

out from their living connection, as jewellers choose gems for setting in some special form, e. g., that of a cross, may make a seemly ornament but fail most thoroughly in discerning what the prophecy is designed to teach. Texts are not to be torn from their native context to adorn our pet systems, but used as the message of God through the prophet to our soul. Men spake with all their surroundings moved, borne along, by the Holy Ghost.

Thoroughly conscious of the necessary imperfection of this effort, we are also assured that if in the way of the facts and principles presented the English Bible is studied, that Bible will be to us a much more living word than in moments of depression it sometimes appears. The history of Noah will be none the less real if we cease to discuss whether the flood was partial or universal, whether or no all existing species of animals found refuge in the ark; and realize that there are to-day ark-builders patiently toiling—"pegging away" as Abraham Lincoln would say—amidst ridicule, discouragement and opposition, that their house may be saved amid floods of ungodliness. Isaiah will speak even more evangelically if we take pains to read—as in Kings and Chronicles we may—that from the fortieth chapter onward there is primary reference to the approaching day when Israel's exiles were to rejoice in their own land, and sing again the songs of Zion in the city of the great King. We might get less speculative theology, but we should find more life; the prophecy monger would be largely discounted, but the ways of God would be more clearly seen; we should find greater unity and a more blessed peace.

Thus intelligently reading we should deepen our reverence for that record of continued and progressive revelation made by divers portions and in divers manners, to be "once for all" completed—not in our apprehension, but—in the Christ. Comparisons with the sacred books of the East, with Vedas or Koran, will only make our word of prophecy more sure and its light more clear. The Bible presents progressive revelation; the Vedas deterioration, the earlier being the simplest and the purest. The Koran is as an iron coat, no growth or