

presence of God, and can put forth his hand at will and take of the fruit of the tree of life which is in the midst of the Paradise of God. This is one consideration which serves to throw light upon the ancient story ; but another is, that the inherent and manifest truth with which that story is thus seen to be fraught goes a very long way towards verifying and authenticating the origin of the story itself. It is either a childish fable and an old world myth, which has no serious meaning and less than no worth, or it is one chapter, and the very first in the history of man's redemption, as that history was written in the providence of God, and as the outlines of that redemption were sketched by Him long before (as must needs be if sketched at all), the details were filled in by the long accumulation of event and the development of circumstance. Thus from the Cross of Christ there is thrown back a light which serves not only to authenticate the Divine origin and significance of that preliminary dispensation which was given by Moses, professedly in the name of God, but also upon that mysterious history which traditionally reaches us from the hand of Moses, and which beyond all reasonable doubt was known to him and to the nation he led forth from Egypt, and which we must assume received the sanction of his authority from the very fact that he adopted its teaching and made it the basis of his own.

The objection may of course be made that to understand the narrative in this way is to relegate it at once to the region of allegory and destroy its value as authoritative history. But this is by no means necessary. If the historical authority of Genesis is accepted, then, of course, that of this narrative is accepted too. But in days like ours, when everything that comes to us in the name of history is questioned and criticised, it may be as well, without dogmatically pronouncing upon the actual historical value of this narrative, to examine and compare it in the light of other parts of Scripture, and if it is found by so doing to receive a large accession of light, then to welcome and hail that light for the sake of the illumination and illustration that it gives.

STANLEY LEATHES, D.D.