

delusion is the one that God sends (2 Thess. 2:11). This verse is the only occurrence of the word 'delusion' in the New Testament. Of particular interest is the reason why God sends this deception: "because they received not the love of the truth . . . but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (vv. 10,12).

The nature of this delusion which is sent by God cannot be treated in depth within the compass of this letter. In any case it is possible that God sends a different form of deception to suit each age or generation. However, it is advisable

that we consider the suggestion that the big delusion of the present age is the theory of evolution. If that is so, how appropriate!

The concept that God does not exist is hugely palatable to a pleasure-seeking world. It removes the rightful supervision of a Maker. It is sad to witness an increasing culture of unashamed evil, but it affords a boost to our faith in the truth of the revealed Word, which says that "iniquity shall abound, [and] the love of many shall wax cold" (Mt. 24:12).

I. T. Rees
Llanelli

Moses: earth's meekest man

12. The first day of a new life

John Mitchell

When Israel arrived on the other side of the Red Sea they began a new life, free from the bondage of Egypt. It was appropriate that they should mark it by praise to God.

THE CROSSING of the Red Sea was far more than a great miracle. It was the consecration of a whole nation as the people of God for ever. It broke with their past and established a relationship with God as close as any that could be imagined: "Out of Egypt have I called My son" was the Divine interpretation of it (Mt. 2:15; cf. Hos. 11:1). They had been called out from the darkness of Egyptian idolatry to marvellous light, and to a newness of life that had been signified by their burial in the cloud and in the sea and a rising again on the other side.

The first Passover, that final meal taken in Egypt with staff in hand, had pointed forward to a more effective Saviour than Moses, but until he came they would have no greater prophet than he in whose name they were now baptized. Moses, the man with whom God would speak face to face, would be their intermediary and the conveyor of God's law, which, if kept, would keep them in health, spiritually and physically, until their journey's end.

The song of Moses

Such an occasion as the crossing of the Red Sea could not pass without a national celebration and an ascription of praise to Yahweh Himself Who had delivered them from Pharaoh and all the might of Egypt. Heaven itself must have rung

with their voices as the children of Israel, led by Moses, sang this song (Exodus 15) on the following morning, saying:

"I will sing to the LORD,
For He has triumphed gloriously!
The horse and its rider
He has thrown into the sea!
The LORD is my strength and song,
And He has become my salvation;
He is my God, and I will praise Him;
My father's God, and I will exalt Him".

So ended the first stanza. The second extolled Yahweh as a warrior:

"The LORD is a man of war;
The LORD is His name.
Pharaoh's chariots and his army He has cast
into the sea;
His chosen captains also are drowned in the
Red Sea.
The depths have covered them;
They sank to the bottom like a stone".

Next the song spoke of God's almighty power over both men and the elements:

"Your right hand, O LORD, has become
glorious in power;
Your right hand, O LORD, has dashed the
enemy in pieces.
And in the greatness of Your excellence
You have overthrown those who rose
against You;
You sent forth Your wrath;
It consumed them like stubble.
And with the blast of Your nostrils

The waters were gathered together;
The floods stood upright like a heap;
The depths congealed in the heart of the
sea”.

Pharaoh’s intentions and design were laid bare:

“The enemy said, ‘I will pursue,
I will overtake,
I will divide the spoil;
My desire shall be satisfied on them.
I will draw my sword,
My hand shall destroy them’.
You blew with Your wind,
The sea covered them;
They sank like lead in the mighty waters”.

There never was, or could be, a god like unto
Yahweh with all His glorious attributes:

“Who is like You, O LORD, among the gods?
Who is like You, glorious in holiness,
Fearful in praises, doing wonders?
You stretched out Your right hand;
The earth swallowed them.
You in Your mercy have led forth
The people whom You have redeemed;
You have guided them in Your strength
To Your holy habitation”.

The effect upon the peoples of the Promised Land
would be shattering:

“The people will hear and be afraid;
Sorrow will take hold of the inhabitants of
Philistia.

Then the chiefs of Edom will be dismayed;
The mighty men of Moab,
Trembling will take hold of them;
All the inhabitants of Canaan will melt
away.

Fear and dread will fall on them;
By the greatness of Your arm
They will be as still as a stone,
Till Your people pass over, O LORD,
Till the people pass over
Whom You have purchased”.

And they would share, not just a land but God’s
inheritance:

“You will bring them in and plant them
In the mountain of Your inheritance,
In the place, O LORD, which You have made
For Your own dwelling,
The sanctuary, O LORD, which Your hands
have established”.

Then the Eternal God would be their refuge, for
“The LORD shall reign forever and ever”
(NKJV).

Miriam and the women join in

As the strains of song from over a million voices
died away there came another sound when
Miriam, the prophetess and sister of Moses, took
a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went
out after her with timbrels and with dances, and
Miriam answered them:

“Sing to the LORD,
For He has triumphed gloriously!
The horse and its rider
He has thrown into the sea!”

Cunningham Geikie paints a graphic picture as
the refrain was seized upon by the women:

“Uttered first, in all probability, by a single
voice, from some rock which lifted the reciter
above the vast multitude between the hills
and the sea, its refrain was caught up by the
women and maidens of Israel, and sung by
them as they danced for joy—for in the east, as
a rule, only women dance—their tambourines
held over their head, and struck in unison
as they moved. Miriam, sister of Aaron and
Moses, noblest as well as first of the daughters
of the people, led the way, the whole chorus
of sisters following, their right hands beating
in time the skin disk of their simple instru-
ment, round which rows of shells, or pieces of
metal, added to the cheerful noise. Then would
strike in the deep, solemn chorus of the men,
every voice expressing, in its loudest chant,
enthusiasm and gratitude for the wondrous
deliverance vouchsafed”.¹

Gradually thereafter the multitude settled
down, and it was not long before the Sinaitic
shore was dotted with the tents of Israel. As the
stars appeared and the pillar of fire shone through
Israel’s accompanying cloud, the people slept
secure. On the morrow the real journey to the
Promised Land would begin.

(To be continued)

1. Cunningham Geikie, *Hours with the Bible*, Vol. 2, p. 190.

2007 Special Issue

The next issue will be the 2007 Special Issue, on the Gospel of Luke. It will be the combined August/September issue, planned to appear in early September.