this the God I am asked to worship? (God is reported to have said, ‘I have made sport of the Egyptians to let them know who I am....’)

Is God a not-so-benevolent Dictator, committed to foul means to clean up frustrating situations? Do we expect miraculous interventions and God sending fire and wrath from heaven? We have to make up our minds whether God is one who sends plagues and goes on a rampage, or whether He is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Did God change his tactics, so that what He did in an earlier period He later on refused to countenance? Otherwise our explanations are only apologies for God's bad behavior. Does God need our apologies or defense?"

Further on: “It was natural for them to try to explain what had happened. None of us likes to be left in the dark. We want to unravel mysteries, for human nature is incurably curious. So you can understand how the traditions grew up as the story of deliverance was told year after year. Any good story-teller elaborates. Don't we have to come to this principle: Experience and explanation are not the same thing. The experience was their deliverance out of Egypt by God's hand. The explanation was too simple in the light of the knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The miracle was that the slaves were delivered out of Egypt. The explanation was the best they could come up with at the time. Better had they said, 'We don't know.' When we try to take away the mystery with too much explanation, we only destroy the meaning.

"If you asked me what was the miracle God wrought in Egypt, I would say that the miracle was Moses, not the plagues. Why did this man, brought up in a palace, exchange his safety for the suffering he endured? How is it that slaves and ghetto folk had the right to a new deal, found the dignity that itself was a promise? The miracle is that their new-found dignity involved them in suffering for a purpose beyond themselves. . . .

"We ask for a miracle! The miracle is that in the face of Moses' forcefulness and courage and integrity, in his utter belief that the plight of the down-trodden people was God's cause—that before this cause Pharoah was helpless. The costly act of self-investment was the miracle God wrought, the way God delivered His people. In every age God raises up men and women who stand strong against injustice and cry for a new deal. The question is, 'By what means can life be renewed and redeemed?' But there is a further question: 'What way has God established for making a family out of discordant and disobedient tribes?' It depends, doesn't it, on where we put our trust, in whom we believe. . . ultimately?"

Event and Interpretation . . . Experience and Explanation: how important it is to raise these questions for our people, so that they can grapple with their own plagues; that they may know that their pastor knows from his own experience that doubt itself is the pathway to a deeper revelation of the Mystery.