

that there was a God in Israel, and God wanted the Children of Israel to know that there is a God in Israel. The famous phrase that runs through those first 15 chapters of the Book of Exodus is simply, "I am the Lord." It was the Almighty God who led Israel out. He divided the Red Sea. The water stood up in walls on either side. They walked across on dry ground, and they sang their great hymn of deliverance. It was this God who gave them a pillar of fire by night and a pillar of cloud by day, and it led them for 40 long years in their wilderness journeys. It was this God when they needed food who brought in the quail. And it was this God, the Bible says, who sent down the manna from heaven. It did not come from the tamarisk trees, as the Canadian Sunday school literature says. It was the gift of Almighty God in His almighty power. Believe me, beloved, if our God could raise Jesus Christ from the dead, as He did, our God could break asunder all the rules of nature and bring His Son into this world by the supreme miracle of the Virgin Birth and could send manna from heaven to feed His people.

This week there came from Canada the official publication of the United Church containing an article on this curriculum by the editor, with whom I had opportunity to talk at great length in New Delhi. He reports an interview with the researcher for this new curriculum, a Mr. Nelson Abraham. May I read you what he now says about this: "It's my impression that since the late forties there has been a dramatic and real change in the United Church. I don't like the word progressive because it has political connotations, but that is the best word to explain what I mean. There is a vital new element in the church, willing to examine new ideas. These people will become the driving force in the United Church in the next 20 years. Or perhaps even before that, for things are happening in the church with real rapidity. . . . There is an increasing willingness to examine old patterns to see if they can be made more effective by change. In my first year of research I doubted if this pattern would emerge. Most of the answers I received were indicative of a much more cautious element. But the second year has been decidedly different."

### **Literalists Derided**

Then he goes on. He says the United Church still has in it what he calls "a vociferous minority of literalists." That would represent the fundamentalists, of course. "But he is careful to point out that this to him is merely a reflection of their unwillingness to adopt change. 'To them any change is dangerous. It is not so much a fact of theology as it is one of psychology.'

"When you ask him about the teachers who have been trying the New Curriculum, he tells you frankly, 'They are worried. Many of them wonder if they are equipped to do the job. This is not laziness,