

Slavery and the Declaration of Independence

A Transcript of a Commentary by Ambrose I. Lane, Sr. Monday April 16, 2007 replay of a July 4th program.

When America's Founders meet in early July of 1776, they agreed finally with the words written for them mostly by Thomas Jefferson. Among those words was a Declaration of Independence. He wrote and they agreed and resolved --

That these united Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States, that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved;

They also told the world that they held –

...these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.

Each signed that revolutionary document, knowing that failure to create a nation and defend those words meant certain death for treason to the British Crown. Failure meant execution by hanging. Their words, especially those regarding the self-evident truths have inspired oppressed people around the world for more than two centuries. Even Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam's leader, was so inspired and after driving the French out of his country, let the world know his was the same vision that enthralled America's Founders. But he soon realized that America's then leadership rejected his desire to make that vision real for the people of Vietnam. And those leaders were determined to kill millions of Vietnam's people to stop Ho Chi Minh. And as the Vietnam war would prove, our leaders were willing to send 58,000 of our own youths to their deaths and tens of thousands of more to be maimed and wounded in order to stop Ho Chi Minh from implementing our Nation's Founders vision in his country.

Just as America's leaders in the later decades in the later 20th century tried to stop our Founder's visions in Vietnam, those original Founder's were determined to stop the spread of their enunciated truths to every person in America, the country they would create. To fully understand our history we must understand that implementation of those words would be slow and would come piece by piece only after long years of pain and struggle. And we would not begin as a democratic nation. Democracy would slowly evolve over two centuries.

We officially begin our legal and national life as an oligarchy-plutocracy. But our founders called it a Republic. An Oligarchy is defined simply as that form of government in which supreme power is restricted and exercised by the few. And a Plutocracy is defined simply as that form of an oligarchy wherein the supreme power is restricted to and exercised by the few who are rich, by the wealthy classes, and by those George Bush called his base; the "haves" and the "haves more".

Those facts, that 200 plus years of our rollercoaster history should not take any deserved credit away from or founders or diminish the power of those visionary words in our Declaration of Independence.

In 1857, in response to the Dred Scott decision which held that black American were not included nor contemplated in the Declaration of Independence or the Constitution, Abraham Lincoln attacked that decision and the reasoning used in the opinion written by Chief Justice Taney in a speech on June 26, 1857 at Springfield, Illinois. In that speech Lincoln attacked both Justice Taney and Steven Douglas who was his opponent for the Senate in that State. And this is what Lincoln said about the Declaration of Independence after he had some words about Chief Justice Taney. He said the Chief Justice...

“...plainly assumes, as a fact, that the public estimate of the black man is more favorable now than it was in the days of the Revolution. This assumption is a mistake. In some trifling particulars, the condition of that race has been ameliorated; but, as a whole, in this country, the change between then and now is decidedly the other way; and their ultimate destiny has never appeared so hopeless as in the last three or four years.”

And then he said,

“All the powers of earth seem rapidly combining against him. Mammon is after him; ambition follows, and philosophy follows, and the Theology of the day is fast joining the cry. They have him in his prison house; they have searched his person, and left no prying instrument with him. One after another they have closed the heavy iron doors upon him, and now they have him, as it were, bolted in with a lock of a hundred keys, which can never be unlocked without the concurrence of every key; the keys in the hands of a hundred different men, and they scattered to a hundred different and distant places; and they stand musing as to what invention, in all the dominions of mind and matter, can be produced to make the impossibility of his escape more complete than it is.” – Speech on Dred Scott – June 26, 1857 – Springfield Illinois.

So he says to the Chief Justice, “It is grossly incorrect to say or assume that the public estimate of the Negro is more favorable now than it was at the origin of the government.” Then he addresses what Taney had to say about the Declaration of Independence. He said,

“Chief Justice Taney, in his opinion in the Dred Scott case, admits that the language of the Declaration is broad enough to include the whole human family, but he and Judge Douglas argue that the authors of that instrument did not intend to include negroes, by the fact that they did not at once, actually place them on an equality with the whites. Now this grave argument comes to just nothing at all, by the other fact, that they did not at once, or ever afterwards, actually place all white people on an equality with one or another.”

And then Lincoln gives his view of the Declaration. He said,

I think the authors of that notable instrument intended to include all men, but they did not intend to declare all men equal in all respects. They did not mean to say all were equal in color, size, intellect, moral developments, or social capacity. They defined with tolerable distinctness, in what respects they did consider all men created equal—equal in "certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." This they said, and this meant. They did not mean to assert the obvious untruth, that all were then actually enjoying that equality, nor yet, that they were about to confer it immediately upon them. In fact they had no power to confer such a boon. They meant simply to declare the right, so that the enforcement of it might follow as fast as circumstances should permit.

They meant to set up a standard maxim for free society, which should be familiar to all, and revered by all; constantly looked to, constantly labored for, and even though never perfectly attained, constantly approximated, and thereby constantly spreading and deepening its influence, and augmenting the happiness and value of life to all people of all colors everywhere. The assertion that "all men are created equal" was of no practical use in effecting our separation from Great Britain; and it was placed in the Declaration, nor for that, but for future use. Its authors meant it to be, thank God, it is now proving itself, a stumbling block to those who in after times might seek to turn a free people back into the hateful paths of despotism. They knew the proneness of prosperity to breed tyrants, and they meant when such should re-appear in this fair land and commence their vocation they should find left for them at least one hard nut to crack.

Lincoln then said "I have now briefly expressed my view of the meaning and objects of that part of the Declaration of Independence which declares that "all men are created equal." Then he turns to Judge Douglas.

Now let us hear Judge Douglas' view of the same subject, as I find it in the printed report of his late speech. Here it is:

"No man can vindicate the character, motives and conduct of the signers of the Declaration of Independence except upon the hypothesis that they referred to the white race alone, and not to the African, when they declared all men to have been created equal—that they were speaking of British subjects on this continent being equal to British subjects born and residing in Great Britain—that they were entitled to the same inalienable rights, and among them were enumerated life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. The Declaration was adopted for the purpose of justifying the colonists in the eyes of the civilized world in withdrawing their allegiance from the British crown, and dissolving their connection with the mother country.

Then Lincoln says, "My good friends, read that carefully over some leisure hour, and ponder well upon it—see what a mere wreck—mangled ruin—it makes of our once glorious Declaration."

And then he paraphrases Douglas' statement,

They were speaking of British subjects on this continent being equal to British subjects born and residing in Great Britain!" Why, according to this, not only Negroes but white people outside of Great Britain and America are not spoken of in that instrument. The English, Irish and Scotch, along with white Americans, were included to be sure, but the French, Germans and other white people of the world are all gone to pot along with the Judge's inferior races. I had thought the Declaration promised something better than the condition of British subjects; but no, it only meant that we should be equal to them in their own oppressed and unequal condition. According to that, it gave no promise that having kicked off the King and Lords of Great Britain; we should not at once be saddled with a King and Lords of our own.

I had thought the Declaration contemplated the progressive improvement in the condition of all men everywhere; but no, it merely "was adopted for the purpose of justifying the colonists in the eyes of the civilized world in withdrawing their allegiance from the British crown, and dissolving their connection with the mother country." Why, that object having been effected some eighty years ago, the Declaration is of no practical use now—mere rubbish—old wadding left to rot on the battle-field after the victory is won.

And then he said to his audience,

I understand you are preparing to celebrate the "Fourth," tomorrow week. What for? The doings of that day had no reference to the present; and quite half of you are not even descendants of those who were referred to at that day. But I suppose you will celebrate; and will even go so far as to read the Declaration. Suppose after you read it once in the old fashioned way, you read it once more with Judge Douglas' version. It will then run thus: "We hold these truths to be self-evident that all British subjects who were on this continent eighty-one years ago, were created equal to all British subjects born and then residing in Great Britain."

And Lincoln said,

And now I appeal to all—to Democrats as well as others,—are you really willing that the Declaration shall be thus frittered away?—thus left no more at most, than an interesting memorial of the dead past? Thus shorn of its vitality, and practical value; and left without the germ or even the suggestion of the individual rights of man in it?

It was quite a performance by a rather skilled politician. Now after the Declaration, they had to form a government. They had tried once with something called the Articles of Confederation. Now they were meeting to make a second attempt to craft a workable constitution because the Articles of Confederation was a dismal failure. But they had – they were meeting in an atmosphere of great concern. While they met Jefferson was in Paris. An armed rebellion called the Shay's Rebellion was in progress and many of the participants in the convention expressed grave concerns about the internal dangers of democracy, what they called "mobocracy". So they acted to protect their class

interests from the perceived dangerous from within and without the nation they wanted to form. They chose what they called a republican form of government because in a republic only some people are allowed to vote and their eligibility to vote is defined by laws approved and determined by the ruling class whose interests matter most and are paramount.

Thus the republic the founders set up placed the forming new nation's supreme power in the hands of the limited body of citizens entitled to vote. That supreme power was to be exercised by the persons those few voted to place in office. Those placed in office were made responsible only to those few who were allowed to vote, not to the masses of what became Americans. And wealth determined whether a citizen was allowed to vote. Even some slave owners didn't have enough wealth to vote.

Now if we had begun as a democracy our government's supreme power would have been invested in the people without a money qualifier, it would have been exercised by the masses through free elections, either directly or indirectly through the regularly elected representatives. Those who gathered in Philadelphia to form a constitution thus had to deal with both classism and racism. Classism applied to poorer European immigrants and former European indentured servants who had been really slaves for a specified period time, usual five to seven years. And of course racism applied to both free and enslaved Africans. These were problems European immigrant leaders had created in trying to structure their exploitation of the lands and people they set out to plunder. Their created problems of classism and racism have followed us into the 21st century. And since the 1700's there have been three attempts to deal with these created problems of classism and racism.

We must understand a major historical fact that is often overlooked and I can't say it enough; when Europeans came to this continent to occupy land and steal, plunder, and develop its rich resources, they did not come as white people. They came as Germans, British, French and other European tribal and state members. And with Africans came they came as Cush, Asante, Hausa, Dahoma tribal and state members, they did come as black people. These designations, white and black, were created by laws approved and coercively enforced by legal and illegal terrorism in all governmental units created by those European plunderers. The intent of those creators was to maximally exploit the labor of those Africans and their descendants and the original native populations found here after the time of indenture for white Europeans had ended. Later the intent evolved into a guarantee by law that African descendants would always occupy the bottom rung on the nation's economic, cultural, social, and political ladders. The mirror intent was to guarantee that every European descendant would always enjoy the special privileges of just being white and thus would always have someone to look down on economically, culturally, socially, and politically.

Now the first attempt to deal with this created problem of racism was the Civil War, the most devastating war ever fought by Americans. It was a war waged by the oligarchy-plutocracy of the south and the oligarchy-plutocracy of the north over the issue of slavery, its proposed extension into other continental territories, and the changes in relative power equations that the proposed extension would bring. Many members of both power groups lusted for the imagined wealth that building a continental wide railroad would bring in trade with China. It reminds me of today.

Now the North wanted the railroad to take a northern route to California so they could sell the products from their factories. The South wanted a southern route so they could sell their cotton and tobacco products. Now another slave state would mean two more Senators and more members of the Congress in support of the South's ruling class. The opposite, another free state, would benefit the North. As in all wars money and patriotic propaganda, fed by each plutocracy to the masses, would lead to massive deaths of mostly poor people, white and black. The war and its devastation would not resolve the racism but it would release African descendants from legal slavery. The question after the war was what do we do now? This was the question that the plutocracies of the North and South asked themselves.

Just as our current president had no realistic plan for reconstruction in Iraq, neither did either side in the Civil War. At first decisions about reconstruction were made by a group called the Radical Republicans. That group of congress person was responsible for major enactments both in terms of legislation and the passage and application of Constitutional law. They passed the civil rights acts of 1866 and 1875 which formerly granted newly freed persons all but one of the rights legally enjoyed by white citizens, the later granted equal rights in public accommodations. Unfortunately for history, the US Supreme Court, which has always been the final judicial protector of the rights and privileges of members of the national oligarchy-plutocracy, struck down the 1875 Act in 1883 as unconstitutional.

The most important contribution of the Radical Republicans was the creation and ratification of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments to the Constitution. The first of these outlawed slavery and involuntary servitude except in conviction of the crime. The second defined both state and national citizenship for the first time, outlawed any law that abridges the privileges and immunities of citizens, prohibited any state from depriving any person – not just a citizen but any person -- life, liberty, and property with out due process of law, and prohibited any state from denying any person -- once again not just a citizen but any person -- equal protection of the laws.

The third of these prohibited the denial or abridgement of the right to vote based on race, color, or previous condition of servitude. It was a monumentally ethical, moral, and visionary performance by our nation's highest elected legislative body. But once again, as it has done repeatedly throughout our history, the ultimate judicial protectors of the nation's white oligarchy-plutocracy step in to thwart the impact of their legislative enactments. Of course they knew that, that's why they passed amendments to the basic document – to our constitution – because the Supreme would act to kill their legislative efforts. And in 1883 the Court ruled that the civil rights act of 1875 was unconstitutional. And like a century later -- the Brown vs. Board of Education decision – the civil rights cases of 1883 consolidated five lower court cases. With only one Justice dissenting, the opinion was written by Justice Joseph P. Bradley. Justice Bradley not only ruled the law unconstitutional but he went out of way to take cheap shot at the newly freed persons who would have benefited from the law's provisions. This is what he wrote, in part,

“When a man has emerged from slavery ... there must be some stage when he takes the rank of a mere citizen and ceases to be the special favorite of the laws....”

Ah – no one asked him how slaves and now new freed persons who were former slaves had ever been a special favorite of the laws. But he went on, he said -- he wrote;

There were thousands of free colored people in this country before the abolition of slavery, enjoying all the essential rights of life, liberty and property the same as white citizens; yet no one, at that time, thought that it was any invasion of his personal status as a freedman because he was not admitted to all the privileges enjoyed by white citizens, or because he was subjected to discriminations in the enjoyment of accommodations in inns, public conveyances and places of amusement.

In short Bradley through the court decision was saying in simple terms to those newly freed person don't expect to be treated like any other white citizen. Now the long dissent was written by a former Kentucky slave owner who, interesting enough, fought on the side of the Union during the Civil War, Justice John Marshall Harlan. Harlan wrote that the purpose of the law was to accomplish for blacks, his words "...what had already been done in every state in the Union for the white race ...to enable the black race to take the rank of mere citizens." But he complained that at every step in this direction the nation has been confronted with class tyranny. Harlan concluded;

There cannot be, in this republic, any class of human beings in practical subjection to another class, with power in the latter to dole out to the former just such privileges as they may choose to grant.

When, in 1964, a hundred years later Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964, what we finally got were the rights originally passed by Congress in 1866 and 1875. And the Supreme Court's decision of 1883 had guaranteed that almost century long denial. But the racist Supreme Court was on a roll. Its next denial took place -- major denial -- took place in 1886 in its Plessy v. Ferguson which was finally overturned by Brown v. Board of Education and subsequent decisions beginning in 1954. The Plessy decision was written by a New Englander, Justice Henry B. Brown. Now this Massachusetts native once wrote that he came from a New England purity family in which there had been no admixture of alien blood for two hundred years – which gives us some indication of his mindset. He like, Justice Bradley, also took cheap shots at blacks as a class and concluded that Louisiana laws separating the classes by race violated neither the 13th nor 14th Amendments. Again, Justice Harlan was the lone dissenter and it was his dissent that contained the now famous words "...our constitution is color blind". These words are often taken out of context because those words followed his assertion that, and I quote;

...in the view of the Constitution, in the eye of the law, there is in this country no superior, dominant, ruling class of citizens. There is no caste here.

And then follows the words;

Our Constitution is color-blind and neither knows nor tolerates classes among citizens. In respect of civil rights, all citizens are equal before the law.

They have twisted those words to make the meaning different. He said there was no caste here, that there was no superior, dominate ruling class of citizens. That's what he meant when he said the

constitution was color-blind. Everybody is equal before the law. Read some of the Opinions that are coming out by the Right Wing Fascist in this country when they quote the words from Harlan's dissent.

A part of Harlan's dissent was, what I call, prophetic. Having been a member of the slave holding class he saw clearly how the Plessy decision that the Court was then going to make would become the legal basis of the construction of what we can only call the America Apartheid System. Now these were his words, and I quote. If laws like the Louisiana law in the Plessy case

... should be enacted in the several States of the Union, the effect would be in the highest degree mischievous. Slavery, as an institution tolerated by law would, it is true, have disappeared from our country, but there would remain a power in the States, by sinister legislation, to interfere with the full enjoyment of the blessings of freedom; to regulate civil rights, common to all citizens upon the basis of race; and to place in a condition of legal inferiority a large body of American citizens,...

Within ten years Harlan's prophecy became true as every Confederate State and other states enacted what could only be called America's Apartheid laws solidifying our Apartheid institutions and way of life that lasted until -- legally until about 1970. This Administration likes to talk about terrorism. Well terrorism against black people in this country, official and unofficial, supported by law and the coercive power of state, and local, and federal governments became the American way of life. While this was our reality within America, our national government used its propaganda power to present a face to the rest of the world that differed from the grim reality faced by its African descendents within its borders. Propagandists were rewarded handsomely for false, so-called scientific proof of our inferiority as humans. A dual system of institutions was created to guarantee that poor southern whites would not succumb to class consciousness in their despair over the horrendous conditions that attained after the Civil War. The greatest danger posed to the Southern Ruling class was the possibility that blacks and whites would realize their common class interest and get rid of the racism that so many people had told them was the normal way of life.

As W. J. Cash wrote about this period and its dangers to the white leadership in the country, especially in the south, this was the social chaos that such a realization would produce and it had to be stopped, else in Cash's words quote "...it would very likely destroy the very fabric of racism." So the dual system apartheid was consciously chosen, north and south. Although the leadership came late to the idea, in the south, to public education they decided to provide public education even to blacks. But in Cash's words "... the education provided to blacks would be minimally supported and designed to make sure that blacks acquired no dangerous notions, to control what he was taught, to make sure that he is educated to fit into and stay in his place."

And what became the American way of life. Black schools were grossly inferior in every respect with public expenditures kept to the barest minimum in contrast to white schools. And that was the way things were until about 1970, beginning first with the Brown decision in 1954 which became the beginning of the end of our system of legal Apartheid, even though that decision did not order the immediate dismantling of the segregated system. What followed was desegregation for swimming pools and all other public accommodations. Now, we're gonna take a short break and

when we come back we're going to read a portion of Frederick Douglas' July 4th speech in Rochester, New York.

Frederick Douglas had been asked to speak in Rochester, New York and he delivered a devastating speech in terms of its analysis of what the nation was at that time. And we're going to read a portion of it. He said, in part;

Fellow-citizens, pardon me, allow me to ask, why am I called upon to speak here to-day? What have I, or those I represent, to do with your national independence? Are the great principles of political freedom and of natural justice, embodied in that Declaration of Independence, extended to us? And am I, therefore, called upon to bring our humble offering to the national altar, and to confess the benefits and express devout gratitude for the blessings resulting from your independence to us?

Would to God, both for your sakes and ours that an affirmative answer could be truthfully returned to these questions! Then would my task be light and my burden easy and delightful. For who is there so cold, that a nation's sympathy could not warm him? Who so obdurate and dead to the claims of gratitude that would not thankfully acknowledge such priceless benefits? Who so stolid and selfish, that would not give his voice to swell the hallelujahs of a nation's jubilee, when the chains of servitude had been torn from his limbs? I am not that man. In a case like that, the dumb might eloquently speak, and the "lame man leap as a hart."

But such is not the state of the case. I say it with a sad sense of the disparity between us. I am not included within the pale of this glorious anniversary! Your high independence only reveals the immeasurable distance between us. The blessings in which you, this day, rejoice, are not enjoyed in common.-The rich inheritance of justice, liberty, prosperity and independence, bequeathed by your fathers, is shared by you, not by me. The sunlight that brought light and healing to you has brought stripes and death to me. This Fourth July is yours, not mine. You may rejoice, I must mourn. To drag a man in fetters into the grand illuminated temple of liberty, and call upon him to join you in joyous anthems, were inhuman mockery and sacrilegious irony. Do you mean, citizens, to mock me, by asking me to speak today?

Fellow-citizens, above your national, tumultuous joy, I hear the mournful wail of millions whose chains, heavy and grievous yesterday, are, to-day, rendered more intolerable by the jubilee shouts that reach them. If I do forget, if I do not faithfully remember those bleeding children of sorrow this day, "may my right hand forget her cunning, and may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth!" To forget them, to pass lightly over their wrongs, and to chime in with the popular theme, would be treason most scandalous and shocking, and would make me a reproach before God and the world. My subject, then, fellow-citizens, is American slavery. I shall see this day and its popular characteristics from the

slave's point of view. Standing there identified with the American bondman, making his wrongs mine, I do not hesitate to declare, with all my soul, that the character and conduct of this nation never looked blacker to me than on this 4th of July! Whether we turn to the declarations of the past, or to the professions of the present, the conduct of the nation seems equally hideous and revolting. America is false to the past, false to the present, and solemnly binds herself to be false to the future. Standing with God and the crushed and bleeding slave on this occasion, I will, in the name of humanity which is outraged, in the name of liberty which is fettered, in the name of the constitution and the Bible which are disregarded and trampled upon, dare to call in question and to denounce, with all the emphasis I can command, everything that serves to perpetuate slavery-the great sin and shame of America! "I will not equivocate; I will not excuse"; I will use the severest language I can command; and yet not one word shall escape me that any man, whose judgment is not blinded by prejudice, or who is not at heart a slaveholder, shall not confess to be right and just.

But I fancy I hear some one of my audience say, "It is just in this circumstance that you and your brother abolitionists fail to make a favorable impression on the public mind. Would you argue more, and denounce less; would you persuade more, and rebuke less; your cause would be much more likely to succeed." But, I submit, where all is plain there is nothing to be argued. What point in the anti slavery creed would you have me argue? On what branch of the subject do the people of this country need light? Must I undertake to prove that the slave is a man? That point is conceded already. Nobody doubts it. The slaveholders themselves acknowledge it in the enactment of laws for their government. They acknowledge it when they punish disobedience on the part of the slave. There are seventy-two crimes in the State of Virginia which, if committed by a black man (no matter how ignorant he be), subject him to the punishment of death; while only two of the same crimes will subject a white man to the like punishment. What is this but the acknowledgment that the slave is a moral, intellectual, and responsible being? ...

For the present, it is enough to affirm the equal manhood of the Negro race. Is it not astonishing that, while we are ploughing, planting, and reaping, using all kinds of mechanical tools, erecting houses, constructing bridges, building ships, working in metals of brass, iron, copper, silver and gold; that, while we are reading, writing and ciphering, acting as clerks, merchants and secretaries, having among us lawyers, doctors, ministers, poets, authors, editors, orators and teachers; that, while we are engaged in all manner of enterprises common to other men, digging gold in California, capturing the whale in the Pacific, feeding sheep and cattle on the hill-side, living, moving, acting, thinking, planning, living in families as husbands, wives and children, and, above all, confessing and worshipping the Christian's God, and looking hopefully for life and immortality beyond the grave, we are called upon to prove that we are men!

Would you have me argue that man is entitled to liberty? That he is the rightful owner of his own body? You have already declared it. Must I argue the wrongfulness of slavery? Is that a question for Republicans? Is it to be settled by the rules of logic and argumentation, as a matter beset with great difficulty, involving a doubtful application of the principle of justice, hard to be understood? How should I look to-day, in the presence of Americans, dividing, and subdividing a discourse, to show that men have a natural right to freedom, speaking of it relatively and positively, negatively and affirmatively? To do so, would be to make myself ridiculous, and to offer an insult to your understanding. - There is not a man beneath the canopy of heaven that does not know that slavery is wrong for him.

What, am I to argue that it is wrong to make men brutes, to rob them of their liberty, to work them without wages, to keep them ignorant of their relations to their fellow men, to beat them with sticks, to flay their flesh with the lash, to load their limbs with irons, to hunt them with dogs, to sell them at auction, to sunder their families, to knock out their teeth, to burn their flesh, to starve them into obedience and submission to their masters? Must I argue that a system thus marked with blood, and stained with pollution, is wrong? No! I will not. I have better employment for my time and strength than such arguments would imply.

What, then, remains to be argued? Is it that slavery is not divine; that God did not establish it; that our doctors of divinity are mistaken? There is blasphemy in the thought. That which is inhuman, cannot be divine! Who can reason on such a proposition? They that can may; I cannot. The time for such argument is passed.