

fore the coming of Jesus Christ upon earth, that love, all irresistible though it might seem, held but a feeble sway over the hearts of men. The true follower of the Mosaic law, with coarser impulse, too often dominated by fear alone, offered his Maker victims on the altar, but stood aloof in awe and trembled while he adored. A vainglorious philosophy analyzed the perfections of the Godhead and expatiated eloquently on His greatness; but methods of analysis and subtle reasoning however searching, were not the warmth of love. The mind, indeed, strained after the sublime, but the heart remained cold and impassive. With the Hebrew of old love seemed rather a sacrifice than a craving of the heart; with the philosopher it was an act devoid of feeling. Thus the union of creature and Creator was not made perfect until Jesus came down from His abode in heaven.

Then, and only then, the dimness of long ages was dispelled, the law ceased to beget but slaves. The reign of fear and awe drew to a close with the rending of the veil in the temple of Jerusalem. For, down the sides of Calvary rolled in great floods love that was to compass the world: the human heart was at length made amenable to its softening influence, and prodigies of love and charity responded to the boundless love of a God Redeemer.

"Lovest thou Me?" was the thrice reiterated question the Saviour put to the one whom He had chosen to rule His Church founded upon very love, "Lovest thou Me *more* than these?" for, the higher was the Prince of the Apostles to be placed above his brethren, the truer, the stronger and the more firmly rooted should that love be which the Master rightfully sought from His disciple. Nor was Jesus disappointed at the diffidence and humility of Peter's answer, a humility painfully acquired from the lesson of the triple denial: "Thou knowest, Lord, that I love Thee." Former presumption and self-assertion had made way for true charity, firmly grounded in humility, in the heart of the self-questioning and repentant Apostle. And it was given him.