

was He, for the proto-martyr also quotes his own account, "I am the God of Abraham;" and if we want still further proof of His divinity, we have it in Exodus iii. 14, where we read, "And God said to Moses, I am that I am," and say, "I am," &c., &c. or, in other words, "the self-existent Jehovah." Can we fail now to see who this Angel, calling Himself by the inconceivable name of God, is? None other than the Angel of the Covenant who appeared in ancient times unto the Fathers, and showed Himself under divine manifestations to the leaders of Israel. This is He that was with the Church in the wilderness, and at the giving of the law. Various appearances of Himself He made before His incarnation, to prepare the Church for that event, and here was a most suitable one in the bush burning and yet not consumed, to *show His inhabitation of our nature without its destruction*. This, then, was an appearance of our Lord, the Angel or interceder between God and man, and yet no mere created or ordinary angel, but God, divine in His nature as well as in His mission; for over and over He uses the very titles and incommunicable attributes of Jehovah. This, then, was the Messiah—the Christ. He it was that was with the Church in the wilderness, and He was also in the bush, calling and qualifying Moses, and imparting to him communications. Moses made his first acquaintance with Deity there, and found grace. The Angel laid His terrors by, and revealed the loving kindness of Jehovah, and Moses' fears were dispelled, and he forthwith devoted himself to his life-long work. But this Angel of the Covenant awaits *our* acquaintance, and Deity, full of grace and of truth. He is ready to reveal to us. In light and love will He make the revelation; the fire of His love warming our hearts, while the flame of His Spirit baptizes our souls; and then shall we be ready to enter upon our life-work with zeal, and to fulfil our ministry. Both consecration to office and conversion to God proceed from Him, and those to whom He reveals Himself are made clean and willing to serve Him. Then let us turn aside and hold communion with Him, with the shoes of irreverence from off our feet, for the ground is holy, and enquire what message he would have us deliver, and ask for the unction of the Holy One, whereby we shall know it ourselves, and utter it from the heart to the heart: then shall the result be profitable for our own souls and for our ministry. It was after Isaiah had his lips touched with a live coal, and Moses had been at the bush, that both stood forth to speak for God, after much secret communion. Then let us neglect not this intercessor, while yet the good Angel is in the bush, and it burn with fire, but does not consume.

But what is this bush, and why should so humble an image be employed? The bush represents the Church, a humble and lowly handmaid; not the tall cedar or gigantic oak, but the unpretending bramble is made the figure of her lowliness, to teach us that not in herself, or in her externals, is there meant a glory, but in her Divine Head. In fact, He Himself was represented by the lily of the valley, an unpretending but precious flower: how much more His Church! to call our attention away from outward show to that inward glory which really characterizes the Church of Christ! Were splendour or power, riches or numbers, the marks of a true Church, then would we find her represented by the lofty cedar or magnificent palm: but no, the lowly vine is her emblem, and the humble bramble her figure. But yet, like these shrubs, she is valuable, "all glorious within" is the King's daughter, her adorning solid, and her excellencies enduring, and herself the mother of millions of sons and daughters who shall serve God in earth and heaven. Therefore let none despise her because of her appearance: that lowly appearance best befits her as the handmaid of Christ, and constitutes her safety; whereas the gigantic oak is exposed to the fury of the tempest, and the cedar uprooted by the storm, the humble bramble escapes safe in her very humility; but as the spouse of Christ, the Church is glorious, and possesses every spiritual excellence, therefore let us appreciate her qualities and uses.