

it means something else I am more perplexed than ever. What am I to do? In my despair suddenly something tells me it means this, and makes it so plain and certain that, although all the world says it means something else, I know that all the world is wrong. How often have we come to these unintelligible passages, these passages with a hidden meaning, and how meaningless and dark they are, until modern inspiration comes to our aid, the holy Spirit that leads into all truth, comes and reveals its true meaning, and oh, how the passage glows then! It enlightens the understanding and warms the heart.

We are grateful, indeed, for the vast coal mines and esteem them on account of their light and heat-producing qualities almost a necessity to our existence. But it would be wrong and foolish to put our faith and trust in the coal mines for all our warmth and light and comfort, when we know that the great enduring sun itself was not only the original source of the coal mine thousands of years ago, but also that it still exists, and pours down its undiminished beams, vivifying all nature to-day. God is no less enduring than the sun; no less unchanging. His love and light are no less universal in time and space than the light and heat of the outward luminary. God is omnipotent, omnipresent. He pours down, into every soul that comes into existence, divine light sufficient to show unto that soul right from wrong, and to make plain the way through this probationary state into the realms of eternal bliss. "This is no doubtful path," says Southey, "for destiny will lead my course aright; the voice of God within me cannot lie."

Though we may sit by the coal stove when the earth turns from the sun; and burn our gas in the night time, yet it is a poor substitute for the direct solar beams; and for even this we must thank the sun. It is all right in its place, the best the sun can do with the beams it emitted long before we were

here to receive them direct. But when the darkness and the winter are past, and the earth turns again to the sun we discard secondary things and come forth into the sun's warm, revivifying, direct, living beams. Even in the winter and the night, if the sun did not continue to exert an influence on the earth, it would freeze up and all life on it would perish.

So God endures. His grace upholds us even when we turn from Him. The whole cause of separation is on our part. It is our privilege, gained by being faithful, to bask in His eternal sunshine. In Him we might live, and move and have our being, if we would. May we permit nothing to come between our souls and God; neither gold, nor fame, nor self, nor priest, nor Bible. Islam says, "There is no God but Allah."

But thanks for all things instrumental in making us better, and purer, and truer, and bringing us nearer to God. Thanks for the Bible, although it is not the supreme Source, it may greatly aid in showing us the way hereto. "In every age," says Merriam, "the soul that cries out for God finds Him—finds Him, it may be, through the help of sacrifice, or temple, or church, or Bible; but above all finds Him present in itself." The Bible contains truths, and precepts for life, that were inspirations to faithful men of old, and may be a means in bringing our minds into a condition favorable for receiving immediate and direct inspirations from God; for all divine inspiration and revelation comes from God direct, and must, of necessity, be immediate. The inspirations to the prophets, and to Jesus, in the Bible are truths, and become inspirations to us only when God's spirit, the witness for truth within us, owns them as His. The influence from the sun is light and heat: stored away in vegetation and formed in the mine, it is only coal; in our stoves, when touched with modern fire, it becomes again light and heat.