

apart from His creative will. Death—coming to young or old—comes by special Divine appointment. “It is appointed unto all men once to die.” God formed those general laws which, being disregarded in human society, have worked such terrible woes; and He also ordained those laws of your body and mind, the violation of which sometimes produces such intolerable anguish. In all these ways we see what a vast reserve force of destruction there must be in the Divine Nature. He who has designedly framed the mechanism of law and force—in body and mind—in such a way that collision with them entails so great and varied calamities, what can He not do to indicate His displeasure against sin, and make men feel how “evil and bitter a thing it is to sin against God?” Sometimes men regard, and very justly, the blessings of daily life as the small outcome of a goodness vast as infinity. And, in like manner, you may regard the terrible powers of destruction which are at work in the storm, in earthquake, in subterranean fires, in the pains of disease, in the convulsions of death, and the torment of conscience, as only the mere motion of a Divine Hand—the indicators of a power before which all defiant creatures must crouch, and finally the heavens “pass away.” Certainly God is not a weak, effeminate, soft Being who cannot lay waste and annihilate. There are signs around us that He can and will carry out His purposes, in spite of all human ingenuity and power.

3rd. *It is said that God did do terrible things in ancient times.*

We have an authentic record of certain terrors of the Lord experienced by creatures of ancient date. “The angels that kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.” Young and old, homes rich and homes poor, fathers, mothers, children—by thousands, and perhaps millions—were in one day deliberately, though sorrowfully, swept by God from life to death—from time to eternity—through the instrumentality of a deluge brought on for the express purpose. The inhabitants of two prosperous cities—Sodom and Gomorrah—were subsequently—without an exception—burnt up by fire and