

The following two readings are adaptations from Emerson's "An Address" delivered before the Senior Class in Divinity College, Cambridge, Sunday Evening July 15, 1838.

### The Law of the Soul

The laws of the soul execute themselves.

They are not subject to circumstance.

In the soul of man there is a justice whose retributions are instant and entire.

He who does a good deed is instantly ennobled.

He who does a mean deed is by that action itself contracted.

He who puts off inquiring thereby puts on purity.

If a man is at heart just the safety and the rigidity of God do enter into him.

If a man dissimulates or deceives, he deceives himself and goes out of acquaintance with his own being.

The man who renounces himself comes to himself.

Character is always known.

Thefts never enrich.

Alms never impoverish.

Murder will speak out of stone walls.

The least admixture of a lie, the least taint of vanity will instantly vitiate the effect.

But speak the truth, and all nature and all spirits help you with unexpected furtherance.

Speak the truth and all things alive or brute are vouchers.

As we are, so we associate.

The good by affinity seek the good.

The vile by affinity, the vile.

Thus of their own volition souls proceed to heaven or to hell.

These truths point to the million <sup>Creed</sup> truths that the world is the product of, but one will, one mind,

That one mind is everywhere active, in each ray of the star, in each wavelet of the pool.

So much benevolence as a man hath, so much of life hath he.

He who seeks good ends is strong by the whole strength of God.

For all good proceeds out of the same spirit variously named love, justice, temperance, just as the ocean receives different names on the several shores which it washes.

### Needed Prophets for Our Day

He who makes me aware that I am an infinite soul heartens me.

He who gives me to myself lifts me.



He who shares God in me justifies me.

He who hides God from me destroys the reason for my being.

The divine prophets' words and language are friends of my virtue, of my intellect, of my strength.  
Noble provocations go out from them, inciting me to resist evil.

But let us not speak of revelations as something long ago given and done.

Only by coming to the God in ourselves can we grow forevermore.

Let us not say that the age of inspiration is past, that the Bible is closed.

Let us learn to believe in the soul of man, and not merely in men departed.

The need was never greater of new revelations than now.

The faith of man has suffered universal decay.

The heart wails, because it is bereaved of consolation and hope and grandeur.

We feel defrauded and desolate.

Our <sup>religion</sup> faith has become spectral.

It has lost its grasp on its affection of the good and on the fear of the bad.

What greater calamity can befall a nation than the loss of worship?

Then all things go to decay.

Genius leaves the Temple.

Literature becomes frivolous.

Science is cold.

The eye of youth is not lighted by hope of a better world.

Society lives for trifles.

In the soul let redemption be sought.

Let the teachers of religion show us that God is, not was.

That he speaks, not spoke.

Wherever a man comes, there comes revolution.

When a man comes, all books are legible, all things transparent.

Such a one is a friend of all our aspirations.

Having himself doubted, he can resolve our doubts.

Trusting his own heart, he wins our confidence.

Such man may God send us to relight the nearly quenched fires on the altars of God,

And cheer our fainting hearts with new hope and new revelation.