

harméd in the flames of Manoah's sacrifice, and smites 185,000 Assyrian in one night; he preserves the three Loly children in the furnace, and Daniel in the den of lions; he announces the birth of John the Baptist and of Jesus, and conducts the celestial choir in the anthem of the nativity; he rolls back the stone from the sepulcher of Jesus, and opens the prison-door for Peter. The angel of the Lord was to the Hebrew the synonym of the unmistakable power of God. No theory of rationalism could account for his august and awful interpositions—and here he is especially connected with answers to prayer. There is no mistaking the Bible doctrine on this subject. When such events as these can be explained by natural causes, by self-scrutiny, self-conquest and self-culture, then prayer may be brought down to the level of natural philosophy and moral philosophy. But, until then, there must remain in this mystery a supernatural factor.

And, in confirmation of this Biblical doctrine, I shall array some examples and proofs of the supernatural force working in response to believing supplication. The examples, selected almost at random, are chosen, not so much for their startling and exceptional character, as to illustrate a positive result not to be explained by the plausible philosophy already referred to.

It has been customary for skeptics to account for answers to prayer by a theory of coincidences, or a mere accidental correspondence between the thing sought and the thing obtained. This might do in one or two cases; but the testimonies to answered prayer run through the whole history of faith and supplication; and not the ignorant alone, or the highly imaginative, whose superstitions or fancies might be supposed to invest events with a needless dignity, but the most intelligent, sober-minded and cautious disciples, form the great cloud of witness-bearers.

We read of the marvelous deliverances of Israel. Are there no corresponding interpositions in more recent times?

A remarkable case of deliverance from persecution, and of punishment visited upon cruel persecutors, is recorded of the Jewish colony at Alexandria, about two hundred years before Christ.

Ptolemy Philopater, furiously angry at the refusal of the high-priest to permit him to invade the temple courts at Jerusalem, on his return to Egypt flung into prison all the Jews upon whom he could lay his hands. There was at Alexandria a huge hippodrome used for gladiatorial shows, and here a host of captives were confined. The king decreed that elephants, made furious by intoxicating and stimulating drugs, should be let loose upon them in the arena of this amphitheater, and allowed to trample them to death. For two days his own drunken revels delayed the execution of this horrid decree, and for two days there went up ceaseless prayer to Israel's God that He who delivered Daniel from the lions would rescue His helpless people.

The third day came, and the infuriated monsters were driven into the amphitheater and goaded forward to torture the prisoners. But, wonderful to relate, instead of attacking and destroying these Jews, they turned madly upon the guards and the spectators, killed many of them, and drove the rest in terror from the corridors! Ptolemy was so impressed with this exhibition of power of the God of the Jews that he released the prisoners, and, like Ahasuerus, permitted them to destroy their foes.

The Waldenses are the Israel of the Alps, who, in their mountain fastnesses, for centuries guarded the ark of primitive faith and worship, while the terrors of the Vatican confronted them—that summit of terror which was "an Olympus for its false gods, a Sinai for its thunders, and a Calvary for its blood." Read the story of the siege of La Bal-sille, their mountain fortress. Hemmed in by the French and Sardinian army through the summer, gaunt famine stared them in the face; the foe guarded every outlet of the valley, and their ungathered crops lay in the fields. In