

The Symbol Rises to the Idea

It has been said, and well said, that "as we rise, the symbols disappear," and we can see how true it is in this Bible story that we are considering. The first symbol in the first thousand years was the false sense of creator and creation, where there was a process of analysis, uncovering, and annihilation through Mind. The second symbol-Noah and the ark-was a little higher, but it was still a myth, an origin-story. And then the symbol changed, and the third symbol was Abraham; Abraham had one son to represent the idea. Then as the spiritual idea developed, we came to the symbol of Isaac, and Isaac had two sons, Jacob and Esau. And then we had the symbol of Jacob, and Jacob had twelve sons, and in their turn they became the symbol. After that the symbol changed again. If you remember that every day of creation is a day of Life, of Truth, and of Love, you can see quite clearly how the sense of Life, Truth, and Love is brought out in the thousand-year periods illustrating each day of creation. Then the first thousand-year period you saw a true sense of fatherhood, of sonship, and of motherhood correcting the Adam dream. There was Adam, the belief of creator, or fatherhood; his three sons, who represented the idea in that age, and who symbolized the three degrees of analysis, uncovering, and annihilation; and then the whole period climaxed in Enoch, who walked with God. And so you had the sense of fatherhood, sonship, and motherhood. Then came the story of Noah and the ark. here was Noah-a sense of fatherhood; there was the ark-a sense of the idea; and the climax of that period was the bow,-the rainbow with its seven main colours, symbolizing the days of creation, a foretaste of Science. So again you saw an illustration of Life, Truth, and Love. Then came Abraham, and there was Abraham - fatherhood; Isaac - sonship; and Sarah - motherhood. Again you had some sense of Life, Truth, and Love. Then came Isaac, and there was Isaac as the fatherhood, Jacob and Esau as the sonship, and Rebekah as the motherhood.

All the time the idea was developing and the symbol was developing, because as we rise the symbols rise, until eventually the symbol and the idea become one. To-day the symbol is Science and the idea **is** Science. The oneness of symbol and idea first became clear in the time of Jesus. At first the human Jesus was the symbol, but when Jesus demonstrated the Christ then that Christ-idea became both the symbol **and** the idea. You remember that Mrs. Eddy says, "The only proper symbol of God as person is Mind's infinite ideal. What is this ideal? Who shall behold it? This ideal is God's own image, spiritual and infinite. Even eternity can never reveal the whole of God, since there is no limit to infinitude or to its reflections" (S. & H. 517: 19-24). Jesus made himself the Son of God, and thereby wedded the symbol and the idea. But let's go on and develop the story as we have seen it in the Bible.

We came to the symbol of Jacob, illustrating fatherhood, and his twelve sons, illustrating the sonship of the idea; and the motherhood in that relationship was really expressed by Joseph, who was the climax of the demonstration. After that there was a change, because Moses was not the symbol of the spiritual idea. Moses was not the symbol, but he **gave** the symbol. The symbol which he gave of the fatherhood of God was Jahweh : the symbol which he gave of the sonship of the idea was the Commandments; and the symbol which he gave of the womanhood and motherhood of the

idea was the Promised Land. Moses gave those three symbols, but he himself was not the symbol.

So the symbols have been Adam and Eve, then Noah and the ark, then Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, then the twelve sons, but when we come to Moses, the whole thing is different. We begin to see him as the recorder of the symbol. The symbol becomes Jahweh, then the Commandments, and then the Promised Land.

And then we come to the prophetic age, and the creative sense, the fatherhood, was symbolized by the writing and the inspiration of the prophets. The symbol was not the prophets, but their writing and inspiration. The idea was symbolized for the first time by a sense of system; and motherhood in that period was symbolized by Jerusalem, "which is the mother of us all" (Gal. 4: 26), as Paul says. So again you have a sense of fatherhood, of the idea, and of motherhood. And then you come to the time of Jesus, and he demonstrated Fatherhood as Life when he fulfilled the days of creation; he demonstrated sonship through his Christ selfhood; and he demonstrated motherhood in his ascension. To-day you find that we are in the period of Christianity, and the essence of Christianity is relationship, the demonstration of the relationship of Life, Truth, and Love, the only relationship, whereby every one of us becomes by reflection a father and a son and a mother to ourselves and to each other.

But don't you see as we trace the story of the Bible how the symbols disappear? First the symbol was Adam and Eve, then it was Noah and the ark, then it became Abraham, then Isaac, then Jacob, then the twelve sons, -climaxing in that wonderful Joseph sense, -and then it became Jahweh, the Commandments, and the Promised Land. All the time the symbol was rising and coming nearer to the idea itself.

John W. Doorly, Talks on the Science of the Bible, Vol. II, p. 363