

Two Poems

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These two poems are part of a series about famous people and universal themes. The first is about heroism, and the hero in question is Martin Luther King. We can all have heroic and doubtful moments, and if we don't allow the doubts to dominate, then perhaps we can follow our dream.

The second poem derives from a time when scientific progress challenged the prevailing religious ethos. This remains a topical issue: Can spiritual understanding evolve, or does it risk destructive stagnation?

DREAMS AND WONDERS

I wonder if when he led
His people out
Of degradation up
To the citadel of Power
And said his immortal words,
There was ever in him a small
Niggling doubt
That any of this
Would do anyone any good.
After all -
It was only a dream.

REVOLUTION

Taking leave of the accepted wisdom
Down a different path,
He took a step away from Heaven's comfort.
Finding that nature favoured happy accidents,
His small steps landed him and us
With social change as well.
His voyage forced the naturalist to note
With fascination cruelty and pattern
And took him from his genteel Wedgewood world
Down to the darkest heart
Of human savagery,
Which was not clothed
In fur of ape-like ancestor,
But wore the pious garments of his day.
Emboldened then by his survival,
Men were free to dwell
In safety who had feared the fires of hell.