

these olden nations would at once connect with the finger of God, was surely the most impressive, most natural form of moral teaching, and the one most to be expected. If Hebrew history were without its examples of striking incidents used as divine object-lessons, we should have wondered at it. Their absence would try our faith more than their presence. To a people apt in receiving this kind of teaching, God gave these object-lessons; and the fact that they were accepted so readily confirms our faith in the wisdom that selected the method.

Take the story of the first man's first sin. The whole series of circumstances seems to be contrived for their moral impression. No need, so far as man's actual fall was concerned, of the events which took place in the garden, of the serpent's agency, of the sword at the gate. But the occurrences were to be for the world's teaching. The garden not only does symbolize, but was intended, as we know by Christ's use of the word Paradise, to symbolize the state of happy holiness, the fulness of which is heaven. And sin was to be made loathsome and foul; and temptation to be seen as stealthy and mean, a crouching serpent, with slimy tongue and insinuating motion and beautiful form, to charm and