

### Light from the East

By Rev. James Ross, D.D., London, Ont.

ONE GOD—There were many gods in the popular Egyptian religion, but some of their wisest sages seem to have penetrated beyond the beings whose images were seen and worshiped to the conception of a power illimitable, incomprehensible, eternal; the one awful beyond expression, enduring while all things change, filling immensity and eternity, self created, the one original, before whom was nothing and in whose presence the earth and the heavens are but a morning cloud; the essence of righteousness, terrible to evil-doers, yet merciful, beneficent, full of love. The following expressions are used of Him, although addressed sometimes to lesser

deities: "Vast is his largeness without limit! Virtue supreme in mysterious forms! Soul mysterious, author of his fearful power, life holy and strong created by himself, brilliant, illuminating, dazzling! Soul more soul than the gods, thou art concealed in great Amon." "Hail to thee Goodness itself, Lord of time, who conductest eternity, benevolent of heart, greatest of forms, most holy of laws, he is beloved by the lower heaven, he is the one fair of face, wearing the greatest of crowns, who rules the elements he has created." "His love is in the north, his grace in the south, his beauty takes possession of all hearts, his love makes the arms grow weak."

### THE LESSON APPLIED

By Rev. John W. Little, B.D., Shoal Lake, Man.

Wendell Phillips, the great anti-slavery advocate, as a boy of fourteen, listened to a sermon by Lyman Beecher on the theme, "You belong to God." After the service he went home, shut himself in a room, and prayed: "Oh God, I belong to Thee. Take what is Thine own. I ask this, that whenever a thing is wrong, it may have no power of temptation over me, and that whenever a thing is right, it may take no courage to do it." All the joy and fruitful service of his after life he owed to that hour of consecration. The Lord is our God. As such He claims, and has the right to claim, our real love and loyal allegiance.

That obedience should be freely and gladly given. God, therefore, first redeems us, and then commands us. He makes known His tenderness and mercy in deliverance before He asserts His supreme authority over us. He woos us to Himself. He surrounds us with such a gracious love and helpfulness, that we are drawn to Him in gratitude, and obedience becomes a joy. If the Israelites at Sinai were under obligation to Him on account of the pillar of fire, the manna, the stricken rock and the miracle at the Red Sea, much more are we bound to Him by every tie of love and gratitude and devotion, who live under the full sunshine of His compassion and saving grace in Jesus.

Sir Walter Scott, in his *Old Mortality*, depicts the wanderings of the hero throughout his native land, removing the moss and lichens that had covered, and were hiding from sight, the inscriptions on the tombs of the mighty dead. So God, in the giving of the Law, makes visible, as it were, in a brief but comprehensive summary, the great principles of right and wrong written on the human heart from the first. For the Ten Words are rooted deep in the very constitution of humanity. But *Old Mortality* couldn't bring back to life Scotland's illustrious dead. So the law that pointed out to man what he ought to do gave him no power to do it. It carried no gift of pardon and redemption. For saving and enabling grace we must turn to Jesus Christ.

As naturally and inevitably as the flower turns towards the sun, man in thought and action turns to the supreme object of his desire. The First Commandment presents to man as the great central reality and object of worship one God, personal, vitally interested in man, longing to share his fellowship, worthy of man's devotion and obedience. If the supreme object of one's desire is any other than God, he is pursuing something less than the worthiest and holiest, and degrades himself accordingly. If his allegiance to God is divided, the effect is the same.