplish the designs intended, and gather out eventually all who are truly the Lord's, whether we are faithful or whether we are unfaithful. But let us be faithful, and thus maintain the relationship to the great antitype of Moses, and ultimately be associated with him in the glories of the kingdom, in the dispensing of the blessings and judgments of the future age.—Acts 3:23.

Not only did the Lord assure Moses of his presence and power and coöperation in the mission, but also that it would result successfully—that he would bring the people out of the land of Egypt and into this very mountain, and to the very place where the Lord was then communing with him. The matter began to take tangible shape before Moses' mind: as God said it would be so, undoubtedly his word would be fulfilled. So the Lord's assurances to us, that the results will come anyway, are an encouragement to us to go forward and to do our parts. The Lord will do the work, and the whole question is whether or not we will have a glorious share in it as his members and representatives.

"I AM THAT I AM"—HE WHO IS—JEHOVAH

Whatever confidence Moses had in his brethren, and their readiness to believe the promises of God and to accept deliverance from Egypt, he seems to have lost. Even while God was telling him of the success of the mission upon which he was being sent, Moses' mind was reverting to the attempt he had made forty years before, and so he objects: "Lord, when I come unto the children of Israel and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers sent me unto you; and they shall say unto me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them?" The people of Israel, long in association with the Egyptians, had doubtless lost much of their faith in the one God of their fathers. Their heathen neighbors and masters of the Egyptian nation recognized various gods, and seemed to be greatly prospered, and it is altogether probable that the Israelites had by this time come to wonder which god they should count as theirs and what his name might be. Moses' question seems to imply that his thoughts ran in this channel. God's reply was the giving of his name, Jehovah, for the words, "I am that I am," signify the same as the name Jehovah—the self-existent one, the one who always exists.

Perceiving that the question only covered a part of Moses' meaning, the Lord proceeded to prove to his servant that this name would not be an empty sound in his mouth, but that he would be with him and exercise powers which would exemplify his greatness, his dignity, his ability to deliver the