

during that brief period, and there is no other evidence of the existence of any type of 'ordeal' as a judicial procedure anywhere in the history of ancient Israel.

To understand the reason for such a unique procedure on the part of God at this time, we must remember the situation. Man had put God out of his thoughts and tried to forget Him (cf. Rom. 1:21,28). God had selected one man, Abraham, and brought him out of Ur of the Chaldees in order that through him and his descendants He should keep alive His testimony and prepare the way for the coming of His Son through whom men should be saved. The witness of God was now confined in this one group of people coming up through the wilderness. If the testimony of this group were destroyed, the existing witness to God would be wiped out and it would be necessary to start to build one all over again. Naturally, therefore, this is one of the comparatively few periods in the Bible where there is an outpouring of divine miracles.

A similar situation existed in the early days of the Christian Church. There also God performed a great number of miracles in order that Satan should not stamp out the Christian witness while it was a very small thing. After it became so large that, if one portion was wiped out and destroyed, other portions would still keep going, miracles ceased.

Many people think that the Bible is filled with miracles. However, this is not the case. Large sections contain no miracle at all. It is interesting to compare the large number of miracles found in the period which includes the deliverance from Egypt, the wilderness journey, and the conquest of Canaan, with their infrequency in the lifetime of Abraham or in the reigns of David and Solomon.

The wilderness journey, then, was a crisis period in which God performed special miracles. Under these circumstances our present