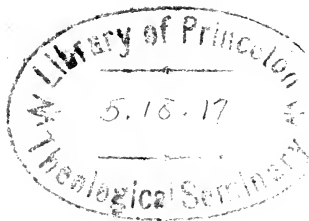


**THE
HUNGER OF
ISRAEL**



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The hunger of Israel

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THE
HUNGER OF
ISRAEL

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The Hunger of Israel



J EHOVAH led Israel from Egypt into the desert. This mob of slaves, enervated and degraded by serfdom, He aimed to train into a truly great people. He first increased their troubles. He shook them out of that lazy attitude which for a few onions and Egyptian melons would willingly give a hard day's labor. Their task had to grow so heavy, the sting of Pharaoh so sharp, that out of the deep of suffering they would turn to Jehovah and cry for help. Is not this God's method of dealing with us today? Because He desires to come to our assistance, He so intensifies our sorrows and afflictions that we are forced to go to Him for succor. Only when we recognize our own impotence, we can appreciate His omnipotence! This is the foundation of spir-

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itual progress. Because man is need and God is help, the soul looks upward.

The Egyptians had been severely punished for whatever wrongs they had committed against the chosen people. They had paid the penalty for their cruelty. Their sensuality terminated in disgusting diseases; their avarice in losses and failures. Their own blood had to atone for the blood they had shed. Through a series of plagues, deeply significant and little understood in their symbolic character, God led them at last into utter darkness, the common lot of those who harden their hearts. Some of these plagues were shared by the people of Israel; the usual course of God's judgment impressing us with the fact that not one of us are worthy to be spared. At other times God's right arm was stretched protectingly over His people; for to do so is His glorious privilege. And when after many disasters, affecting Egypt's pride and prosperity, God at last touched the very heart of Pharaoh by slaying the firstborn, He symbolized by this action His eternal

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plan of salvation. "All of you," He meant to say to Israel, "together with your first-born, are worthy of death through your transgressions; but I will give my own Son, the firstborn, to be a propitiation for your sins; with the blood of the innocent lamb, which is a symbol of the blood of Christ, you may mark the door-posts. I will consider this your plea for forgiveness and accept it. But those who refuse this token of grace will surely perish!"

Thus emigrated about six hundred thousand people, amid the lamentations of their oppressors; a whole people rejoicing; rescued from the lash of the taskmaster, henceforth to be free! Through the magnificent row of palaces and temples, of obelisks and sphinxes flowed on the stream of this mighty throng. While torches were wafted to and fro, excited women and trembling children, laden with gold and silver, the hard-earned fruit of their labor, followed in the ceaseless train. God was their leader. Memorable night! That Israel should never forget it, is Jehovah's warning. Finally

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the stream is ebbing out. The Egyptians remain behind with their dead—stupefied, horror-struck. Like lightning ruin had come to them. A whole nation followed two old men into the wilderness, the unknown—by faith!

Slavery, long continued, makes cowards. Israel needed to be inspired with courage. This God planned to do by a mighty salvation, impressive and distinct. He leads Israel into the sea, into apparent destruction, and while the vast waters stretch out before them, they notice behind them, like an approaching storm, the horses and chariots of Pharaoh. Again there are voices of fear and despair and finally a loud appeal to Jehovah. History tells us, how mightily God came to their rescue.

Wonderful indeed Jehovah's help against the iron wheels of Egyptian chariots which were about to crush the women and children loaded down with booty. Over the rising surf sounds the song of Moses and Miriam: "Sing to the Lord; horse and rider He has dashed into the sea!"

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Thus God placed in His wise providence at the threshold of Jewish history this manifestation of His visible presence. Israel should remember at all times that it had an all-powerful Protector. At dead of night, in the midst of the Red Sea, aye, amid the very pangs of death was born the chosen people of God. In the morning it stood on the shore, hearing the call to the new life; it gazed upon the illimitable desert and discerned with eyes of faith the promised land of liberty beyond.

And now the Supreme Pedagogue proceeds with the education of this barbarous people, composed of irreligious, undisciplined and lawless slaves. The time of training is short, especially when we consider the mighty aim of the Most High. His plans, conceived before the foundation of the world, are to be imparted to a race which spectre-like emerges from eternity and as mysteriously disappears. God wills the annihilation of sin and sorrow. With this point in view a fixed number of human souls is to be created. Within a period of

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fifty years, the average life-time of a generation, sixteen hundred million human beings appear on the earth, to give way in turn to another generation. Where are now the multitudes, aye, where is a single one of the millions who a hundred years ago were men of affairs and acted as if they owned the world forever? And again, after a century, (but a stroke of the pendulum of the celestial clock which measures the hours of suns requiring thirty million years for a single revolution) where will they be who at this present hour stir on the face of the earth with their commerce and industry, their prayers and blasphemies, their vices and virtues? Gone like a dream! "Thou turnest men to destruction; again Thou sayest, come again, ye children of men." But in this brief period between two eternities is to be decided the great issue of immortal souls. Will they rise to the light or sink into utter darkness?

God begins the education of His people by confronting them with the very question of existence. He causes them (after

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the manner of every new-born babe) to be hungry. Hunger is the mysterious longing for food, strength, sufficiency, experienced by every creature. "The whole creation groaneth," says St. Paul; and the whole creation is hungry. The earth is hungry for rain, the fire for combustibles, the plant for water, the flower for the sunbeam. And thus the human body hungers for food, as the mind hungers for thought, the soul for faith, hope and love; and the spirit for the good, the true and the beautiful, for God! It is a grand, profound and sobering fact that we have no life in ourselves; we cannot exist independently; we are in constant, pressing need of nourishment without which we should instantly wilt and die. Oh the depth of our impotence and poverty! We must have food; seek some suitable nourishment or we are instantly doomed. Whether he wander through the desert or travel the seas, whether he dwell on the height of the mountain or grovel in the depth of the earth, the child of dust is ever asking the helpless

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question, "What shall I eat; what shall I drink; wherewithal shall I be clothed?" How shall I support this little loam-cottage of mine to keep it from tumbling down? How shall I fill the void within me that I may gain strength and vigor for my daily task? How can I cover my nakedness and adorn my body, that I may not stand uncovered in all my humble nothingness? Aye, there is none that would have his fellowmen see him as he really is, his denuded soul, his naked self!

Why does the Creator force his creatures to be ever hungry? Easily He could have averted this condition. By a slight change of our organs and by combining air and food we might have inhaled whatever nourishment we required. But God wants us to be hungry. Why? First of all to teach us humility. A father, discovering the favorite vice of his son, will aim to eradicate it. Now the fundamental sin of the human race is pride, the very thing that drove Satan from heaven. It was pride that caused Adam and Eve to want to be like

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God and to know good and evil. They ate of the forbidden fruit; and ever since hunger has seized the human race. Hunger for food and knowledge, for pleasure and riches and art and science and honor and happiness. Hunger! But because God's punishment is also grace and discipline, this hunger is to train us in humility. Mortifying indeed that the same people who are continuously bragging about their scientific and commercial triumphs have to look for something to eat every few hours! Humiliating, too, the hard labor we have to perform to gain our little share of the daily bread! We should grow humble in the presence of this everlasting hunger and more humble at the thought of the thousands "whose belly is their god" and whose aim in life seems to reach no higher than to eat as much and as good as the world affords.

And just as our physical hunger bears daily witness to the fact that we are dust and must return to dust, so the hunger of the soul for spiritual food proves that there

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is a divine breath within us which is insatiable, because it is severed from its original source. In vain we try to feed our soul with the fruits of this world, those wild, sour, bitter and indigestible fruits of the cursed acre (Matth. 13:38) on which we live. This experience has been made by the wisest and best of men. It is continually being made by the millions who suicidally throw their lives away. Yet ever again Satan lures us with tempting bubbles to vain repetitions of our useless search, while multitudes follow. Pathetic sight to see human beings in greedy pursuit of gold and honor, of fine houses and gorgeous clothes. Moths flying into the flame!

Jehovah caused His people to hunger. Was it necessary? Why, even on the very first day God might have rained quail and manna from the sky. But He did not do that. The reason for the delay is given by the aged prophet: "Remember, Israel, the way which the Lord, thy God, led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble

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thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep His commandments or not" (Deuteronomy 8:2).

"Remember, Israel, the way which the Lord, thy God, led thee." Yes, God leads. With much thought and worry and anxiety we seem to choose our own path. But as a matter of fact, God leads us. We are not tossed on the sea of chance. Whether we will or not, we are being led through the wilderness of the world. Those that go willingly reach the promised land, where they shall "eat bread without scarceness" (Deut. 8:10). But they who remain defiant, must perish in the desert of life. But even the just, like Joshua and Caleb, must cross the wilderness for a period of forty years and share in the guilt of the people.

Jehovah causes thee to suffer hunger, oh Israel, to "know what is in thine heart." Is not the heart known to God, "whose eyes are everywhere beholding good and evil" (Prov. 15:3)? Yes, but God requires manifestations.

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To try us, to know what is in us, God sends us weal and woe. To know what is in your heart He causes hail to destroy your wheat-crop and mars your hopes, and breaks your trees under their load of fruit. For this reason you inherit or acquire riches; for this reason you earn but a mere crust for your daily task. For this reason He causes your marriage to be happy or unhappy, your children to be good or bad. For this reason you lose your only child, a beautiful daughter or a promising son—God wishing to see if you “hate your life for His sake.” “He maketh thee ride on the high places of the earth and maketh thee to suck honey out of the rock to see, if Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked and forsook the God who made him and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation” (Deut. 32:13). “What is man, that thou shouldst magnify him? and that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him!” (Job 7:17.)

Life is a continuous examination from cradle to grave. God tries the soul in myriad ways. He ascertains how the crea-

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ture is related to its Creator. Are we self-centered or God-centered? Do we recognize and worship our Maker or do we side with Satan, the enemy of God? If such be not the purpose of life, our existence with all its dole and delight, its ups and downs, has no meaning whatsoever.

“God makes manifest what is hidden” (Dan. 2:22) and Christ emphasizes the same law when He says “there is nothing hidden that shall not be revealed” (Matth. 10:26). God makes the seed to bud beneath the soil, but He also causes it to come into the light and produce a plant. Should we receive a revelation of the world in its present condition we should see a confused image of varied influences, divine thoughts mingling with the schemes of Satan and with the designs of unbelief. Aye, should you try to empty your own heart, you would find it a veritable ocean of hatred, sordidness and multitudinous sins.

Thus we comprehend the meaning of our hunger, and of the work and labor we have

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to perform to gratify such a hunger. The choice of our food, our greed or our gratitude—all of this reveals what “is in our hearts” and whether we desire to “keep God’s commandments” (Deut. 8:2). Humility and manifestation, the twofold purpose of life, of which fools and philosophers alike know nothing. Recently a noted writer exclaimed: “It is only too true that human life has no meaning!” Science is unable to solve the problem. Your commerce and your industry, your colleges and your laboratories, your microscopes and telescopes look for this truth in vain. To the universal question, “Why was I born,” there is no answer. And this fact accounts for the hunger of the heart that cannot be satisfied. Oh well for the Christian who has a God not only causing hunger but also providing food! When Israel hungered and murmured, God said, “I have heard your murmuring,” and He made manna to fall from the sky. And He does the same today.

“The whole congregation of the children

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of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness" (Ex. 2:16). Does not this also apply to us? We growl and groan, and fuss and fret and worry, because this wish has not been gratified, this hope proven false, this loss impoverished us, this sickness interfered with our plans. The hand of rebellion we would raise against the Most High, because our loved one has died. Even about the weather we have our misgivings. In short, the whole congregation is murmuring. Let us recall the prophet's advice: "Wherefore does a living man complain? Let everyone complain about his sins!" (Lam. 3:39.) Aye, if we could look deep enough, we should find that sin is the very root of our sorrow and discontent. It was a matter of gratitude for the Jews to consider their emancipation from the tyranny of Pharaoh. How they had longed to be freed therefrom! But all of this is forgotten. Now they only talk of the fleshpots of Egypt, "the fish they ate freely, the cucumbers, and the melons and the leeks and the onions, and the garlick"

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(Num. 11:5). And we are not any better. Even to good Christians the devil will present a rosy picture of sin and its charms, carefully concealing from their memory the hours of disgust and despondency which followed its gratification.

The whole congregation murmured against Moses and Aaron. Moses, the legislator, is the State; Aaron, the high priest, his brother, the Church. Even against these two authorities, which should ever be harmonious in the world's affairs, the congregation murmurs. "What are we that you murmur against us?" This is the question of Moses and Aaron. "Your murmuring is not against us; it is against the Lord, your God!" (Ex. 16:7.) They should have murmured against the sons of Aaron who carried desecrating fire into the sanctuary of the Lord, provoking His wrath. This concerns them not. But when the question of the daily bread becomes troublesome, they murmur, rise in revolt, rail against the Almighty and declare: "Would we had perished in Egypt by the hand of

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the Lord!" Forgotten God's unceasing kindness, His glorious miracles, His protecting hand, the march through the Red Sea and the destruction of Pharaoh's host; forgotten, too, the triumphal song of Miriam! We hear naught save the cry for death of a defiant and disheartened race.

Was it wrong for Israel, tortured by the tooth of hunger, to cry to God? No. God says: "Call to me in thy distress, and I will hear thee and thou shalt praise me" (Psalm 50:15). But in humility they should have gone to Moses and Aaron, saying: "Pray for us to the Lord lest we perish in the wilderness, we and our children!"

Will God exterminate His thankless people? Will He send down upon them destructive lightning or command the earth to swallow them? No. The gracious Lord, whose patience is infinite, simply says: "I have heard your murmuring; I will make manna to fall from heaven." Day and night the blasphemies of the human race ascend to God; their murmuring and cursing, their utterances of ingratitude. And

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ever again God says: "I will make bread to fall from heaven." Where is there a God like our God, forgiving our transgressions? He maketh manna to rain from the sky. The fields provide for multitudes of cattle clover and grass, and for millions of people wheat and fruit and wine and oil. Do we pay attention to this? We thank Him not, but murmur!

"And Moses and Aaron spake to the whole congregation: At even ye shall eat flesh and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread, because the Lord has heard your murmuring" (Ex. 16:12). "And the glory of the Lord appeared in a cloud." Thrice the people murmured and thrice appeared the glory of the Lord, the *Sheshina*, visible to all, radiant with incomparable beauty, as if to convey the warning: "Do not try my patience too long. Who are ye that ye argue with the Lord of Glory?"

Cooling night descended from the starry sky upon the burning sands of the desert. The careworn, weary people had fallen asleep. Many a restless pilgrim was kept

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awake by the thought: Where shall we find bread on the morrow and the day after, and the many days we are to spend in the wilderness. "And in the morning the dew lay round about the host. And when the dew was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small, round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground" (Ex. 16:13-14).

Everything connected with the heavenly bread is typical and symbolic. Says St. Paul: "All these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition" (1 Cor. 10-11). God works in the very silence of night. He that neither sleeps nor slumbers cares for the helpless human race even while they sleep. He sees to it that we have bread in the morning. This is true also in a spiritual sense. While we are absorbed in our selfish and material interests, God stirs in our souls the longing for diviner things and provides for our religious hunger the true manna from heaven, which is Christ, the Lord. Aye, God moves in a mysterious

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way. This appears everywhere in creation. In the very darkness of the ground the chrysalis is being transformed into a butterfly and the grain of wheat evolved into the plant. The root of the oak selects and rejects, even under the ground, the diverse forces which afterwards develop into the great and glorious tree the branches of which give lodging to the birds, shade to the cattle and shelter to the storm-lost pilgrim.

“A small, round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground.” Note the apparent insignificance of this miracle. God provides for us without violent manifestations in thunder and lightning. Silently the great harvest is being prepared for the starving race.

“And when the people of Israel saw it, they said one to another, It is manna, for they wist not what it was” (Ex. 16:15). We, too, ask this question when God makes bread to rain upon us from the sky. Enforced rest, a medical retreat, caused by some accident; associations which do not

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particularly please us; new relatives; a call to new fields and localities; interruption of cherished studies — there are hundreds of gracious things that happen for the advancement of our souls which we fail to trace back to the Divine Author. We ask “Man-hu,” what does it mean? The same God who provides for our physical hunger, is also supplying the needs of the soul, sometimes through joy, sometimes through sorrow. Even our punishment is manna.

“And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat. Gather of it every man according to his eating, an omer for every man. And when they did mete it with an omer he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little, had no lack: they gathered every man according to his eating” (Ex. 16:15-18). We are reminded of the accumulation of spiritual food during conferences, religious seasons and special occasions, when we aim to gather a superabundance of manna. But God is a God of Moderation. Hebrew wisdom calls Him

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Elshaddai, which means "The Temperate." He provides a certain quantity for every soul and no more. We receive our omer, no matter how much we revel in spiritual transports. The poor in spirit, apparently neglected, will also receive his share. God wills moderation. Whether His children are long-lived or short-lived, live in huts or palaces, have joy or sorrow, the Heavenly Father provides exactly according to their needs. His calculations are accurate. There is never a drop too much or too little, though there be those who say "too much" and others who murmur "still more."

"And Moses said, Let no man leave of it till the morning. Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto Moses" (Ex. 16:19-20). When shall we appreciate the lesson of the commonplace and obey its divine injunction? Is it without significance that God withdraws His sunlight every night, forcing us in this way to close the day's labor and to seek rest? Is it well that we should fret and worry about the morrow? Should we not rather listen to Him who, while

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bearing every burden, assured His disciples that "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof?" "Cast your burdens upon me," He says, "I am with you always!" It is enough for you to bear the responsibility of the hour. I know what tomorrow will bring forth and I will help you tomorrow as I help you today. "Who by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?" And still we continue to give idle thought to the possibilities of the future. Why? Because we choose to do so. And if there be no reasonable causes for care, we find unreasonable ones. In this way we lose the privilege which God gives us and are tormented by worries, utterly foolish and useless, about the unknown troubles of the morrow. Because our hearts are empty and void, estranged from God, we take thought for a multitude of things, first of all for ourselves, then for our children, for the progress of missions, for rights of women, for humane societies, prohibition movements, etc. Surely God could never accomplish a thing, if we did not aid Him with our cares!

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And Jehovah said: The people shall gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law or not. But they did not obey. "Some of them left of it unto the morning and it bred worms and stank" (Ex. 16:20). How many well meaning people, even Christians, make arrangements for the well-being of their physical or spiritual children! They settle estates upon them, secure positions for them. They see to it that their daughters are well married and that their sons enter into profitable business connections. They leave legacies for good institutions and appoint able successors for the place they have to vacate. Assured that they have laid up a good supply of manna for the morrow, they step into their graves. And lo, during the night "it bred worms and stank."

Every man according to his conscience. One is called upon to do some quick, aggressive work for God and His kingdom, his is the mission of Paul. Another has to give forty years to the sheep of Jethro, as did

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Moses, or spend "a long time," like Elijah, the prophet, serving the widow of Sarepta. "Lord, thy will be done. Thou knowest best. I can only go one step at a time." On this subject a great deal has been written and we may dismiss it without further comment.

For the Sabbath the people were told to gather a double quantity. On that day manna was found without worms. This shows that it was not the nature of the bread to spoil. If it did spoil, the cause must be found in the will of God. It is true that there are what we call "laws of nature." But these laws have no existence apart from Him in whom all things live and move and have their being. The Bible calls those fools who say "there is no God" (Psalm 53:2). And must not our idle talk of the "laws of nature" seem like utter folly to the angels? Some of our modern philosophers admit that somehow these laws were arranged by God, but having been arranged they pursued an independent course. Who is this "Nature," pray? Is

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it the mother of us all, looking after her children with loving care? So they say. But others have come to the conclusion that "Nature" is an old idiot which to fill the unconscious nausea of her eternity, created generations in order to destroy them again. Unfortunately we cannot discuss this fabulous personality, inasmuch as we do not even know her and almost incline to the belief that she does not exist at all. We only know the creation of Almighty God who rules His universe according to His unsearchable wisdom. In His presence the twenty-four elders cast away their crowns and exclaim: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for Thou hast created all things and for Thy pleasure they are and were created" (Rev. 4:11).

"And it was like coriander seed, white; and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey" (Ex. 16:31). This is a clear and distinct description, given, no doubt, to counteract any later criticisms of unbelief. It proves that manna was not a bread

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of the imagination and it refutes the charges that it consisted of a "perfectly natural" growth. The report says that it was lying all about the camp, in little white pieces, tasting like wafers made with honey. It also says that it came in such quantities that it amply sufficed for the hunger of an entire people. This means at least one billion pounds a day, reproduced every morning for a period of forty years. In the light of these facts how absurd appears the rationalistic theory that manna was merely a common shrub growing on the peninsula of Sinai! The so-called manaweed is neither small nor round nor white nor nourishing. Its entire production amounts to about forty thousand pounds per year and would, therefore, not even suffice for a single meal!

Note also the naturalness of this divine and miraculous manifestation. Ever and again we are assured that the Bible does not claim to be a scientific book. This is correct, inasmuch as we are not to get information about botany and astronomy

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from the reading of the Bible. Studies relating to a number of plants or a species of animals, to the course of the stars, etc., are left to our scholars who can divulge their wisdom with more or less accuracy and more or less show of importance. But in a deeper and infinitely more valuable sense the Bible (which is the record of the Holy Spirit who Himself co-operated at the creation of the universe) permits us to look into the underlying principles of nature, ever revealing the miracle in the "law" and the "law" in the miracle. It teaches us that the miracle is not unnatural, as viewed in fairy tales, but supernatural, that is, divinely natural. God could have kept the people of Israel alive without any food whatsoever. But He chose the natural, as well as a miraculous way of feeding them. His miracles are correlated to the natural processes which underly creation. His actions do not clash. They correspond. Whatever God does, is miraculous and yet again "divinely natural." While our poor, purblind race defines things that happened for

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thousands of years, as “natural” and things that only happen once in a thousand years as “miraculous,” God has no such distinction. As a matter of fact, we know no more of the mysterious process that turns a seed into a plant than we know of the resurrection of the dead. And should manna have rained regularly from the sky during the past six thousand years, we should have found this miracle just as natural as the falling of rain or hail, which God might have made nutritious, if He had willed to do so.

“And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a pot and put an omer full of manna therein and lay it up before the Lord, to be kept for your generations” (Ex. 16:33). “That they may see the bread wherewith I have fed you in the wilderness,” (Ex. 16:32) said the Lord. So Aaron laid it up. And for decades, aye for centuries, this manna remained pure and unspoiled, because it was kept in the sanctuary, before the Testimony, the dwelling-place of the Most High. Whatsoever God takes into His

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holy place is removed from the laws of mortality and corruption. For such things death has ceased to be (Rev. 21:4). They have entered the realms of eternity. Thus we have in the Old Testament a symbol of the words of Christ: "Whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die" (John 11:26). All things go back to their source. Manna descended from heaven and thither it returned.

Long after it ceased to drop nightly from the sky, it was preserved in the sanctuary. Thus all transitory things, creation itself, will be reabsorbed by God. Purified by fire it returns into the Holy of Holies. The early martyrs entered the arena and sang: "From God we came; to God we go!" Paul prophesies that "God shall be all in all."

"And the children of Israel did eat manna forty years, until they came to the land of Canaan." We do not read of Israel's gratitude. Did they thank the Lord for His bounty? Or did they ask Moses to do this for them? No. They looked at

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the heavenly present and said, "man" ("what is it")? Then they proceeded to load themselves with it for future emergencies, notwithstanding God's warning. Exactly as we do!! Who offers daily thanks for the bread that nourishes us, for strength of body and soul, for friends and relatives, for health, sunshine and good cheer? Manna tastes good—this seems to be the only thought. Who lives in implicit faith, without taking thought for the morrow; who refrains from gathering manna for the unknown future?

"That thou mayest know that man does not live of bread alone, but of every word that proceedeth from the mouth of Jehovah" (Deut. 8:3). In every respect, absolutely and relatively, our bodies, souls and minds live of the word of God. And not only we, but all angels of heaven, all devils of hell. Thy word, O God, is their nourishment and ours! Where, in all creation, is there a single atom not made and sustained by Him? Did not His word create the colors that please the eye, the forces

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whose intricate relationship we call Nature? Through all the pores of our body we inhale the life-giving air, and our soul receives impressions, thoughts, suggestions by the contemplation of nature. The atmosphere we breathe, the ideas we conceive — all proceeding from the mouth of God. Aye, we are words of God ourselves. For this reason we can live in and of each other. The child is nourished not only physically, but mentally, by its parents. The man lives through the woman, the woman through the man, and every human being through all those with whom he came in contact. And because Satan is the counterpart of God, his word is death and ruins the soul. We live by God's everlasting "Yes;" we die by Satan's everlasting "No." Creation is the very expression, the word of God, uttered in myriads of forms and infinite variations.

"Jehovah, thy God, bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat and

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barley, and vines and fig trees; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness; and when thou hast eaten thou shalt bless the Lord for the good land which He hath given thee" (Deut. 8:7-10).

The hunger in the wilderness is not of eternal duration. God who makes us feel want here, will give us food in abundance. This promise is repeated again and again throughout the Scriptures. "To him who thirsteth I will give of the water of life freely." Waters of life, fruits from the tree of life, words from the mouth of God will feed body, soul and mind. "They shall neither hunger nor thirst, for the Lamb will lead them to fountains of living water."

Since time immemorial the poor, hungry race of men has looked forward to this land of satisfaction. The Arab under the burning rays of the desert sun; the inhabitant of Saharah, "that country of thirst," is longingly waiting for paradise where the waters flow crystal clear and without ceasing. The Indian traversing the prairie for days and weeks without a bite to eat;

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the Eskimo returning empty-handed from his fishing trip; the Tunguese lost on the frozen and shelterless steppes — they all look for the promised land. And the human heart hungering for light and life and love, often disappointed, restlessly seeking like Ulysses, hopes ever for the satisfaction which earth does not give. And the Lord who causes us to be hungry to humble us, to try us and to know what is in our hearts and whether we would keep His commandments, will not leave us to starvation and want. He will not give us a stone when we ask for bread, not a scorpion when we ask for a fish!

“And the manna ceased on the morrow and the children of Israel ate of the fruits of the land of Canaan” (Josh. 5:12). For us, too, the day is approaching, when after long pilgrimage through the burning wilderness of this world, we cross the Jordan to enter the promised land where milk and honey flow. This God has sworn He will give to us for an eternal possession. Then the earthly manna, which has taught us

THE HUNGER OF ISRAEL

that man does not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God, will cease and we shall eat of the fruits of the promised land and drink of the clear fountain of life, which quenches our thirst forevermore. This food will not give us the life eternal which we already possess as “the gift of God,” but it will enrich this life and deepen it. Oh that many be called to the joys of Canaan!

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