

Ice

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Suppose you had always lived in a hot country, where you never saw any ice, do you not think you would be very much surprised, and perhaps find it hard to believe, if you were told that the water which you had always seen flowing so freely could be changed into a perfect solid; is hard as glass, upon which you could ran, and play, and jump, just the same as on the dry land?

This wonderful transformation of the water is made by God for His own wise, loving purposes. In the Book of Job we are told that it is "by the breath of the Lord frost is given." [Job 37:10]

You may have noticed that everything contracts, or gets smaller, with cold, and expands, or swells and grows larger, with heat. Perhaps you have seen this even in your own bodies.

Did you ever notice that your hands get larger if they are very hot, so that your gloves become tight? Then too if there is a pan quite full of water on the stove, the water expands as it gets hot and runs over the sides of the pan; and in many other ways you can notice the same thing.

So it is what men call "a law of nature," that things contract with cold and expand with heat. But "the laws of nature" are simply the ways of God,—His way of doing His wonderful works.

We know that God can work in any way that He pleases; but men notice His usual ways of working, and call these "the laws of nature."

But in forming the ice, God works in exactly the opposite to His usual way, and I think we shall see something of His loving purpose in doing this.

Until it reaches a certain temperature, water, like everything else, contracts and grows heavier with the cold. But when it gets near what is called the freezing point, it suddenly changes and begins to do just the opposite,—to expand and [get] lighter. Because of this the ice floats and stays on top of the water instead of sinking to the bottom as it would do if it were not for this change.

You will see that in this way a covering is made for the water underneath, which is kept warm enough for fish and water animals to live in. "The waters are hidden as with stone, and the face of the deep is frozen." Job 38:30.

Of course if all the water were to freeze up, as it would do but for this wonderful change from God's usual way of working, all the creatures that live in the waters would die, and the water would become a mass of solid ice that the summer sun could never melt.

Then when the weather is warmer, so that the waters do not need this protection any longer, God, who made this icy sheet for their covering, "sendeth out His word and melteth them; He causeth His wind to blow, and the waters flow." [Psalm 147:18]

"The fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee; who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?" Job 12:8, 9. "Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons and all deeps; fire and hail, snow and vapour, stormy wind fulfilling His word." [Psalm 148:7, 8]

As you think of these things, and see more and more of God's love and goodness, you too will want to join this song of praise to God that is going up to Him continually from all His works; for "All Thy works shall praise Thee, O God; and Thy saints shall bless Thee." "Both young men and maidens, old men and children, let them praise the name of the Lord!" [Psalm 145:10; 148:12, 13]