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HAND-BOOKS  
FOR  
BIBLE CLASSES  
*and Family Studies.*

— EXODUS —  
CHAP. I—XIV.

BY  
*Prof. James Macgregor, D.D.*



EDINBURGH

T. & T. CLARK







HANDBOOKS  
FOR  
BIBLE CLASSES  
AND PRIVATE STUDENTS.

EDITED BY  
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# EXODUS,

WITH INTRODUCTION, COMMENTARY, AND  
SPECIAL NOTES, ETC.

BY

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*PART I.*

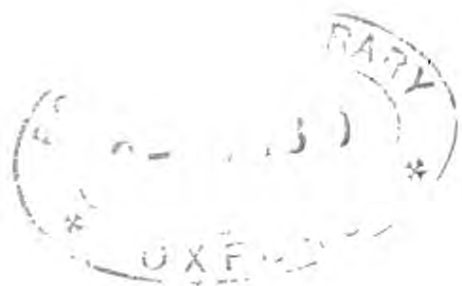
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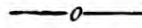
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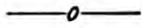
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# THE BOOK OF EXODUS.



## INTRODUCTION.



### CHAPTER I.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE BOOK.

EGYPT, from which Jehovah called His Son, affords, even in the physical geography of the land, illustration of this history of that wondrous calling. The revelation, through which the calling was made effectual, is pictured for us in the great River, which is the life of Egypt land. In the time of Herodotus it was a saying, that the Delta land "is a gift of the Nile." In truth all Egypt is a gift of the Nile. The land is an oasis of the African desert, very strangely formed in that, while more than 600 miles long, between Ethiopia and the Mediterranean, it has above the Delta an average breadth of scarcely a hundredth part of that number of miles. It thus is like a very long narrow strip of green ribbon, stretching across that desert of sand, and shingle, and broken ground which in places is like mountains; in all which extent the River is as a silver thread, wrought into that variegated green by the Creator of Aholiab and his embroiderers.

The land, if not in all places beautiful, is very rich. It has in all ages been proverbially "a granary of the world." "There is corn in Egypt," was the cry of famine-stricken Shemites beyond its border long before the beginning of the Greek heroic ages, a millennium before Homer sang "the song of Troy divine." And all through the ages of its being and wealth, Egypt has been "a gift of the Nile." The Egyptians honoured the River as a god, so that proud Pharaoh

was perhaps on his way to worship it when Moses met him ; and the princess, whose kind heart became a home for the infant, brought wailing from among the Nile papyrus reeds, may have been idolatrous in her bathing ; as, long after, Moses had to leave her household, bearing the cross of "the reproach of Christ," when, having caused him to be "instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians," she would fain have endowed him with "the treasures of Egypt." And a motive to that idolatrous veneration lay in the fact, that, in a manner that has always made it a wonder of the world, the Nile has to that land been as, not only a bounteous Providence, but even a beneficent Creator, so that Egypt is not only the debtor but the creature of the Nile.

This river not only benefits the land through which it flows, like other famous rivers. Jordan has a blessing as well as a song, and Euphrates was a benefactor to the land of Abraham's birth. The Nile, of rivers, alone is creative, so that men see it making the land which it enriches and adorns. The yearly Nile flood is like nothing else in the physical history of the world. In the season every year, the silver thread becomes an inland sea (Nah. iii. 8). It covers the whole face of a land otherwise "dry and thirsty, waterless" (Ps. lxxiii. 1). And, thus refreshing the heart of that earth with new moisture, it creates the land anew by fresh contribution of soil, with which, for this beneficent distribution, it has come laden from those far distant Central African mountains, where, beyond the utmost bounds of furthest Ethiopia, the head waters of the Nile are supplied from "the river of God" in the sky.

That River is like the revelation, which in Exodus appears from heaven creating a new kingdom of God among men. *Exodus*, the proper name of this Book, is a Greek word, meaning *exit* or "departure" from. It is so employed for description of Israel's departure from Egypt, in He. xi. 22. In the only other places, too, where it occurs in the N.T. Greek Scripture, it is rendered "decease" (A.V.); for there it means death, "departure" from earth and time : namely, in 2 Pe. i. 15, the death of a Christian, the aged Apostle Peter, "after my *exodus* (decease) ;" and in Lu. ix. 31, the atoning death of Christ, who is our Passover, sacrificed for us ;—Moses and Elias, appearing in glory on the mount of His transfiguration, "spake of His *exodus* (decease) which He should accomplish at Jerusalem." The original *exodus*, which was in the mind of Peter, James, and John, when they heard the two great ones of old

prophecy thus speaking of that Passover Lamb of God who is the Redeeming Son of God, was the departure of which the history is recorded in this Book.

It is the history of Israel's departure from bondage of Egypt, into privilege of liberty sealed and secured in Sinai, on the way to an inheritance of plenteous peaceful rest in Canaan. And, as Egypt is the gift of the Nile, beneficent creative, so the rise of that Israelitish people into distinctness of national existence, through liberation from Egyptian bondage, is the result of a new creation by the word of God. Thus wise Matthew Henry says, that, while Genesis gives a history of the old creation of nature, Exodus is the history of a new creation of redeeming grace. And it is a creation through that word, by which the worlds were first called into being. Moses in that great work was only the minister of Jehovah. And in it Pharaoh and his taskmasters and his horsemen under their captains, were made to serve the purpose of Him, who "maketh the wrath of man to praise Him," and "hath made all things for Himself, even the wicked for the day of evil." But, as the Gospel is God's power unto salvation, so the grand instrument of the Almighty, in that new creative work of Israel's redemption, was a new supernatural revelation of Himself, as the only God living and true, faithful in remembrance of His covenant promise to Abraham, that in him and his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed.

The proper name, Exodus, is thus appropriate on account of the character of Israel's departure. That is illustrated by two uses of the word which are found in Classic Greek. 1. In reference to an *army*, it meant, the "marching out" of departure on a military expedition or campaign. And such was Israel's departure from Egypt. While it was truly miraculous, Jehovah bringing an outcast perishing infant (Ezek. xvi. 1-4) home to Himself "on eagles' wings" (Ex. xix. 4), on the other hand, the face it showed to man was that of military triumph:—"the children of Israel went out with an high hand" (Ex. xiv. 8); "they went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt" (Ex. xiii. 18) — where our *Commentary* will, for *harnessed*, say, "arrayed;" and (xiv. 30), in the morning of the completion of that exodus, "Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the sea-shore." 2. Another use of the word was, for description of a festive procession, in a *bride's* "departure," from her father's house, to her predestined home of love. And Israel (Jer. ii. 2) was never allowed to forget, that the exodus had been a "day of espousals:" "thy Maker is thine

husband." The great song of Moses, sung by those emerging from the baptism of deliverance out of bondage, was an epithalamium — a marriage hymn. And the wonderful transactions in Sinai, down to the close of the history in this Book, are the detailed proceedings of a marriage settlement, crowned by a covenant of marriage, under which Jehovah God takes up His abode among men, in the Dwelling which He has prepared for His meetings with them.

The Book has thus a completeness in itself, as the record of one great event, of redemption from Egypt, passing into consecration in Sinai. But in some Versions of the Scriptures, it is not named Exodus, as it is in the Septuagint Greek, which is the oldest of the Versions. It is described as "the second Book of Moses," with a reference to Genesis, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, as the first, third, fourth, and fifth, Books of Moses. The Septuagint itself, by naming the collection of these Books *The Pentateuch*—i.e. "the five-fold" (book)—confesses that Exodus is natively, not a separate work, but a part of that whole work of "Moses in the law" (Jn. i. 45). And accordingly, in the original Hebrew, it has not even a descriptive title, such as, "the second Book." Its name is only, *V'Ellēh Shēmōth* ("now these are the names"), or, for shortness, *Ellēh Shēmōth* ("these are the names"), or simply, *Shēmōth* ("names"). This is not a descriptive title: much less is it a proper name, for intimation of the contents or character of a book. It is only an index or catch-word,—like *B'rēshith*, "in the beginning," the Heb. title of Genesis;—the opening of the first clause of the work, taken, for convenience of reference and perusal, as a guide to the memory through the eye. The *V'*, which is the first part of this title, is a conjunctive particle of transition (see note on *v'* in *Commentary* under i. 1). The specific meaning of it in every place depends upon the special kind of transition represented in the place; thus in Lev. i. 1, and most commonly, *v'* is rendered simply, "and." The transition at the opening of Exodus is in its nature, *historical continuation*. The stream of narrative, flowing down through Genesis, as the Nile flows through Ethiopia, here passes into a new reach of the stream, as the Nile, at the lower Cataract, passes into Egypt land.

We thus are led to look for a connection of Exodus with the Pentateuch as a whole, and especially, with Genesis. And in order to see the whole matter rightly, we have to take into view these two things, 1. that the Pentateuch is *more* than the history of the

creative epoch of revelation ; and 2. that Exodus is *more* than a continuation of the history in Genesis into Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. 1. The Pentateuch is not only the history of that creative Epoch. No doubt it in fact is the history of that epoch of revelation. It is the Book of all the Beginnings of God's kingdom on earth. The later Books all receive of its fulness, as the planetary stars have no light but from the sun. "The prophets and the Psalms" (Lu. xxiv. 44) thus begin with "Moses in the law," as a river which, in all its winding ways, is ever derived from one fountain—in a smitten Rock (1 Co. x. 5). Thus Moses is "*the* prophet," the one who is mediator, who received the primal gift of revelation, the only one (De. xxxiv. 10) "whom the Lord" so "knew face to face." But that is not the whole truth. It is true also, that recollection, "remembrance," of the great original works of God, in creation and redemption, is the appropriate appointed means of originating and sustaining, in the heart and life of men, that righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, which constitute His true kingdom in individuals and in communities. The Pentateuch, as the instrument of God in that recollection of the Beginnings, is thus evermore in a fontal relation to the true new life of mankind in the Creator and Redeemer. And the vast importance of Exodus begins to appear when it is seen to be, thus, the central vitally essential part of a whole, whose importance is so vast as a feeder of that life which is unseen and eternal. For,

2. Exodus is not only a continuation of the narrative in Genesis on to the last three Books of Moses. Our Translators, when they make the *V*, at the opening of this book, to be, not "and," as in Lev. i. 1, but "now," mean, that here there is something more than simply continuation of the narrative. And in fact, there is here a decisively new reach of the stream. It is not merely, as when the Nile rushes down its Cataract from Ethiopia, a sudden transition into a new manner of movement, amid new surroundings. It is as if a new and mighty river had sprung out of a smitten rock, or poured down from heaven in effusion Pentecostal. For instance, on the face of the movement there is that very great new thing, the first appearance among mankind of a visible kingdom of God ; a kingdom destined to unfold into that Christendom which is the only real civilisation of the peoples in human history. And at the heart of the movement, as the very life and soul of it all, there is the new supernatural revelation of God now, for the first time since the flood, going forth to mankind



as a public instruction which is Gospel preaching (He. iv. 2). It is accompanied by the first appearance of credential evidence of miracles and prophecy. And in especial, that revelation takes the practical form of an actual supernatural redemption and consecration ; in the accomplishment of which there are brought into view, for the instruction of mankind in all nations through all ages, those principles of the kingdom of God, regarding His character, and moral government, and gracious purposes toward mankind, which are the *principia* of the only true religion that is ever to live upon the earth. These are main, plain, unquestionable characteristics of the Book. The first part of it, the Redemption from Egypt, has a place like that of the Gospels in the New Testament Scripture ; and the second part of it, regarding the consecration in Sinai, has a place like that of the Acts of the Apostles, along with the Epistles to the Hebrews, to the Galatians, and to the Romans. What greater thing could be said in illustration of the importance of it? In some obvious respects, it is the most fundamentally important Book ever given to mankind. And the study of it is essential to a real and scholarly acquaintance with the history of man.

Still, while perceiving that in Exodus the great matter is that new supernatural revelation and redemption, in connexion with a new thing, the visible kingdom of God, we ought ever to look at it in connexion with the whole historical movement, in which it comes to us instated as a part. And so, we may regard the matter thus :— While the whole Pentateuch is the Book of the Beginnings, the last four Books of Moses bring into view a new beginning, of God's visible kingdom among men ; and in Exodus this new beginning is definitively complete thus far, that here there are laid the foundations (1 Co. iii. 8–15) of that kingdom, on which Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, are a superstructure ; so that Exodus represents the decisive inauguration of the new kingdom in its completeness, as manhood is completed in the youth assuming the *toga virilis* of maturity.

Noting that peculiar distinctive importance of Exodus, we now seek further illustration of the connexion, which we ought not to forget ; for the Exodus movement is, on the face of it and in the heart of it, really, though not solely, in continuation of God's covenant dealings with Abraham and the other patriarchs ; so that the rise of this new kingdom is really an evolution, of promise into performance, out of a relationship more primæval than that of Sinai and its

“law” (Ga. iii. 13-17). And now, if we regard the Nile stream as a great tree of life, extending across the North African desert like the New Life of Israel and Christendom in the world; then, while the last three Books of Moses are the branches of that tree, pictured in the Delta “branches” of the Nile, and while in Genesis we see the far spreading roots of the whole, in Exodus, corresponding to the Nile’s undivided flow through Egypt proper, we behold the stem.

Within the setting of that view of the whole Book, it is not difficult to perceive the relation of its parts to one another and to the whole. The whole is a history of supernatural revelation and redemption, in Israel’s deliverance from Egypt and consecration in Sinai. These two, the deliverance and the consecration, are, in the nature of the things, the two divisions of the history; and they are connected together by that step, across the Red Sea, of actual departure, which evermore makes a division between Egypt and Sinai (which, in a profounder sense, is a division between bondage and freedom of mankind).

The actual occurrence of the exodus (departure) occupies but a small space in this Book (chap. xiii. 17-xiv.); and it occupied a yet smaller proportion of the whole time over which the history extends. The period in the history before that departure (i.-xiii.) embraces several centuries. And that which comes after the departure (xv.-xl.), though it embraces only a year, yet in those few months includes a whole historical cycle and system of events which, truly great and marvellous, have made that year a “wonder year” to all following generations (*Annus Mirabilis*, “Wonder Year,” of Israel, is the title of a book on the exodus). On the other hand the actual departure was only a step, of initial movement, we might say, filling only the few hours of an early summer night; or at the utmost, a few days, some part of one week. Nevertheless, Exodus, “Departure,” is well chosen as a proper name for the Book of this history. *Waterloo* would be appropriate as descriptive title of an account of the last of Wellington’s campaigns; or *Bannockburn*, for Bruce’s career of liberation; or *Hastings*, for the Norman Conquest of England. These decisive battles, as compared with that one step, from Egypt into Sinai, are only “skirmishes of kites and crows.” Competent judges have accepted the decision of Bunsen (*Egypt’s Place in Universal History*), that Israel’s exodus was not only the beginning for Israel’s own existence as a nation, but the true beginning of history of mankind. Not only was there then and there (Is. lxvi. 8) “a

nation, born at once." Nationality as a distinctly realized thing among the world's populations, and the true historical movement whose pulse beats only in a nation's life, had their effectual true beginning in that momentous birth.

That appears on the surface of the movement, in its outward political aspect. But a movement, though only of a political society, or even of an individual politician, is not truly seen, unless, through the outward political aspect of it, we look into its inward nature ; into that feeling or thought, which is the constitutive element of soul in any movement, furnishing the inspiring motive impulse ; unless the movement be merely mechanical, as of a marionette that is moved by wire-work of machinery. Moses was not a mere politician. And his exodus was not a mere secular political event. If they had been, we would not go so far into the past and the distant for the study of them. Now there has to be some motive influence beyond that of the passing hour, some ruling thought, feeling, purpose, aspiration, which is the mainspring of the outward course, in order that there may be anything of true dignity or interest in the representation even of a fictitious career :—whether it be the wrath of Achilles, in melancholy scorn of his life and of all men ; or, the indomitable proudly tender devotedness of home affection in Odysseus the sore tried and never failing ; or, the deep design of God, overruling human purposes, and wielding for His purposes the mundane impulses of men. But the best and highest that a poet's imagination may invent can only place us upon the sea, voyaging through weather foul or fair, among heroic men. In Exodus we are among men, upon our own earth, under our own sky ; we are among men who live by faith : we are beyond the stars, with the Living and Eternal God. What makes that step, from Egypt into Sinai, to be for us of interest so transcendent is, that in it we see the Eternal, bearing a sinful people home unto Himself, as "on eagles' wings."

Relatively to the preceding history of the Plagues, the Passage of the Red Sea may be compared to that famous Waterloo charge, before which the fabric of Napoleon's greatness all crumbled into dust, to vanish as a dream. So completely, at once and for ever, did the oppressive power of Egypt pass away from Israel's life : a remarkable circumstance, considering how near the Sinaitic Peninsula is to Egypt, and that from immemorial time before the exodus the Egyptians had settlements on the Peninsula (for certain mining purposes). The previous action of the Plagues, by which their spirit

seems to have been brought to the point of utterly breaking when disaster came, may thus be regarded as the record of a day of battle, which closed in the great disaster. And the retrospect in chaps. i., ii., will be the exposition of the remote causes of the campaign, involving preparation for it ; as Herodotus in his nine Books prepares us for the grand *finale* of Marathon and Platea, Salamis and Artemisium, by his representations of that historical condition, of the ancient world, which made a collision inevitable ; such as at last occurred in the shock of hostile meeting, of western civilisation in its motherland and centre, and the then imperial magnificence of Oriental "barbarism."

Relatively to what follows in the history (chaps. xv.-xl.), the exodus conflict in Egypt may be compared to the siege of Avaris in Goshenland (see in next Chapter, note on the *History of Egypt*). That siege was really a campaign, like that of Sebastopol in the Crimean War. The Hyksos foreigners, after long domination over Egypt, like that of the English in Scotland after the martyrdom of Wallace, were at last, by insurrection of native Egyptians under a Bruce of an old royal race, driven back to Avaris their capital city, where they stood at bay as in an entrenched camp. The great siege-campaign, terminating in their final defeat and expulsion, was their Bannockburn. From that time onward, Egypt seems to have been completely free from serious apprehension of any formidable invasion ; though perhaps (cf. Ex. i. 10) with a certain liability to apprehensiveness, as if the memory of the Hyksos tyranny still haunted her in her dreams. And the remarkable circumstance we noted is that Israel's deliverance from apprehension of any pursuing vengeance of the Egyptians appears to have been similarly complete as well as final.

The oppressors were never seen again (cf. Ex. x. 28, 29), except as helpless corpses stranded on the Sinai shore. And the great deliverance, accomplished in the agony of exodus, was, so to speak, prolonged through the period of wilderness sojourning, as a boat continues to move long after it has felt the last impulsive stroke of the oarsman. The song of salvation, the march on to the Sinai mount of meeting God (Ex. iii. 12), the victory over Amalek by the way, until the final repose in enjoyment of "the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God,"—these are in continuation of that grand originative impulse. The Tabernacle building, which comes into so great a place at the end, is

the erection of the trophy, of Jehovah's victory (Ex. xv. 3), which He gained for His people, and in them, though not by them, but as "treading the wine-press alone," in the Passage of the Red Sea. The very life of Israel, then and thenceforward consecrated because redeemed, along with the great gifts of legislation and of other means of covenant consecration, are Jehovah's gifts for men (Ps. lxxviii. 17, 18), His distribution of the spoils of His victory, in that great final overwhelming Battle of the Exodus.

It now remains only that we consider *the point of view*, from which the various details of the great movement are to be seen in this history. That we must learn from the history itself. And in the history itself we perceive, that in fact the details are presented in a view which may be described as bird's-eye retrospective. There are one or two details which may suggest the impression, that the history, before becoming finally stereotyped in form, may have been re-touched at some point of time toward the close of the wilderness sojourning. Thus, the last paragraph, regarding the leadership of the Pillar of Cloud, speaks of that as having endured all through the period of the wandering. But there probably is only one other sentence in the Book (xvi. 35) that might not have been written thirty-eight years before the date thus implied. And that one, also, is plainly called for, and could be written by Moses. In point of fact substantially the view that is given in the Book is precisely such a view as would have been given by a writer at the close of Israel's wonder year, pausing to recall that wondrous past,—say—when Moses found his blessed rest (Ex. xxxix. 43) in completion of the building of the Tabernacle. Placing ourselves on that Pisgah of retrospection, we see the events precisely as we find them here recorded.

The erection of the Tabernacle, at the close of the first year, rounds the whole history into an epical completeness. The Tabernacle is a trophy like the Arch of Titus, with its exhibition of the spoils of fallen Jerusalem and her temple. The Symbolism and the memorials in it resume the wondrous past, while in itself, as the symbol and the medium of God's coming to dwell among men, it is a thing so great and wonderful as deservedly to fill the whole foreground of the historical picture at the close; occupying, even in the written history, a larger place than is given to the whole period from Joseph's time to the Passage of the Red Sea. But the eyes of the historian are clear and far-seeing (De. xxxiv. 7). His retrospect embraces the whole movement, back to its remotest origination in the past. And

in the furthest past, all that he shows is definite in outline and bearing, as in that wilderness the remotest things in space appear in clear distinctness through the pure atmosphere, on a cloudless day.

The historical perspective of the Book we can see to be not unjust, even when we take into account the contents of later Scriptures, recording the great revelations of the following ages. What was it, in the Mosaic age, that could lead a writer, of manifestly sound judgment, in the history of his nation (Ex. i.-ii.), to give to the fortunes of his people through centuries, including their connexion with a great ancient world-empire, a space which is only about a tenth part of that which he gives to the building of a tent and a tent house? It is the fact, that the tent is the Dwelling of the Living God, who has come to take up His abode among men, that He may be their God, and they may be His people. As compared with that, all temporal history of evanescent empires is a mere nothing. There is no real parallel to it, in the history of the universe, but that which was welcomed in the stable at Bethlehem, when an Infant was approached by wise men from afar, who laid the homage and the tribute of Gentile nations at His feet. In view of such an event, vulgar insignificance is the aspect that is assumed by such a power and wealth as that of Egypt at its highest,—

When the Memnonium was in all its glory,  
And time had not begun to overthrow  
Those Temples, Palaces, and Piles stupendous,  
Of which the very ruins are tremendous.

Regarding that Eternal "Word" who "was made flesh," the expression (Jn. i. 14), for "dwelt among us" might be rendered, "tabernacled in us," or "dwelt in our nature as a tent." To the erection of the Mosaic Tabernacle in the wilderness, the only real parallel is the fulfilment, Incarnation of God.

At this stage it may be well to glance at the whole contents of the history in one view, as in the following :—

#### CONSPECTUS OF CONTENTS.

Exodus, "the Second Book of Moses," *V'Ellēh Shēmōth*, is a history of supernatural revelation and redemption, in two parts :—

1st, of Israel's deliverance from Egypt, and 2nd, of the redeemed people's consecration in Sinai. The details are as follows :—

**PART I. (Chaps. i.—xiv.).—Of the Deliverance.**

1. „ i.—ii.).—The preparation : (1) in *Israel*; (2) in *Moses*.
2. „ iii.—x.).—The campaign : (1) *opening*, down to the first appeal to Pharaoh; (2) *progress*, down to the last of the Plagues.
3. „ xi.—xiv.).—Its triumphant close : (1) *inauguration*, the Passover; (2) *consummation*, Passage of the Red Sea.

**PART II. (Chaps. xv.—xl.).—Of the Consecration.**

1. „ xv.—xviii.).—The approach to Sinai : (1) *Song* of salvation; (2) *probation*, with wonders of mercy; (3) *battle*, followed by repose.
2. „ xix.—xxiv.).—The Sinai Covenanting : (1) *foundation*, the Moral Law; (2) *superstructure*, of civil laws—the Blood of the Covenant.
3. „ xxv.—xl.).—The Tabernacle building : (1) *direction* for it; (2) *episode*; (3) *erection* of it.

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## CHAPTER II.

### CHARACTER OF THE EXODUS MOVEMENT.

THE suggestion of Bunsen, that Israel's exodus should be regarded as the true beginning of history for mankind, is very interesting, and of some considerable importance. Such a suggestion from one like him, a celebrated scholar-statesman, of a peculiar type of theological speculative tendency, is fitted to give the great event something of its due place in relation to secular history; especially in the mind of a class of inquirers whose credulity takes the direction of weakly disbelieving plain facts plainly evidenced, because they happen to be connected with supernatural religion and the kingdom of God. But, while recognising the interest and importance of that aspect of

the matter, in our study of this Book we must look at the matter in the light in which it is placed by the historian. And when we so regard it we perceive that the historian, while he is not blind nor unfeeling relatively to the outward political aspect of the movement, is mainly occupied with its inward spiritual nature, as a movement of faith in God. Accordingly, it is with this that we shall now begin.

1. In its inward spiritual nature, the movement was one of *faith in God*. Though exodus be a common word for exit or departure, it has come to have an appropriate special meaning in reference to such a movement as that in question was. And we may profitably here for a little consider, what is meant by such an exodus? (See in Seeley's *Expansion of England*.) A true exodus is not a mere migration of a people, such as we read of in the history of primæval Celts and Germans, occasioning so much uneasiness and trouble to "civilised" Romans and others. Such a movement might be merely blind instinct, like that of bees in swarming; or it might be merely the result of some—so to speak—mechanical pressure, from within or from without. Again, those colonizing movements of individuals, through which new nationalities are coming to be formed in the British empire, differ from a true exodus in their motive impulse and spirit, as going to market on business differs from going to church for worship of God. But one of the Pilgrim Fathers of America said, that they had gone thither across the ocean, "to serve God." And there he expressed the true spirit of an exodus. It is a migration for the purpose of serving God. Such was the purpose of Israel's departure from Egypt. Even the three days' leave of absence, which was all they asked at first (Ex. v. 3), was for an act of high service to "the God of the Hebrews." The Egyptians no doubt (Ex. i. 10; see *Commentary*) understood whither this was purposely tending. And (Ex. iv. 18, 29-31 cp. iii. 12) the Israelites themselves, from their first thought about the movement, had thought of it as one for final abandonment of Egypt, "to serve God" in the promised land. Their movement not only was religious, it was religion: religion was not a means, but the end; as in temple-building, religion, which is the end of the work (*finis operis*), ought also to be (*finis operantis*) the end in view of the worker.

Now such was the character of Israel's movement Canaanward. When we look close into the history, we perceive that the Hebrews were in large measure not in the true spirit of the movement (He. iii. 12). Among them there was much of ungodly selfish worldliness



(ver. 9) ; so that in the end they as a people perished in the wilderness through unbelief (vers. 16-18). Yet a nation entered Canaan. And they were not all unbelievers who died in the wilderness ;—Miriam, for instance, and Aaron, and Moses. Even at the worst (cp. 1 Ki. xix. 18 and xx 41), there may have been in Israel as large a proportion of Calebs and Joshuas (Is. i. 9) as would have sufficed to prevent the destruction of Sodom. The true faith of some might, by contact of its enthusiasm, kindle others into great action “for a time” (Lu. viii. 13). Even a false faith (1 Co. xiii. 2) may work wonders, though (2 Thess. ii. 9, 10) they should be lying wonders. A merely “historical faith” does not go deep, and may not “endure” (Hos. vi. 4). But even that of devils is operative, in trembling, though not in loving obedience, so long as it lasts and as far as it goes. What we seek to see in this movement is, its *characteristic* impulse, the spirit of its true life. And that, no doubt, is, *faith in the living God, as revealed supernaturally, in positive covenant promises of redemption.*

Such had been the distinctive nature of Abraham’s life on earth (Ge. xv. 6). And it continued to be the characteristic of his covenant seed (Ro. iv. 3, 11). In Egypt, that true light of life had manifestly languished far toward extinction (Josh. xxiv. 14 ; Ezek. xvi. 1-6 ; see *Commentary* on chap. xxxii., Initial Note). But it was there, though it should have been only as an ember spark in the ashes. And the kindling of that spark into a flame was the exodus movement in the true cause of its life (1 Jn. v. 4). The people cried to God, because they *believed* that He heard them. They followed Moses, because they believed that He was Jehovah’s messenger. They went through the Red Sea, looking for salvation in Abraham’s God Almighty. They overcame the valiant Amalek in battle, because on their behalf faith was stretching out her hands to God. And the Sinaitic laws and constitutions were received by them, trembling and rejoicing, into the bosom of a belief, that these were the covenant gifts of God their Saviour, and ordinances of their heavenly King. “*By faith*” they passed the Red Sea ; and “*by faith*” the walls of Jericho fell down (He. xi. 29, 30). Such was the distinctive nature of the movement from first to last. Not only the history shows this : this is what the history shows.

2. It was a movement *into brotherhood of man*. On the face of it, it was into *nationality* of social condition. At the original settlement in Goshen (Ex. i. 1-5), the sons of Israel were passing from the simply domestic condition under patriarchy, into the distinctly tribal.

As their numbers grew into national dimensions, the continued influence of patriarchy, as an ideal, still kept the separate tribes in a unity of outward connexion, as of Swiss cantons under the Hapsburgs. Even their common experience of Egyptian oppression served to unite them in a fellowship of suffering, as through a common baptism of fire ; and to mould them as in a furnace, and stamp them as with a hammer, into a common type of national character, whose invincible tenacity has, down to our time, been a sort of physiological wonder in the natural history of man. But the unity, which at last found its full expression in the nation full and independent, had its true root, or living foundation, in a constitution that is not of nature ; the new constitution, of redeeming grace ; which (Ex. xix. 6) makes the nation to be Theocracy, holy to the Lord ; and of which the citizens are to be a brotherhood, united in the common bond of a filial relationship to God (Ex. iv. 22, 23).

This idea is involved in the nature of a spiritual patriarchate, such as Abraham's was. The noble custom of adoption (Ex. xii. 48, 49—*Commentary*) made statutory in Egypt at the foundation of Israel's national existence, provided for expanded application of the idea, for blessing unto all the families of the earth (Ge. xii. 3). But what we clearly see in Exodus is the realization of the idea in the foundation of the Israelitish kingdom of God. Of those admitted by adoption there is not express mention ; though their admission may have contributed to the marvellous rapidity of Israel's growth in number. The Israel whom we see have in them, as contributory to "solidarity" of nationalism in feeling, thought, and aspiration, a community, not only of blood, and of language, but, above all, of religion. That religion, keeping them separate (Ex. v. 2, 3) from the heathen around them, at the same time binds themselves together in the sacred bonds of a common inheritance of memories from the fathers, and of glorious hopes of Canaan, all centring in God, as the living God, the loving Father, who is Israel's covenant God in the promises. To a people in possession of this idea, Egypt might be a dark and joyless house of bondage. But "out of Egypt have I called my Son." It was from Egypt that there was "a nation, born at once." And effectively Egypt, dark and joyless, was the womb, of Israel's preparation, in a formed nationality, for being a first-born of the nations. So we see in fact, that, *through its religion*, the Hebrew people comes to be addressed as one community, both in the ordinances of Pharaoh through the taskmasters, and in the gracious promises of Moses

through the elders. And what gathered, in the end, toward Moses at Succoth, was, not a mere multitude of individuals or families, even in tribes ; much less, a "mob," or unorganized mass, of runaway slaves. It was a nation, arranging into compact order (xiii. 18, xiv. 8), that formed at the Red Sea, to pass on to the trysting place (iii. 12) of Covenant with God. And it was a nation (Ex. xix. 6), specifically a Theocracy, or kingdom of God, that in that covenant was vested with title to Canaan.

Egypt, in the isolation of its "valley," was as a world in itself, and was a world-empire to itself. With an extent of really habitable area that to us appears ludicrously small for an "empire," it had, in curious completeness, the conventional assumptions or affectations of imperialism. Within so narrow a space, there could hardly be wantonness of mere barbarity of cruelty, which, with such a race of bondsmen as the Israelites, might cause dangerous explosions, like the servile wars of Rome in Italy and Sicily. The climate is excellent. There were affluent means of life. The marches appear to have been securely guarded and well warded on the Ethiopian and Arabian borders. After the expulsion of the Hyksos there appears to have been, for a series of generations, little occasion for exhausting foreign wars ; until the "broken reed" of later prophecy was impelled, by a fatal weak ambition, to play a part on the great theatre of empires in the Asiatic mainland. The Egyptian character was "mild." There does not appear to have been any specialty of the ferocity of world-empires in the experience of that land, which lay in the seclusion as nature's own "happy valley," Nile's Eden wonder of the world. Yet, what we see in that old empire, at its culmination, is ruinous degradation of manhood and of womanhood. In that Paradise Man was lost.

In the freest of Ancient republics, the free men were not nearly so numerous as the slaves ; and, generally speaking, a heathen slave's condition was one of defenceless exposure to every outrage of capricious tyranny, as compared with which the condition of a bond-servant in Israel was a heaven on earth. (See the fruit of Ex. iii. 12 in Ex. xxi. 1, etc., with *Commentary* there.) This Exodus history shows in Egypt an enslaved foreign people cruelly oppressed by the masters of the land. But the monumental history shows, not only gangs of chained prisoners, perhaps at forced labours, but, more impressive to the reason, the great "mass" of native Egyptians themselves, excepting the privileged classes, of the priesthood and

the military, in a veritably hopeless bondage of heavy ceaseless toil at field-work, canals, stone-cities, and quarries. Let us look at those Pyramids, which for "forty centuries" have been looking down on mankind, as if in silent haughtiness of asserting antique grandeur. They claim to be the monuments of ancient kings who built them. Truly they are monumental of the ruinous degradation of mankind. Mere vastness of such work—how different from the nobly beautiful emanations of Greek genius!—means barbarous waste of human life. Could there be a more confounding proof of shameful ruin to the great family of man than this, that in that "happy valley" there should be, generation after generation, myriads of rational beings who, in the great opportunity of life, were doomed to merely toiling, like ants or coral insects, at a huge uncouth stone mountain mass, of sepulchre for a mummy?

It is said that a musical composition, "rendering" the characteristic sounds of song on Egyptian fields of labour at this day, was so sad, that the public could not endure it, and it was condemned. The following is a "rendering" into words of the spirit of that song :—

Work, my brother, rest is nigh ;  
 Pharaoh lives forever !  
 Beast and bird of earth and sky,  
 Things that creep and things that fly,  
 All must labour, all must die ;  
 But Pharaoh lives forever !

Work, my brother, while 'tis day ;  
 Pharaoh lives forever !  
 Rivers waste and wane away,  
 Marble crumbles down like clay,  
 Nations dwindle to decay ;  
 But Pharaoh lives forever !

Work ! it is the mortal doom ;  
 Pharaoh lives forever !  
 Shadows passing through the gloom,  
 Age to age gives place and room,  
 Kings go down into the tomb ;  
 But Pharaoh lives forever !

(Quoted as from "a gifted hand" by Charles S. Robinson, D.D., LL.D., New York, in his work, *The Pharaohs of the Bondage and the Exodus*, 1887.)

Israel's was the only formed nationality in existence between the

exodus from Egypt and that exodus of Jesus which He accomplished at Jerusalem. To say nothing of Babylon and Persia, even the Hellenic peoples, one in so many important respects, never united into a real Hellenic nation. Their outward political unity was thrust upon them from without, by alien dominations of Macedon and Rome. Rome never was a nation. From a petty republic she grew into an imperial city; but "Italian nationality," even as a political day-dream, was not heard of until the old Roman empire had really passed away. And under the old succession of world-empires, the condition of mankind was one of manifest hopelessness. The "glories" for which those empires contended were only those of success in ambition that was worldly selfishness, while the "conquering hero" had his triumphal welcome home, the *vae victis*, in the desolation he had left behind him, was that which really told upon the condition of humanity. "They make a solitude, and call it peace" (*solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant*), is, in reference to the filibustering Roman lust of conquest, the sentiment of the greatest Roman historian, which he puts dramatically into the mouth of Caledonian Galgacus. The "fair humanities" of common life were effaced from the earth in the competitions of a giant selfishness, contending for sole mastery. Nascent nationalities were stamped out of inchoate existence, or shattered in the collisions of imperial forces. Tribes were broken, families dispersed, even homes were obliterated past recognition, by the ravages of armies, where the soldiers had no nation, and had forgotten they were men. Then Christ came: to show men the Father, and lead them to see and feel (Act. xvii. 26), that God hath made of one blood all the families of mankind.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### EGYPT-SINAI THEATRE OF THE EVENTS—IN PLACE AND TIME.

RENAN found in Palestine "a fifth Gospel:" so much did that open Bible place him at home with the Evangelists. We may look for a second Exodus in the theatre of events:—*supposing* the events as recorded in this Book to be historically real. There are some who cannot believe in them as really historical matters of fact: they can

see in them only legends, myths, fables, which grew up in the religious imagination of the people, when the Hebrew mind was in a childish condition of inability to distinguish fact from fiction, day-dream from reality of waking life. Such inability to believe is found by the Christian missionary among uneducated natives of India. The Gospel story is to them simply a story, which they call *maya*—"representation." They do not believe it nor disbelieve it; but simply allow it play upon their minds as a reverie or day-dream, 'a tale that is told.' So as to the Exodus story of redemption, Niebuhr speaks of the importance of writing history as if the things were real. Some appear to imagine that in reading history the important matter is, to look on the things as unrealities, matters of *maya*—"representation." And of the reality of things, thus coming to be doubted, one practical test is found in the physical geography of Sinai as it is, and the political as well as physical antiquities of Egypt as now known.

That, as compared with the Egypt-Sinai of this Book, is one means of judging, whether the history was derived from a knowledge of reality, or, whether it did not merely originate in reverie or day-dream. The picture of a strangely original face, the like of which has never been seen in the world, is produced by a child; and therefore, on discovery of the original, is found to be an exact likeness of that original. Whereby it is demonstrated that the picture is not mere fancy-work of the child or any one else, but must have been drawn from actual observation of a real face:—observation on the part either of the artist, or of some who gave him correct information. The strangely original face is that of Egypt-Sinai of the ancient time in question. There is nothing like the Sinaitic Peninsula on the face of the earth. There has been nothing like the Egypt of the Pharaohs in the history of the world. And of course the combination of the two into a Janus double-face, of Egypt-Sinai of the Mosaic age, greatly enhances the uniqueness of strange originality in the whole. And of that strange original face, an exact likeness is the background of this Exodus history, its theatre of events. (See *e.g. Commentary*, under xxvi. 20.)

Sinai, such as it must have always been, is known to us now, probably better than it was known to mankind in any previous age of the world's history. It has a face of nature perfectly unique. There is nothing elsewhere in the world, that could for a moment be confounded with it. That any one should dream into existence, or

invent for a historical background, that natural face of Sinai, is no more possible, than it would be, to create the Sinai of reality out of nothing. Yet here, on the background of the history in Exodus, is exactly that unique face of Sinai ; with far more of clear unmistakeable distinctness than there is, on the background of the *Waverley Novels*, the face of that Scotland so well known, and so dearly loved, by Sir Walter.

Again, the face of Egypt of the Pharaohs in the Mosaic age, especially its aspects of natural human life, has through discovery of ancient monuments, come to be known to us, such as it must have been at the time of the Exodus and for a thousand years before. But that ancient face of Egypt had been buried, out of the sight and memory of mankind, through all the period between this and the dawning of most ancient history of Rome and Greece. Diodorus the Sicilian, about the time of Christ writes about Egypt one whole Book (II.) of his *Bibliotheca* of universal history. Herodotus, "the father of history," devotes to Egypt the most elaborate Book (II.) of his Nine Muses ; and he travelled in Egypt personally, and studied it with characteristic ardour of his child-like enlightened curiosity. These two no doubt knew all that could be ascertained about Egypt by the ancient Romans and Greeks. And yet, of that most ancient Egypt now in question, they manifestly had no distinct conception. There never has been anything like it in the very dreams of men. Of course a large part of all human life is the same in all ages, as all human faces of individuals have very much in common. But one face differs from another, and that ancient Egypt was different from all other countries of all time. Its face of human life is as unique and unparalleled as the Sinaitic face of natural scenery. And that ancient face of Egypt is exactly pictured on the background of this history.

Again, it is not only a single face that we have here, nor two single faces ; but (Janus-like) a double face, of Egypt-Sinai, or Sinai-Egypt. The probability, of course, is thus vastly augmented, of the pictures being truly derived from observation of the original. And the thing, the only thing, that makes the two, so unlike one another, to be one living face is *the wonderful history of redemption*, through which the two are vitally connected in this Book of Exodus. The force of the argument thus arising can be fully felt only through the details, which are given in the following parts of this chapter, and in the *Commentary*. But already we perceive, the significance of the

fact, that *the theatre of the events* was not imagined in dream, but observed by eyes capable of perceiving. Here we are not in dream-land, but on *solid historic ground*, in a clear historic light.

1. *Egypt*—"the monuments."

*Egypt*, the name so familiar to us from the ancient Greeks and Romans, was not known to the ancient Egyptians. *Nile*, the Greek and Roman name of their great River, was unknown to them. And the Greeks and Romans did not know the Bible name of Egypt, nor the title of Pharaoh, which outside of Egypt is found in the Bible alone in ancient literature. Until our own day, the knowledge which could be obtained of that most ancient land was only such as a botanist in last century could have of the geological history of the earth. Josephus and Philo Judæus had added a little of Hebrew colouring to the little of real knowledge of that primæval Egypt which was possessed by the Romans and the Greeks. And Christian scholars made bricks without straw.<sup>1</sup> The learned world was a child, at the door of a vast museum of antiquities: the door was locked, and the key was lost. Not only the "monuments" were mostly buried out of sight and memory. The language was not known. So was even the alphabet, popular and hieroglyphic, in which the inscription on the monuments was written.<sup>2</sup>

The wonderful romance of the recovery of the language, decipherment of the inscriptions, and interpretation of the monuments, has resulted in "monumental history" of that Egypt, embodying a real knowledge more comprehensive than could be attained to by any one Pharaoh with all his magicians. So recently as seven years ago, one discovery included the bodies of between thirty and forty kings of that most ancient Egypt, along with various indications of the history of their times.

Now if the writers of the Bible had not a real knowledge of that Egypt, the imposture of their professed knowledge of it would by these discoveries be exposed. How, then, stands the fact? The knowledge of these antiquities is now a distinct science—Egyptology.

<sup>1</sup> H. Wilkins, *Aegyptiaca*. We ought not to forget the *Spicilegia Aegyptiaca* of William Jamieson, *blind* Professor of Theology, in Glasgow at the beginning of last century.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Rawlinson's Books are in this relation of the greatest value: *History of Egypt, Ancient Empires*, etc.



And a confessedly first-class Egyptologist<sup>1</sup> has borne witness that Egyptologists look upon the "Egyptian" portion of the Pentateuch (Gen. xxxix.—Ex. xv.) with the same confidence as if it had been a monument of that ancient Egypt known to have been executed by the Egyptians themselves at the time. In this he speaks not for himself only, but for Egyptologists as a class. The picture which the child had in its possession is exact.

The detailed illustrations of the Pentateuch to be found in that unburied Egypt might fill a volume.<sup>2</sup> Those available for Exodus will find their places in the *Commentary*. Here we shall refer only to some of them, as contributory to a general view of the matter. As a sample, we will begin with *the art of writing*. Within our own memory it was part of the stock-in-trade of infidelity to maintain, that the Pentateuchal Scriptures cannot be Mosaic, because *Moses could not write*: the art of writing—it was maintained—was not in existence till long after his time. Christians had sore labour in meeting that stock objection. There was no extant heathen literature older than the *Iliad*, which originally was not published as a written book, but sung or chanted. How could it be *proved*, that writing was known and practised half a millennium before? The accomplished Moses Stuart<sup>3</sup> within our lifetime tried to prove it by means of something said about "fatal tablets," entrusted to a messenger, in the *Iphigenia at Aulis*. But (1) This was among Greeks, at the time of Troy siege, several centuries after the exodus. (2) The "tablets" may have been, not writings, but pictured information, such as was in use among the Mexicans of modern time. (3) Euripides, who wrote the *Iphigenia*, lived a great many generations after the time (of Troy siege), and was not (in a play) tied to historical accuracy, while he might not have real knowledge of the matter; as an English dramatist now may not really know what was in a secret letter by Richard I. after a council of war at the beginning of the Crusade.

From the need of such precarious reasonings we now are completely delivered by ascertainments as to fact,—*e.g.* (1) Discoveries in the Euphrates valley, where there was an ancient empire presumably coeval with that of the Nile, show that writing was practised—"the bricks bear witness"—there before Abraham was called from

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Stuart Poole; so in his articles "Egypt" in the *Contemporary Review*.

<sup>2</sup> There is a volume on the subject by the late learned Hengstenberg, *Egypt and the Books of Moses*. Clark, Edinburgh.

<sup>3</sup> *Introduction to the Old Testament*.

“between the Rivers.” So that Schliemann’s recent discovery, in the ruins of a Troy more ancient than Homer’s, that writing must have been practised by Asiatics in the region of Troy a thousand years before Homer’s time, is, though it should be fully authenticated, for our purpose not really needed. (2) The great oriental scholar Ewald has pointed out, in all the Semitic tongues (excepting Ethiopic) a use of the words *writing, pen, ink*, which proves, that writing with pen and ink must have been practised by the Shemites before their original (Babel) mother-tongue became divided into the various known Semitic languages (one of which is Hebrew). But (3) an overwhelming independent proof is contributed by that Egypt where Moses was born and bred.

The information derived from the “monuments” is furnished by them largely in *writing*, on papyrus and cloth, and in inscriptions on those tombs, out of sight of day, which made Egypt to be known as “a land of graves” (Ex. xiv. 11). Thus, even from mummy coffins there have come many spoken as well as pictorial illustrations of the old Egyptian life. In that life a very conspicuous character is *the scribe*. With his paper and ink, prepared “in act to write,” he is shown in the representation of stone city, and public works, and busy farm; in a ubiquity which makes the people appear to have almost a passion for writing about everything, like the Chinese of our time. A writer on their “domestic manners” (Wilkinson), makes the general statement, that among them every transaction worth remembering has to go down in writing. In their greater affairs, they are monumentally shown to have been in the habit of obtaining careful written reports of such things as the charge of provinces, and the fortunes of military expeditions. An extant poem by a native Egyptian is rapturous in description of that Janus region which is another name for Israel’s “field of Zoan.” An extant fragment of an epic poem—the Pentaur—describes a real war against the Hittites (*Cheta*) of North Syria or Palestine, before the time of Moses. There is in the British Museum a manuscript which was written centuries before he was born. There thus are found, from that high antiquity, even philosophical essays, and forms of prayer and religious instruction, put into coffins for the use of the departed in the unseen world. If Moses “instructed (*Revised Version*) in all the wisdom of the Egyptians,” and “mighty in words” as well as “deeds,” was not able to write—say—a straight-forward simple narrative like Exodus, he must have been singularly neglectful of his opportunities as the alumnus of a royal princess,

within reach of the famous university of Sun-town (Heliopolis-On). He was not a good speaker, and is never seen to make speeches; but he had great gifts of composition (the *Song* in Ex. xv.). We see him several times (Ex. xvii., xxiv., xxxiv.) in the very act of writing the most important materials of prose history. But, though he should have been unable to write or spell his own name, there must have been thousands of his Israelites who could write as easily as any now alive. Thus completely are the tables turned upon those who invented history to bear witness against the Bible.

The silencing of the opposition is at the same time corroboration of the history impugned. And one very important evidence thus arising ought to be distinctly noted by us, because it does not call attention to itself. That is, the evidence of authenticity that is constituted by the *absence of proved mistakes*. The all but impossibility of avoiding mistakes is commonplace in the history of literary forgery. Chatterton, it is said, betrayed himself as an impostor, in his "Old English" poems, by employing the possessive pronoun *its*, which had not come into use at a period so late as that of our Authorized Version of the Bible (which has *his* where we would have *its*). A Frenchman, after years of residence in Britain, if he should endeavour to pass for an Englishman speaking about common English matters, would probably be detected before he had spoken many sentences. This author of Exodus writes about a great complicated historical movement, a work full of unstudied allusions and implications relatively to that ancient Egypt-Sinai under varied aspects. We now have means of thoroughly bringing him to book, by comparing his picture with the original. And it proves that he never makes a mistake, in even a passing allusion or a recondite implication. That, to those capable of judging, is very strong proof of authenticity,—that is, of information derived from real acquaintance with the land as it then was:—whether by the author himself, or by men through whom the knowledge came to him.

On the other hand, we must not overestimate the importance of real or imagined coincidences. The conclusive identification of Pithom, as a real city, a stone city of that period, of which the civil name was Succoth,<sup>1</sup> is really important as well as deeply interesting. So is the wonderful recovery by Mr. Petrie (1884) of a great city Tanis, the Zoan of Scripture (Nu. xiii. 22), a seat of Egyptian Empire, peculiarly associated with Rameses the Great, and really more im-

<sup>1</sup> M. Naville, whose remarkable explorations began in 1883.

portant, though not so impressive to the sensitive imagination, is the definitive establishment of the fact, of a foreign domination (the Hyksos) for some long period, on the part of a Semitic race from the north-east, having in that region the seat of its dominion. The discovery of a Semitic family depicted on an older Egyptian monument, might not signify much apart from the *general* fact of Semitic movement in that direction. And the discovery of a few bricks that must have been made without straw might have been insignificant if this had not been in Pithom (a city built by the Israelites), which now is shown to have been almost wholly built of bricks, and to have been partly *built with bricks made without straw*.

The monuments do not name the Hebrews, nor describe the oppression of them, nor record the judgments upon the oppressor. But was there any *occasion* to speak of these things in liturgies for the Egyptian dead, or philosophical treatises, or heroic poems in praise of the Pharaohs' prowess in a foreign war? On their sacred tombs they would of course have no memorial of despised slaves, foreigners, heretics, of the hateful Semitic cousinhood of Hyksos. As for the Ten Plagues, culminating in the Red Sea disaster: nations do not raise monuments of their disastrous disgraces. Is there a national monument of Waterloo at Paris, or Jena at Berlin, or Sadowa at Vienna? There *might* have happened to be some traces of the sojourning. But mere absence of them is of no importance. And the mere presence of them; what purpose would it have served? *To prove the fact* of Israelitish residence in Egypt? That needs no proof. It is admitted that the Exodus is not only historical, but (Bunsen) the true beginning of history for mankind. And an historical exodus from Egypt of course presupposes an historical residence in that land. The ground is thus literally taken from beneath the feet of merely "mythic theories," which require a dreamland for their theatre of events. Here, *historical reality* is clear as Mount Sinai.

"The bricks are there to bear witness," might be conclusive to the judges addressed by Jack Cade; but it is because those judges were incapable of truly judging. The proof—or disproof—depends, not upon the presence or absence of any sort of mere detailed coincidences, but upon *testing* coincidence. And in the present case, where a historical picture has to be identified with the alleged original, the really satisfactory proof is constituted by those characteristic aspects and features in the history, which produce upon a

sound mind the impression, "*This is that Egypt*, with which we are otherwise acquainted." Rasselas, for example, Prince of Abyssinia, is a very moral personage, with finer English than Moses; but he never saw the Nile.

There is another species of proof that is constituted simply by the *truth* of the history, reflecting *reality* of the recorded facts. The intuitive perception of this is what we proceed upon in the ordinary intercourse of life. An honest man speaking what he knows does not need to prove what he says. We believe him. Every one believes him. It is *natural* to believe him, as to believe our eyes. Though we had never seen nor heard of him before, a true man saying what he knows is believed. Hence, a story so strange as that of the Gospel Histories is always believed when read. No one really doubts in his heart the reality of what is said as matter of fact within their knowledge by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. So of the very strange ancient Egypt of the Pentateuch. It is satisfactory now, on various accounts, to have a distinct proof of its reality. But a sterling good proof of its reality has always been the Pentateuch itself; an honest book, giving the story of really experienced fact.

It is not critical sagacity, it is wiseacre perversity, stupidity, or crass ignorance, to ignore *the substantive reality*, of an exodus and a sojourning, which is a fact of history as solidly fixed and established as any Egyptian pyramid, and more enduring than the very land of Egypt. The kind of corroboration, that may be expected from our knowledge of that country, is constituted by the *characteristic* features or aspects, of land or people, which are fitted for identification of that individual country, as distinguished from other countries. Herodotus was so impressed with the distinctness of those characteristics, as to say that the Egyptians were in *everything the opposite* of the rest of mankind, a lively manner of his speaking, which really means, that this country is quite different in its aspect from all others;—here is *a unique face* of nature and of human life. And as thus reasonably understood, his statement is fully justified by the Egypt of Exodus and "the monuments," which both bring to view *the same unique face*.

NOTE (1).—**History of Egypt.** The monumental history of Egypt has *no chronology*. That is to say, the ancient Egyptians had no era, like the birth of Christ, or the founding of Rome, or the first Olympiad, from which to date an

event. In all the monumental discoveries, there is only one case in which a detailed event is dated by stating the number of years between it and a memorable event in the long past history. Ordinarily, events are placed according to their year in a king's reign, or in the lifetime of a sacred bull, without specification of the period of the flourishing of the monarch or the beast. The archæologist is thus placed at a disadvantage, as if the specimens in a museum had all been rolled together down a hill into a heap at the foot of it; while the life of that ancient Egypt remained so much the same through the whole ruin, that it may be difficult from internal evidence of the things to determine with confidence to what period this or that belongs, and impossible to decide as to the extent or duration of the periods. Accordingly, in the estimates of not irrational Egyptologists, as to the duration of the whole time of authentic history of Egypt, there is a difference of some 3000 years: as if one historian had placed the crusades a thousand years before the birth of Christ, and another, two thousand years after it. Of course the events of the history may nevertheless be real: the pyramids do not cease to be, because we differ as to their age. There were crusades, witness even Tasso. But in relation to that old Egyptian history, we are put on guard against the fallacy of dates.

It has been attempted to make out an Egyptian Chronology from the written history of Manetho:—a native Egyptian priest who, in the third century before Christ, wrote the history of his country for the information of Greeks, who had come into command of Egypt with Alexander the Great. He is said to have used materials of authentic history that are lost. But his work is known to us only from some fragments of quotation (by Josephus), and from a sort of abstract (by Eusebius and Syncellus) which we do not even know to have been made from the original work. He is suspected of having exaggerated the duration of his country's history, for what he deemed its glory of antiquity. He is known to have some 25,000 years of what is really a mythic period, of gods, heroes, etc., previous to the time of Menes, with whom authentic history begins. Counting all the years of his dynasties within this period, we should be carried back to 5004 B.C. But, with only one exception (Mariette), all the Egyptologists admit, that some of the dynasties, which he gives as continuously consecutive, really were contemporaneous; there being different kingly houses reigning in different parts of Egypt at one time. A good-sized congregation, if all the ages of its members, infant and adult, were added together might thus be made out as 100,000 years old. And further, even the detailed numbers, when they can be compared with monumental tests, are found far from trustworthy in accuracy. By various processes, his 5004 years have thus been reduced, until respectable Egyptological experts have named 2500 B.C. as a probable date of the beginning of the history with Menes.

Nevertheless, by comparison with the monuments, his history is shown to have not been a mere romance, but to have had some foundation in authentic facts. The 5000 years may be regarded as a "maximum limit," tending to shrink through discovery of limiting conditions, such as we have referred to. For our study of Exodus it is not necessary to "synchronize" the Bible history with the old Egyptian; so as, for instance, to know at what point in the old Egyptian

history to place the visit of Abraham, the settlement in Joseph's time, or the exodus. For the general aspect, which appears in Genesis and Exodus, is presented by the Egypt of every period that can be supposed to have witnessed those events. But for convenience of memory we will suppose the date of Menes, the beginning of real history of Egypt, to have been about 2500 B.C. In this we are warranted by the fact, that all that is really and positively *known* of the Egyptian history can be brought within this date. And a very strong corroboration, with *cumulative* force of circumstantial evidence, is constituted for us by an independent proof of the duration of the Assyrian and Babylonian empire of the Euphrates valley. That empire, the only one whose antiquity is comparable to that of Egypt, is now known to have begun to exist not earlier than about 2500 B.C. And it is quite unreasonable to imagine that the origin of civil order and settled government should have been earlier to any considerable extent in the valley of the Nile. The two governments must have begun to be somewhere in the same period, soon after the Babel dispersion of mankind,—and that, long before the beginning of real authentic history of India and China. Assuming the date of 2500 B.C., we have 500 years between Menes and Abraham's time, and 1000 years before 1500 B.C.; which latter is about the middle point among various dates assigned to the Exodus (see following note, (2), on *Exodus Chronology*), whose true date is to be ascertained from the Scripture history, if it is to be precisely ascertained at all.

The Old Egyptian history was distributed over three periods of the Old Empire, the Middle Empire, and the New Empire; the Middle period being characterized as one seemingly of suspended progress in civilisation, with effacement of monuments of the preceding civilisation of the first period. It is certain that the exodus took place in the third period, not far from the beginning of it. With reference to the middle period, in which may have fallen the times both of Joseph and of Abraham, there long were disputed questions among the learned as to the reality of an alleged foreign domination of "shepherd kings" or *Hyksos*; of which the original story according to Manetho was to the effect,—that these foreigners had domineered over Egypt 500 years (another reading has 250); but were at last expelled by insurrection of native Egyptians, under a hero (Amosis or Ahmes) of native kingly race; in a war which terminated in campaign-siege of Avaris, the capital of the Hyksos, to which they had fallen back as an intrenched camp. Josephus imagined, that this was a discoloured and distorted version of the story of the sojourning and exodus of Israel. He was followed in this view by many Christian scholars. Even the late distinguished Egyptologist Hengstenberg, in his latest work,<sup>1</sup> maintained, that there were no Hyksos but the Israelites. That long controversy has now been finally and strangely set at rest.

The learned world will not soon forget the deep thrill of wondering interest occasioned within this decade by the discovery (in A.D. 1881) of the bodies and other remains of some thirty or forty Egyptian kings of that most ancient period. One result of the discovery has been the establishment of the fact of that foreign Hyksos domination beyond all rational doubt. There has even been identified

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<sup>1</sup> Lectures on *The Kingdom of God in the Old Testament*; Clark, Edinburgh.

the body of that hero who led the insurgent Egyptians to their final success. And there is ocular demonstration of his having died in battle, in the arms of victory, leaving his country free. Three terrible wounds on the head are the manifest cause of his death, and the distortion of his countenance bears witness to the agony of dying by violence; while the manner of his burial shows, that those who buried their king were not broken discomfited fugitives, but in victorious command of the situation.<sup>1</sup> A picturesque illustration of the closeness of connection of our Exodus interest with these discoveries is furnished by a recent letter<sup>2</sup> from M. Naville, in charge of the exploration, intimating the discovery of a Hyksos king bearing the unique name of "*Jan-Ra*;" which curiously coincides with "*Roy-an*;" the name which in Arabic literature is assigned to the Pharaoh of Joseph. More important is the really wonderful discovery (by Mr. Petrie in 1884), and conclusive identification of Tanis, the "Zoan" of Scripture (Nu. xiii. 22), shown to have been a great imperial city, specially the seat of Ramesés II. ("The Great" *Sesostris* of the Classics), who is understood to have been the father of (Meneptah) the Pharaoh of the exodus, and also of that princess who was adoptive mother of Moses (Dr. Robinson's work referred to above, p. 27).

In the light of information incomplete and not yet digested, we will venture upon a provisional view of what may have been the real fact as to that Hyksos domination:—The native Egyptians are historically distinct from the Semitic peoples to the north and east of their valley. But in the Tanaitic region to the north-east, where even now (in the Menzaleh district) the type of man is different from the true Egyptian, there always was some considerable basis of Semitic population; which may have been under the native Egyptian power as the Saxon English were under the Normans, or the Hungarian Slavs under the Magyars. Now the Hyksos movement may have originally been simply a "wave" of Semitic migration of nomads (cp. Ge. xlv. 34) into the land among their kindred. Or, it may have been distinctly an invasion, like that of the Roman empire by "barbarians;" which might gather into itself accessions of the resident kindred Semitic population. Considering that the arable land of Egypt was in area only about as large as Yorkshire, we can understand that the invaders, once within the belt of border fortresses ("land of forts," is an etymology of *Mitzraim*, "Egypt"), and with helpful sympathy of a vigorous rustic population—like Israel—in the north and east, would meet no very formidable resistance at the centre of old "empire." Apparently the invading race always had its main seat of dominion in the lowlands of the Delta and the Tanaitic region. In the Nile "valley" of Egypt proper, there seems to have remained some native Egyptian sovereignty. About the duration of the domination—whether 500 or 250 years—we need not inquire (see Canon Cook, Appendix to *Speaker's Comm.* on Exodus). Its character, as comparatively rude and barbarous, we can believe in from the nature of the case: though Charles Lamb has taught us, in his instructions about a hue and cry, not to repose implicit confidence in the native Egyptian tradition; in which the

<sup>1</sup> There is an account of the Discovery, beautifully illustrated from photographs, in *The Century Magazine* of May, 1887.

<sup>2</sup> *Journal Transactions* of the "Victoria Institute," 1888, No. 184.



Hyksos are *shasus* — “robbers” — if not lepers ; being despicably loathsome as heretics, all the more because not agreeable as conquering masters. That—even from political motives—they defaced the ancient monuments of native Egyptian independence, we have learned from the statesmanship of Edward Longshanks in Scotland. But into such details we are not called to venture in a Bible study of Genesis or Exodus.

Rameses II. has been identified not many months ago among the dead Egyptian kings. His very face bears witness to his having Hyksos blood in his veins. All the more he might—like the Idumean Herods posing as Jews—be disposed to extremes in playing the “true born” Egyptian. His being the oppressor of the infant Moses, is a very fair conjectural hypothesis ; which fits conveniently into the view of the oppression that is given in our Book.

NOTE (2).—On **Exodus Chronology**. Within the eighty years of Mosaic life in the Book, and the two years of exodus movement, the history itself is distinct as to time. What has to be inquired about is, the place of the exodus in connexion with the whole chronological system of Scripture for the ancient time. And the inquiry has difficulties :—*e.g.* in the circumstance, as to the three cardinal statements, that the text of one of them (1 Ki. vi. 1) is not of undisputed genuineness ; while of another (Ex. xii. 40), the Heb. text is departed from by the Septuagint and Samaritan Versions ; and the third (Ge. xv. 13) is ostensibly contradicted by Gal. iii. 17. The following representation is intended simply as a fair view of the matter, according to the best judgment of the present writer.

In connexion with numbers, a certain amount of hopeless difficulty is part of our inheritance from the past ; occasioned by the ancient manner of marking numbers, which involved a peculiar liability to misapprehension in the reading, and confusion in the copying, and effacement through tear and wear of manuscript. But, relatively to the real interest of history, we must beware of imagining, that the importance of the numbers which may be thus obscured is in proportion to the difficulty in reading them aright. History is not an Almanac, nor a bill bearing interest, whose value is always vitally dependent on accurate chronology of date. The fate of Europe depended, not on the Almanac date of Waterloo, but on the victory. The date of the greatest event in all history is quite undetermined, as to the day, and even the season of the year ; even as to the year itself, of the birth of Christ, it is certain that the generality of Christians have been mistaken. But that in no way clouds the true historical order of events,—the connexion, for instance, of the birth of Jesus with Paul’s conversion and the new creation of the world. The essential order of history is organic, not chronological merely, as if constituted by succession in time, but logical, as arising out of moral if not also physical causation. In the Bible history, the real interdependence of events is nowhere obscured by difficulty as to dates. And even where the numbers have got confused beyond hope of expiscation, the *fact* of numbers is important, like the naming of places that now cannot be identified, as indicating careful accuracy in the original composition. But the chronology connected with Exodus is by no means hopelessly confused.

1. *Presumable date of the Exodus*. Where to place it in connexion with Egyp-

tian history, is, we saw, a question of no importance; because the Egypt of Exodus is found all through the third Egyptian empire until long past the Mosaic age. The generally "received" date (Hales) is 1491 B.C. (Usher placed the event at 1648 B.C.). Calculations by Egyptologists now before us range from 1320 B.C. to 1593 B.C.: their middle point is about 1500 B.C., thus nearly coinciding with the "received" date. If we assume the genuineness of 1 Ki. vi. 1, that gives 480 years from the exodus to the building of Solomon's temple; and if we place this event at 1020 B.C., we again have 1500 B.C., which thus variously appears as the true date of the exodus.

2. *Duration of the sojourn in Egypt.* The fundamental witness is Ex. xii. 40. Our A.V. has a mistranslation, "who dwelt in Egypt," which the R.V. has corrected into, "which they sojourned,"—430 years. The Sept. and Samarit. Versions, by their departure from the Heb. text, make the 430 years to include the patriarchal residence in "the land of Canaan," along with the Israelitish residence in "the land of Egypt." And in Ga. iii. 17, 430 years are spoken of as elapsing between the Abrahamic covenant and the Sinaitic legislation. Thus ostensibly in two ways, the Egyptian sojourn is made to shrink into 215 years,—half of the 430. And that twofold presumptive evidence is corroborated by the observation, that the shorter sojourn would bring the original settlement in Goshen within 130 years of the birth of Moses; which again would be manifestly consistent with Ex. vi. 16–20, where there are to be found only three ancestors between Moses and Levi; and with Ex. ii. 1, which makes his mother "a daughter of Levi."

*Answer:—*(1) *The direct and primary evidence* is Ex. xii. 40, of which the Heb. text is clear and unquestionable, on proper grounds of textual judgment. It states only what could be verified with ease in the Mosaic age, from family and tribal histories. There is no assignable reason to imagine that the writer did not simply state the fact as thus ascertained by him. On the other hand, the Samarit. and Sept. Versions have internal evidence of deliberately tampering with the original in their translation. (2) The longer period is *favoured* by the round number 400 in Acts vii. 6 and Ge. xv. 13; especially as there *the whole period* in view is spoken of as one of oppressive bondage in a strange land. In Ge. xv. 16, "the fourth generation," in reference to the time of Israel's returning, is, in accordance with a common use and wont of languages, a generality of expression, of which the special meaning depends on the connexion: here, it is to be regarded as a parallelism to ver. 13, which it resumes ("at the close of the fourth century"). (3) As to those *passages ostensibly conflicting*. *a.* "A daughter of Levi" (Ex. ii. 1) may mean simply, a *Levite*, one of the *tribe*:—which *here* is the important point. Cp. "a daughter of Abraham," Lu. xiii. 16 (also the "Son of David"). *b.* As to paucity of ancestors in Ex. vi. 16–20:—In a Scripture Genealogy names may be omitted; three are omitted in the genealogy of Christ: a genealogy is not a census return. Very strong *on the other side* is the fact (1 Chron. vii. 20–27) that to Joshua, younger contemporary of Moses (40 years his junior), the number of ancestors assigned is *ten*. *c.* As to Ga. iii. 17, Paul makes "the law" (Sinaitic, ver. 13), to have been 430 years after "the Covenant" (Abrahamic, vers. 14–16, 18). He does not say, *only* 430 years. His interest here is

not chronological merely. The point he is making is theological intensely : what he wants is, *a long time* between Covenant and law. His point is sufficiently made by the number 430. And his employment of that number may be accounted for in two ways. First, in fact, there *was* a well-known 430 years between the covenanting and the law, namely, that of the Egyptian sojourning. That sufficed for Paul's argument, which would in no wise have been strengthened if he had added, prosaically if not prosily—"and 215 years besides." Paul the soldier does not seek more if the enemy be already shot through the heart. Second, here, Paul is a *Hellenist*, a reader of the Septuagint addressing readers of that Version, —Gentiles, as well as Jews, who read the Scriptures only in that form. *Their* conventional manner of speaking of the period between Abraham and Moses would be founded on that Version. Paul may not have thought it necessary to depart from that manner, which had nothing to do with the theological purpose of his reference—to (a long) time.

NOTE (3).—On **Egypt's place**. 1. Though so close to the main world, Egypt never did really rule the main stream of world-history. The great series of empires—Babylonian, Persian, Greek, Roman—had Egypt as a contemporary, parallel to them all, though more and more dwindling into servitude complete and confessed. The Hyksos domination was, like that of the Normans in England, comparatively an internal movement. And in relation to the world beyond itself, Egypt was unbroken for generations after the Exodus, and before that event had attained to the culmination of its power and glory. 2. The place of the Egyptians as a people, in the ethnology of mankind, is not very easily defined. By Scripture (Ge. x.) in its Table of nations, they are put under the name of *Mitzraim*, along with *Cush*, *Put*, and *Canaan*, as the children of Ham. But the Hamitic Canaanitish monuments gave place to the Shemitism which early came to southern Syria in the person of the Phœnicians. Of the two "Ethiopias" (*Cush*), African and Asiatic, not much is distinctly known; and *Phut* was early effaced beyond recognition. The native Egyptian physique is finer than the common Hamite, while distinct in type from the Japhetic and the Semitic. The language, and even the mode of writing, show essential distinctness of origin, in which the Semitic element is only an infusion and influence natively from without. And there appears to have been a very pronounced religious antipathy going as far back as the light of history really trustworthy. The suggestion thus is, that of a fundamentally Hamite people, with some foreign elements of refining strength. 3. A large amount of distinctness, otherwise unaccountable, may perhaps be accounted for by the uniqueness of position in the Nile valley, with a soil more fertile than that of the Euphrates basin, and a cloistral seclusion as compared with which Mesopotamia was an exposed common for mankind. 4. Egypt is peculiarly interesting as being, along with Babylon, equivalent to the most ancient civilisation of mankind. The civilisation in the substance of it appears, not as a gradual development, but as if placed there from the first. There is no real accounting for it, but in the supposition of some such preceding history as that of the Babel dispersion.

## 2. *Sinai and the Red Sea.*

*Real Geographical Knowledge of this region did not lie in Israel's way at any period of their residence in Canaan.* For centuries after they first entered the land of promise they were occupied with a chronic warfare against a still surviving power of heathenism within it ; while around them, to the east and south, blocking the way to the Sinaitic Peninsula, there was a fire-girdle of hostile heathenism, Ammon—Moab—Edom, and “the great and terrible wilderness,” of *et Tih*. So late as the time of Elijah, his visit to “Horeb, the mount of God” (1 Ki. xix. 8), has in the narrative the aspect of a strange unwonted thing, as if he had gone into the unseen world without the chariot of flame. At a yet later period, when the “Jews” began to take part in outside business of the world, if any of them crossed the Peninsula on the caravan route between Euphrates and Nile, they are not likely to have turned aside, from the way of safety and of wealth, to linger in those wild solitudes for the prosecution of antiquarian geographical researches. Nothing is more notable in the New Testament than complete absence of interest in such things. And Paul's mind must have been absorbingly occupied with a wholly different interest of the kingdom of God, if Sinai was the Arabia (Ga. i. 17 cp. iv. 25) to which he retired for seclusion in a great crisis of that kingdom ; as Moses and Elias had similarly found a seclusion there before.

After the Primitive Church found rest in the converted Roman empire, there arose a superstitious interest in Sinai, which led to visible contrast with New Testament feeling, in pilgrimages thither ; and a certain amount of information thus was obtained ; along with vain tradition, to which additions were made by Mohammedanism when it came to be in power there. But a really full and accurate knowledge of the Peninsula was not within reach of mankind, until our own day. A crowning work of accurate observation has been the Survey of the district by Queen Victoria's Engineers (under Captains Wilson and Palmer), combining the skill of military science with mathematical exactness. And in connexion with that labour there ought to be kept in memory the uniquely valuable contribution made to real knowledge of the primitive manner of life in that region by Professor Palmer, who afterwards was murdered in the neighbourhood by men whom he had trusted. He, for the first time in human history, placed the qualifications of rarely high oriental scholarship at

the service of the western world for a real study of that life, by a personal sojourn of years among the rovers of "the great and terrible wilderness."<sup>1</sup>

There is, however, a sort of spiritual identification involved in that legendary Mosaic tradition of the region as a whole. It lies between a more ancient, pre-Mosaic, old heathen tradition, and the more recent Mohammedan and Christian traditions. It is distinct from both, as one stratum of rock is from the strata beneath it and above it. And in this respect there is a remarkable contrast between Sinai and Egypt in their connexion with Israel's Exodus. In Egypt, the land of memory, with its monuments vast as mountains, its literature more durable than brass, Israel's hundreds of years of sojourning, with the terribly memorable events of the departure from Egypt, has left no trace, more than if a "congregation" of shadows had flitted over the land's face. In Sinai, on the other hand, there is only an oral tradition, the passing breath of men. The men themselves have been changing, in language, in religion, and in race. And Israel's abiding there, thirty centuries ago, was only as the wild-asses' halting in the wilds to quench their thirst. Yet the memory of that transition abides there like the "everlasting hills;" as if the spirits of the Israelites were posted there, to keep watch and ward over the region where once they were the masters in the flesh. Their great leader appears to be still in command of the region, as when Robert Bruce, a solitary fugitive in the Scottish highlands, was named "the monarch of the mountain." That is not the result simply of impression that may be made by a great personality, a commanding puissant individuality; like that of Solomon, whose proverbial wisdom is (not very gloriously) represented in oriental tradition by the mightiest "magician" of its legends. Rather, the deep abiding impression (Ex. xxiii. 27) in Sinai is to be accounted for by the *historical reality of the exodus*, with its wonders of mercy and of judgment. Not only Israel saw those wonders, but surrounding peoples felt them, when Sinai shook "at the presence of God, the God of Israel." The deep ineffaceable impression, made on the wandering populations of that

<sup>1</sup> His observations were published in two interesting volumes. There is a compact account of "Sinai" by Captain Palmer in one of the Christian Evidence volumes; and one on "Egypt" in the same series from the master hand of Dr. Birch. The whole theatre of events is illustrated, with letterpress descriptions of the first quality, in Virtue & Co.'s magnificent *Picturesque Palestine, Sinai, and Egypt*.

wilderness, is to be regarded as a memorial result, not of the personal greatness of the Hebrew Legislator, but of the great work of the Lord God Almighty through the servant, who brought laws from heaven to His Israel for mankind.

We now shall endeavour to obtain some such view of that region of Israel's consecration to God as may be serviceable for introduction to the history in Exodus ; and we will accompany that history in its order of time.<sup>1</sup>

NOTE (1).—**Passage of the Red Sea.** It is remarkable how completely for Israel the Egyptian power ceased at once to be. For generations there had been Egyptian settlements on that west of Sinai, for mining purposes, with no doubt some military occupation for protection of the mines and miners. Traces of the miners of the Great Rameses have been seen there within the last two years. And the African continent, from which Israel passed into Sinai through the Red Sea, was separated from the Egyptian empire of that mainland only by a step ; whether the step across the Sea, or by the way around the head of it, along the Isthmus of Suez, between it and the Mediterranean,—a route which no doubt was taken by the Ethiopian Eunuch in his chariot (Act. viii.), as well as by Joseph and Mary (Mat. ii. 15), when the ancient word was coming true a second time, " Out of Egypt have I called my Son."

The distinguished Egyptologist Brugsch has proposed to take Israel that way, past the head of the Red Sea to Sinai ; and to place the waters they passed through, " which (He. xi. 29) the Egyptians essaying to do were drowned," in that district, to the north-east of Egypt, between Etham and the Mediterranean ; where at present there is brackish water of an inland lake, and where anciently there was much more of lake, and bog, and quagmire than there now is. No doubt it was physically possible for Israel to go round that way to Sinai, skirting Palestine on the southern border of it ; so that Moses might have touched the land of promise many centuries before he appeared in glory (Lu. ix. 30), to speak of another exodus ("decease," ver. 31) on the mountain of Transfiguration. And the Egyptians pursuing, might on that way have overtaken swift destruction, as another army perished in "Serbonian bog." But though, under Herr Brugsch's guidance, we might thus get round the Red Sea, we cannot get round the history in this Book. Under the leadership of Moses it compels us to go not through lakes, or bogs, or marshes, round the sea, but straight through the sea. There might be plenty of water on that other way, as there was in the neighbourhood when the Eunuch was ready for baptism. But in historical fact (1 Co. x. 2) it was " in the cloud and in the sea " that the fathers were " all baptized unto Moses," passing " through the sea." No doubt the thing was impossible, as if an army had been ferried

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<sup>1</sup> A most valuable sketch, with illustrations, is in the *Century Magazine* for July, 1888. In this and the Pharaoh article in the May preceding, the publishers have conferred great favour on the students of Exodus.

across "on eagles' wings" (Ex. xix. 4). Nevertheless it is a fact of this history. And it is our part, not to undertake the thankless task of making things easy for God, but simply to learn what is said about Him in this Book: remembering, that it was not by easy things of God that, in that Passage, there was "a nation, born at once": the Mosaic works were samples, not of sleight of hand, but of Omnipotence (Ge. xvii. 1).

From the history it appears that Herr Brugsch's roundabout way would not have been in all respects easy for man. Israel's commander-in-chief (Ex. xiii. 17 cp. xv. 3), who sees the end from the beginning, saw, at the further extremity of the Isthmus, in the south-west corner of Palestine, as if guarding the gate of it against assault from Egypt, those Philistines after whom Canaan afterwards was named Palestine. They were not among the nations expressly doomed to destruction at the outset. They were allowed to remain there long, as a thorn in Israel's side: witness the long after histories of Samson and of David. It was in the Plan of the Campaign of "Jehovah of the armies" (the Lord of Hosts), that Israel, before coming to the final tug of war with them, should first be trained and indurated, by residence in the wilderness, and war-practice in their journeying to Canaan, and in the conquest of the territories of the doomed Canaanitish peoples; whom Jehovah's army approached from the east side by passage of the Jordan. Through that side, thrown open by the downfall of Jericho, they found an open way into the very heart of the land, so that, with the heart of heathenism split in twain, it required but two powerful strokes of Joshua's campaigning, to the right and to the left, in order that heathenism should be shattered into impotency, and Israel should obtain its promised rest, in "the land subdued before them" (Josh. xviii. 1). This was in view of the Lord, who "is a man of war," when Israel was on the wing of departure from Egypt. The Philistines were a martial race, with strong fenced cities. Jehovah did not choose to begin His campaigning with setting that frowning face of war against His Israelites, accustomed for generations to blench at the frowning face of man, and to tremble under the lash. So, instead of leading them straight north along the Isthmus way to Canaan, He led them east and south, along the Egyptian (or African) side of the Red Sea; whereby it was impossible for them to escape into that Sinai so near in sight of them without taking the fateful step, of passing the sea that lay between them and that refuge.

The Red Sea is narrow like a Scottish Highland sea loch, as if it had only been a salt-water Nile. But the Passage of it was no more possible for an array like Israel "harnessed" (Ex. xiii. 18), than would be, a Passage of the Atlantic Ocean by bisons from the Rocky Mountains. And here, again, men have been labouring at the thankless task of making things easy for the Almighty—as if bent upon *His* having no credit for the work, or "glory" in it. There has been difference of opinion as to *the place* of the Passage of the sea (*Commentary*, under Chap. xiv.). There is room on the ground of Scripture for a difference of opinion. For the now remaining topographical marks for identification, by means of names, or other indications of place, in the Exodus history, are not clear beyond a doubt. And some, in the inquiry on the Scripture ground, are apparently biassed by a disposition to make the Passage, either not miraculous, or as little wonderful as

possible. Now that bias is forbidden by the history, and by all the commentaries on the history that were afterwards given in the course of the further intimations recorded in Scripture, of the mind of God about that matter. According to the Scripture history and commentary, the Passage of the Red Sea was a miracle—of “eagles’ wings” (Ex. xix. 4). And the miracle was intended to be, not a small one, as if God had here been half ashamed of Himself and His workings, but a singularly great one; such that in this work both Israel, and Egypt, and all following generations of mankind might see, in light of clearness unmistakable, that “Jehovah is God Almighty,” and “that Jehovah God Omnipotent reigneth.”

In looking, then, for the site of the famous Passage, we are not to select one where it would be easy, or somehow possible for man; but rather, to prefer one where it would be difficult, so as to be possible only for God. But in making a selection, we are confronted with a difficulty created by changes that have been going on, all through the historic period of man’s acquaintance with the Red Sea. That narrow tongue or horn of the Arabian Sea, pushing itself north and west in the direction of the Mediterranean, has continually been encroached upon by sands, moving from the west, and pushing the Red Sea farther and farther back toward the east; as if the Arabian Sea were drawing in its horn or tongue. Hence there are some geographers of high repute<sup>1</sup> who would place the Passage where now there is no sea, but sand, where the land has so far encroached from the north and west upon the sea-tongue. Others<sup>2</sup> place it where the sea is only about a mile broad. And there appears to be a curiously confused impression, that their view is countenanced by the circumstance, that at that place the sea is (now) fordable in certain states of the tide: as if the conditions there at present would facilitate a passage three thousand years ago, when the conditions were different from the present! The prevalent weight of expert opinion is in favour of a place nearer to the main sea, where the Red Sea is six miles broad. The Scripture fact of history for us is, that the Passage, which must have been *somewhere*, was wonderful or miraculous: “He divided the sea, and caused them to pass through; and He made the waters to stand as an heap” (Ps. lxxviii. 13).

NOTE (2).—**On to Sinai:**—*The sustentation of Israel.* Though there were no Gilgal Pillars as memorial of this Passage, but a more durable monument in immortal song (Ex. xv.), *Ayun Mousa* (“Wells of Moses”) is not without some appearance of having right to its name, through being an actual resting-place of Moses and his now emancipated Israel. There, too, on the east side of the Red Sea, between it and the central Sinaitic nucleus of unchanging mountains, is evidently the region of the commencement of the wandering ever memorable. Marah, with its bitter waters, and Elim, with its wells and palm trees, have been identified with some reasonable confidence. But beyond that, as regards the Sin resting-place, and as regards the sites of movement during the fortnight between Elim and the Sinai mount of legislation, opinions are seriously divided between

<sup>1</sup> Ritter: *Erdkunde*,—the Biblical part in *Translation*; Clark, Edinburgh.

<sup>2</sup> Robinson: *Biblical Researches*.



two routes. One leads straight into the centre of the group of mountains of which that Sinai is one; namely, by Wadys or dry river courses which lead straight inland from a Sin point of departure somewhat inland; the other, by a deflection to the right until the Red Sea is reached at Sin, and a departure thence is made for the concluding four marches on to Sinai. Both ways are declared practicable for the Israelitish host by the military skill of Queen Victoria's engineers (above, p. 43). And speculative reasons are given for and against both by Biblical scholars. These, no doubt, would have been very valuable if the route were being fixed beforehand by a council of war, as of course all the scholars are good strategists. But they are not of the same weight for determining the route which was actually taken in the historical past; when considerations not known to the scholars may have influenced the commander. We will provisionally, and for convenience, assume the second of the routes; namely, that which deflects to the seaside before striking inland toward Sinai mount. Then "the wilderness of Sin" will be, the narrow plain of *El Markha*, stretching southward for several miles along the Red Sea side, in the direction of *Râs Mohammed*, the promontory which pushes into the sea at the southern extremity of the Peninsula. Here, where the people rested for some days, there occurred the wonders of the manna and the quails. In order to reach the Sinai mount from this place, they had to press through a long gorge, in which the military officers have found a spot for "Rephidim," where hostile Amalek might make a stand for their pastures and their springs of water. But *Massah* and *Meribah*, names of "temptation" and of "chiding," are memorials of the fact, that there were not waters there, that would have sufficed to keep invading Israel from perishing of thirst. Hence the first miracle of bringing water from the rock. Jethro's visit (Ex. xviii.) may have extended into the repose of Sinai.

This is not the place for commentation on "the Rock was Christ." But even a historical glance has to take in the spiritual significance of that physical wonder, in which was the Redeemer who appeared at Jacob's well (Jn. iv. 10).

The manna, too, as a proof of revelation, and (John vi. 30-59) a type of the salvation which has come in Christ, had an abiding supernatural purpose. But the ordinance (Ex. xvi.) for the collection and the distribution of it evidently contemplates a permanency in the use of it for the temporal support of Israel in the wilderness. Accordingly (Josh. v. 12), it did not cease until the people had come to have ripe corn in Canaan. It was in itself a supernatural provision; as is shown by the fact that it could be baked into bread, which the natural manna cannot. But evidently it was not intended to come in the place of a diligent use of what natural means of living there may have been available. A distinguished agriculturist, Mr. Wilson of Edington Mains, in a tract on *The Manna from a Farmer's Point of View*, has shown in what manner skilled agriculturists and cattle-feeders from Goshen might administer the supply that was given to them (directly) from heaven. But the present question is, What, apart from the supernatural manna, that supply might be?

As the question is not directly answered in the history, it cannot be of much importance. We need no revelation to show us, that Israel must have been sustained *somehow* in the wilderness. For plainly that Israel which conquered

Canaan was not a company of ghosts, but a nation of vigorous *alumni* of the desert. On the other hand, any food supply they may have carried from Egypt must have soon been spent; in fact, before the end of the third month we find them at Sin on the brink of starvation (see *Commentary*, xvi. 3). Windfalls of quails, as they were directed by Him whom winds obey, were fitted to prove the Israelites rather than to feed them chronically. The wealth of Egypt would enable them, after they had settled down in occupation of the Peninsula, to purchase provisions from surrounding peoples of the plains, as we find them doing at the close of the forty years (De. ii. 6, 7). Like other pastoral peoples, they had a resource of wealth additional to that godsend in the produce of their flocks and herds. Besides, their living would in large measure be on the milk and the flesh. And for a supply of bread, there was the resource of cropping the land, which was much more fruitfully available for that purpose then than it now is, when trees are neglected or cut down; as always the grass withers where the land is under domination of "the unspeakable Turk." But with all the supply, there was want enough to try:—"He humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna . . . that He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live" (De. viii. 3).

NOTE (3).—**General Aspects.**—Notwithstanding all the lapse of ages, and the changes in religion, language, even blood, the people of that Peninsula must, in their general manner of living, be very much what they were three thousand years ago. For the outward conditions, which mould the way and manner of a people's life, are in that region substantially unchanged, as they are seemingly unchangeable. For instance, as illustrating one of the ways in which Israel may have obtained means of life in that wilderness, it may be mentioned that Professor Palmer found, in *et Tih*, the great wilderness between Sinai and Palestine, one man who in three years had not tasted either bread or water, but had lived entirely on his camel's milk. Perhaps there is no other region on the face of the earth where the population so nearly resembles in its present manner of living what it must have been in the Mosaic Age.

Exodus, however, has very little to do with the native population of Sinai. What we have to see is, the general aspect of the region itself. The Red Sea is one of two Arms of the Arabian Sea, which divide at the promontory of *Rás Mohammed*, the southern extremity of the Sinaitic Peninsula. The other arm, stretching northward from that promontory, is the Gulf of Akabah or Ailanitic Gulf, another narrow sea "loch," across which may have been ferried, from Midian, the flocks which Moses tended at the "back side of the desert," when he "came to the mountain of God, even Horeb." Akabah bounds and fences the east side of the Sinaitic Peninsula, and the Red Sea the west side; respectively like the forefinger and the thumb of the right hand laid flat on the table, palm downward at an angle of about two-thirds of a right angle. Though the Akabah *gorge* (forefinger) into which the Red Sea runs up, is longer than the Red Sea (thumb), the Akabah *Gulf* does not go so far as the Gorge. The Gorge, in the direction of the Gulf, really reaches over a "saddle" of dry land, into the

profound depression of the Dead Sea (1291 ft. below the Mediterranean level); and beyond that, up the basin of the Jordan to its sources in Mount Lebanon; so that, if the "saddle" between Akabah Gulf and the Dead Sea were removed, the Arabian Sea would reach as far as to the Waters of Merom in Upper Galilee!

Now supposing the Akabah Gulf to extend as far along the Peninsula on its east side as along the Red Sea on the west, a line drawn across country between the extremities of the two, from east to west, will form with the two a nearly equilateral triangle. This triangle is the Sinaitic Peninsula. That line, the northern base of the triangle, is the boundary between the Peninsula and "the great and terrible wilderness" (*et Tih*) extending north between Sinai and Palestine. We in Exodus have nothing further to do with it, except to look South from it, upon that Peninsula along whose northern boundary it stretches as a base line. Beyond the base line northward "the wilderness" is flat with undulations; a part of that Great Desert, which stretches east along North Africa, and into Asia across Arabia, on to the basin of the Euphrates. In that Great Desert Egypt is an oasis, a "gift of the Nile;" and the Sinaitic Peninsula, a step across the Red Sea, is a wonderful Temple of Nature,—about to be a Sanctuary (Ex. xv. 17) of revelation—with mountain pinnacles rising to a height of from 6000 to 9000 ft. from the Red Sea at its base.

From the Red Sea and the Akabah sides, the natural form of the Peninsula is not fully seen; because, especially on the east side (Akabah), the mountains push into the sea, or close upon it. But from the north side (*et Tih*), it is seen that the temple, nucleus of Sinaitic mountain system, which is formed of primary rocks (granite, etc.), really rises from a platform of secondary rocks, perhaps 3000 feet above sea level. Within the central nucleus of mountains (the temple), there is the Sinai mount of legislation (on which, *Commentary*, Chap. xix.), which we may think of as the Sanctuary, or Holy Place, of that natural temple: while the actual spot (*Râs Sufsafeh* ?) to which Moses went to his meetings with God, will fall to be thought of as the Holy of Holies.

That natural temple is the most wonderful that the world has ever seen. What most impresses travellers is the sheer wonderfulness of it. Those who have seen every other face of nature under the sun, say that this new face is unlike everything else on earth. The view from the summit of one of the mountain peaks, of a vast surrounding region, in the clear pure atmosphere, is inexpressibly grand. But the natural wonder of wonders is in the central nucleus, the congregation of giant mountains itself. The rocks are almost naked of vegetation and soil, and their variety of colour has a peculiar effect. But the bewildering strangeness is in the form of the mountains, as seen crowding together from some commanding point of view. The weird uncommonness of their aspect would appear grotesque, were it not for a certain terrific sublimity investing their awful forms. One traveller, impressed with the nakedness, describes the whole as "a skeleton Alps." Another, labouring to express his feeling of the terrific strangeness of the forms, compares the whole to a furiously raging sea of lava suddenly stereotyped into primæval rock.

The only practicable way to Israel, from the Red Sea border to the central sanctuary of this temple, was along the wadys, which, remaining as the pathway

of occasional flood-streams, are a rugged way, of sand and shingle and rock, inward from the precincts of the temple through its gorges. The solitude of nature there is most profound. But the stillness is occasionally broken in upon by awful storms, of clouded thunders, lightnings, deluges of rain. These are occasioned by the loftiness of the mountain peaks, rising from the hot-house atmosphere of the Red Sea, whose surface heat is said to be the greatest upon earth. Those peaks in high upper air occasion the great atmospheric disturbances from which break out the storms. The vast volume of rainfall rushes down the steep naked mountain-sides as from the crowded roofs of a great city. They instantly form powerful streams, which rapidly accumulate into pent-up furious seas, of arrowy swiftness, hurling along huge rocks in the resistless momentum of their projection. The traveller or the encampment it reaches disappears, with every other form of life. And then, suddenly, it vanishes. It does not subside; but suddenly is gone, as if it had never been there, or like a mocking mirage of the desert. What remains is the wady, in the track of its desolating course, with a life that languishes "in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is." (A recent traveller saw beautiful vegetation near the central spot; and at Meribah, it seems, there is a perennial streamlet. But Robinson, A.D. 1838, travelling there, in seventeen days only once saw a blade of grass.) In experience of its barrenness, and terrors and privations, Israel learned only to appreciate that "good land" (De. viii. 7-10) which the loving heart of God had selected as the inheritance of His first-born. But His true Israel never forgot, or desired to forget, what, for the chosen of God, and who, was in that experience itself (Nu. xx. 7-11; De. ix. 21) :—"when thou wentest forth before thy people, when thou didst march through the wilderness: the earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God: even Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God, the God of Israel" (Ps. lxxviii. 7, 8).

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## CHAPTER IV.

### THE REVELATION, AS A FACT IN THE HISTORY.

IN the following chapters we will consider the doctrine of the revelation, its evidences, and its monuments. In the present we will restrict our attention to the fact of it, the historical reality of a supernatural revelation, or self-manifestation of God, as the beginning of Israel's national existence. And it will serve our purpose, furnishing illustration of contrast, to look at an alternative that has been proposed, namely, the "mythic theory" (cp. 2 Pe. i. 16, where the Gr. for "fable" is *mythos*) of Israel's wonderful primæval history; namely (above, p. 29), that the wonders were not real; but that the people had imagined them in its childhood, day-dreaming about its infancy,

and that afterwards it came somehow to believe in the dreams as realities. We will consider whether that is a reasonable explanation.

Children do see wonders in their infancy. And a childish people, such as Christian missionaries have met in India, may not distinguish imagination from reality, fiction from fact. What has to be explained is the fact, that *Israel*, alone of a mankind sunk in "the pollutions" of polytheistic idolatry, came to be in possession of a pure and lofty monotheism, so as to rise into *this Theocracy*, or Kingdom of God ;— which in Jesus Christ has made a Christendom that is a new creation, specifically different in respect of moral excellence from all civilisations otherwise known among mankind. How did this come to rise out of reverie or day-dream, about an appearance of supernaturalism which had no reality? The theorizers account for that by a *natural religiousness* of the Israelites. The Semitic peoples—they explain—are naturally the most religious of mankind ; and the Abrahamites are naturally the most religious of the Shemites ; and Israel's belief of the wonders was occasioned by a very peculiar convergence of outward circumstances, operating on their very peculiar character of natural religiousness. Now, an explanation is what explains. "Theory" is Greek for vision. A true theory is what enables us to *see* the things in question, to apprehend them as a luminous whole, to comprehend them in their connexion as one system. An explanation that does not explain, that is not a key to comprehension but breaks in the lock, is not a true theory, but a blundering guess. And the "mythic theory" of the exodus is found to be thus only a blundering guess, when brought to the test of main, plain, unquestionable facts,—1. As to the Israelitish people, and 2. As to Moses their leader.

#### 1. *As to Israel.*

We have to consider, What is *the fact*? And we observe as follows :—(1) *In fact*, the Semitic peoples have not in them such a natural religiousness, as would account for the rise of a pure and lofty monotheism like Israel's. Far otherwise. When Israel's career began, the kindred Shemites all around it were deep sunk in the same pollutions of idolatrous worldliness as Hamites and Japhethites. If Melchizedek and Jethro had some pure knowledge of the true God, the presumption is, that they had obtained it in some way from revelation. (2) *In fact*, it is not all Abrahamites that have had the pure knowledge, but only some : "In Isaac shall thy seed

be called :” Ishmael, and Edom, and Amalek — who all were Abrahamites, yet, mere heathen idolaters. And (3) *In fact*, the Israelites, among whom alone the pure knowledge is found, at the same time show, in various ways, that its existence among *them* is not a result of peculiar natural religiousness in them. For instance, — First the truest Israelites have always been the foremost in maintaining, and loudest in protesting, that this knowledge has come only from supernatural revelation, and that naturally the Israelites were dark, blind, ignorant, like the rest of mankind. Such was the testimony of the Psalmists and of the Prophets, of the Apostles and of Christ. These were the truest Israelites. If there be a natural religiousness of Israel, it must in them have been at highest. Is it possible that it should have led them all to false denial of its own existence? But second and especially, as to the Israel which is according to the flesh, what is *the fact*? Have they *in fact* shown in themselves a natural religiousness, such as would account for the origin and continuance among them of that pure and lofty monotheism? All history says, *No*.

At present they reject it, in its only real existing form, of Christianity, and have invented in place of it (Mk. vii. 13) a Judaism, which has only a mummy coffin instead of the ark of God. They rejected it as taught by the Apostles, their best and highest men, who found them to be “by nature children of wrath, even as others ;” so that there is shown to be “no difference” of Jew from Gentile, but “all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” They crucified and slew it in Jesus of Nazareth—the best and highest of all men, the Son of God—who thus found them (Jn. viii. 44), who are the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, to be spiritually the children of that Wicked one, who is a liar from the beginning ; and who abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. And they had previously rejected it in the prophets—God’s true witnesses and man’s true friends ; whose denunciations of them, as blinded worldlings, gave Paul his proof texts ; and in the habitual murdering of whom they had provided Christ with His proofs.

So in this Exodus history, the truth of which has never been denied by them, but always has been owned by them as of God. What did Moses find in them? Was there shown by them in Egypt a natural religiousness, that could originate the pure and lofty monotheism, and hold by it, with such invincible tenacity and power, that it should live on to make a new moral creation in the

world? No: he found them far gone in heathenish worldliness, notwithstanding the light of heavenly truth which had come down to them as a sacred inheritance from the Patriarchs (see xxxii. 15, with notes in *Commentary*). That inheritance they, profanely, were ready to sell for a mess of pottage. Notwithstanding the glorious teaching of Moses, and the promises of liberty and of plenteous peace in Canaan, after the shameful bondage had stung them into sending up their cry to heaven's throne,—still they were so abject, selfish, cowardly, sensual, that it was almost impossible to move them to go forward, though they had only to look and see the salvation of their God. In the wilderness, the wonders of mercy on God's part only called forth from them ever new wonders of mutineering selfish ingratitude, and, perhaps more wonderful, criminal stupidity, of "an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God" (He. iii. 12, *Commentary* xvi. final note). They almost broke the heart of the hero God had sent them, and who ever showed himself to be as a living sacrifice of love's devotion to their highest interest. They provoked the Lord ten times, as Pharaoh had so often hardened his heart against Jehovah. Hence, as Pharaoh perished in the sea, so their bodies fell in the wilderness. God swore in His wrath, that they should not enter into His rest. And these corpses in the wilderness, the "dry bones" which are the monumental remains of "the house of Israel," bear witness to all generations, that Israel's wonderful origination was not the result of natural religiousness. The great experiment of the wilderness is an experimental demonstration of the untruth of the "mythic theory" of that origin. (Hear the Protomartyr in Act. vii. 35-44.)

But now, supposing for argument's sake that the primæval Israelites had in them that natural religiousness, so high in quality and degree, here comes a yet more difficult question: Would they, with that rarely high natural religiousness, *suffer Moses to go about with a lying story of supernatural revelation*, in a supernatural redemption of Israel, and supernatural punishment of Egypt, before their eyes? And though naturally most religious Israel had been so insanely wicked, what about Moses himself?

## 2. *As to Moses*—"the servant of God" (Re. xv. 3).

Far the largest part of what he alleged as to supernatural revelation was openly tested and proved, before Egypt and all Israel, in pro-

phesies fulfilled, and miracles performed. But let us take him where we first find him in connection with his mission,—as “in a corner,”—at the bush in the wilderness. Unquestionably, the tradition of that initial revelation has come down from his time. Let us suppose that he was naturally religious ; that would not make him *lie*, in the name of God, inventing a miracle for deception of the people. If he was not naturally idiotic, he could not believe in the reality of that wonder if it *was* not a reality. A similar wonder was alleged by Peter, James, and John, bearing witness to the transfiguration of Jesus ; and another by Paul, in so often telling about the appearance to him, of the glorified Christ, near Damascus. All the three appearances are one in this respect, that if there was any reality in so much as one of them, then *the Bible supernaturalism* is a fact, and *the Bible religion* is true and divine. In all the three cases, what took place was away from public view, and for the reality of it we have the evidence only of those persons. But in all the three cases, there are circumstances fully warranting and cogently demanding our belief.

(1.) The men are *thoroughly good witnesses*. Peter, James, and John, it afterwards appeared, were men of very extraordinary ability. It is more to the present purpose, that they were earnestly conscientious about religion, who would not conspire to lie about God, but showed themselves ready to die for the truth. In Paul, the same features, of ability, earnestness, truthfulness unshrinking, are gloriously conspicuous. As for Moses : he is another name for morality. His intellectual power must have been of the highest quality given to mankind. And he was a superlatively able man of business, far the greatest administrator, in a combination of circumstances supremely testing practical sense, that the world has ever seen. No one can seriously doubt the truth of what is said by any one of these men, about a plain matter, within his personal knowledge, which he has really observed with attention.

(2.) In all the three cases the story is credible, and antecedently probable, supposing the being of God. While the Almighty could produce the appearances supernaturally, there was a manifest occasion of calling for the intervention of extraordinary providence. Paul, a murderous persecutor, had to be turned (Act. ix. 15) into the great Apostle of the Gentiles. The Original Apostles (Mk. viii. 27-38), immediately before the Transfiguration of Jesus, had been startled and shaken by His clear prediction of His approaching death. In the supreme crisis, now at hand, there was a peril to the faith of



those men, upon whose faith was (Mat. xix. 28), under God, to depend the future true life of the world. And the great career of Moses, and all its great issues for mankind, hinged upon his effectual calling at that point; while the effectual calling depended, as on a *fulcrum*, on the *reality* of that burning which did not consume, and of that articulate speaking voice out of the bush.

(3.) It is specially important, in connexion with the whole question as to Bible supernaturalism, that in all the three cases the manifestation, of supernatural reality, was *to the natural senses* of men, in the ordinary use of their bodily eyes and ears (1 Jn. i. 1-3 and cp. Jn. i. 1, 14, ii. 11). In these three cases, what took place was a "vision" (to Paul, Act. xxvi. 19; to the three disciples, Mat. xvii. 9; and so in effect to Moses, Act. vii. 30). But not the less it was manifested to their bodily senses; they clearly *saw*, and distinctly *heard*, so as to recognise, understand, remember, and repeat. Paul distinctly remembered *what he had heard* the persecuted Jesus say near Damascus; and *saw* the risen Lord (1 Co. xv. 8, where, mark the "*seen*" in vers. 5, 6, 7, and cp. the "infallible proofs" in Act. i. 3). Peter very strongly insists upon this point (2 Pe. i. 16-18) when (ver. 15) he is soon to have at bottom nothing else to trust in (for what else at bottom is vers. 19-21) as a stay in death. And Moses, all through his life, had no more doubt of his having seen that flame, and heard that voice, than if it had been the fire on his own hearth, and a fireside conversation with Jethro about the flocks. Thus at bottom, the testimony is that of human sight and hearing. The point which we have been looking at in those three cases is, that, even for the sort of private view of wonder, which in a sense *was* "done in a corner" (Act. xxvi. 26), there comes to us the very best *kind* of evidence that could be imagined in such a case. No one can really doubt the personal truthfulness, regarding such a matter, of Moses, Paul, Peter, James, John. They were in the full possession of excellent faculties of mind. The matter in question was not a mere startling prodigy, but an appearance of God, on the gravest business that He has ever done on earth. And *what they bear witness to* is a plain matter of fact, addressing itself to their eyes and ears. Their *inference* from what they saw and heard, their *theology* of the manifestation, depended upon their judgment; and we can reason about it. But *the thing on which it hinges*, the plain matter of fact, addressed itself simply to their bodily senses,—*e.g.*, to those eyes which were clear (De. xxxiv. 7) so long! There never

were in the world men better qualified to know, whether *they really saw*, and *really heard*, that thing. *We* might wish we had been there to see and hear. *They* were there to see and hear. Their eyes and ears were just as good as ours can be. And they have a right to claim our acceptance of the testimony of their senses :—"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that you also may have fellowship with us" (1 Jn. i. 3); "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us; and we beheld His glory" (Jn. i. 14).

(1.) BIOGRAPHY OF MOSES — the only mere man who is a "mediator" (Ga. iii. 19). He is so completely one with the movement, that history of Israel's origin is the only true biography of Moses. And in his case, to dwell upon personal details about him would be, false reading of the Book of Israel's exodus. The Gospel History makes us look on the person of Jesus even when it is something else that is spoken of. Exodus, even when speaking about Moses, bids us think of something else: puts a veil on *his* face. The Hebrews, like the other masculine races, had a reverence for personal excellence of their heroes, even in respect of bodily form. It may have been on this account, for prevention of a hero-worship of him after his death, that the grave of Moses was concealed from them. Probably his bodily aspect was heroic in its nobleness. He seems to have had in highest degree that powerful vitality which was characteristic of his family and tribe. But his wonderful personality, with a seemingly immortal vigour as of a demigod, was not obtruded for men's admiration in his lifetime. It was not a thing allowed to dwell upon their minds. On the face of his greatness, there is a strange aspect of almost abjectness; seemingly deliberate self-effacement. Even in this respect not only "he wist not that his face shone; his own hand put a veil upon its glory."

(2.) *Did Moses write Exodus?* This is a branch of the general question of the human authorship of the Pentateuch. If it be supposed that Moses wrote the Pentateuch, there can hardly be any question about the authorship of Exodus. For this Book has not in it, like Deuteronomy, any such distinctness from the Pentateuch generally as would leave room for a reasonable suggestion of a possible difference in authorship. At present we will not attempt anything like a real discussion of that general question, on which the special question is thus far a pendant; but will make some observation which may serve the present interest, of intelligent study of the Book in hand.

Ordinarily the question of the human authorship of Scripture does not affect religion. The question of religion is about the truth of the Book, and its divinity of authorship. But in some cases the impression that is made by a book is dependent on its authorship. It does not matter who invented the Multiplication Table. But Cæsar's *Commentaries* would to our feeling be a different book if we had not known that the author is the great general; as also would Knox's *History*, if we did not understand that "a certain minister" is I.C. Moses is the hero of this great movement. His being the author of the history would further make it to be, what otherwise can never be in human literature, in considerable measure the autobiography of a "mediator" between God and man. And both for believers and for sceptics the matter has a certain theological interest on this account, that the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch may be held to be implied in certain utterances of the other Scriptures and of Christ; and that, if Moses be supposed to be the author of Exodus, then no man of sense will doubt the historical truth of this Book in the substance of it—a Book which really is *all* substance only.

In dealing with this particular question at present, we will assume that generally the Scriptures are true, and the religion is divine. Until recently, those who are of this mind were unanimously of opinion, that the Pentateuchal Scriptures are all the work of Moses. But now the Mosaic authorship is denied or doubted by some who profess to believe that Christianity is of God, and that the Bible is true. The question, therefore, is to be regarded as not only between infidels and Christians. It is one as to which Christians may profitably confer among themselves. In any case, it is a fact, that there are Christians who, not denying the divinity of either the Scriptures or Christianity, nevertheless do not believe in a Mosaic authorship of either Exodus in particular or the Pentateuch in general.

The circumstance, that some believers in the Bible and the Bible religion do not believe in the Mosaic authorship of this Book, only shows that there is a question as to its human authorship, to be considered as among believers. And relatively to that question, there are some aspects of the matter which, though affecting the whole Pentateuch, have a peculiar vividness in connection with Exodus. Its *Egyptism and archaism*. In the Pentateuchal Scriptures there is, along with archaic Hebrew, an infusion of Egyptian elements of language, stronger than is to be found in the other Scriptures; such as to suggest a primæval authorship. The Egyptism of the language,

which has been investigated with peculiar mastery by Canon Cook (Appendix to Exodus in *The Speaker's Commentary*), is naturally (*why?*) most manifest in Exodus. Still more, in Exodus there appears with peculiar vividness that face (see above, p. 29, etc.) of a manifestly unstudied exact likeness of Egypt and Sinai, which, presenting itself on the background of the Book, is presumptive proof of a writing within living memory of the events, or at least of information derived from such memory.

Now looking at this Book by itself, we observe in it the following characters. 1. Great importance attached to *monuments* of the history for future times: such as, the Passover, erected at the beginning of the wonder year, and the Tabernacle at the close of it. Exodus is the Bible Book of monuments, as Egypt is the world's land of monuments. No one thinks of the Pyramids as rising under the Greek Egyptian empire. And in Egypt the Israelites had learned the art of constructing the best of all monuments of history, namely, a carefully-written record. Careful written record, of everything, great and small, worth remembering, had for many generations been the custom of that land, from which, after centuries of education there, God called His Son. We know how unsparing the Israelites were, in lavishing expense on such monuments as the Tabernacle and the Temple. The far more valuable monument, of a simple record like Exodus, would cost almost nothing. It would endure forever. And it could be prepared in a few days, where there were thousands of men at leisure well able to write. Why should not such a record be prepared? The Israelites had surely learned this much of "the wisdom of the Egyptians" (Act. vii. 22). Though they had been "mostly fools," *some* of them must have had some sense.

2. That *character of the "Egyptian" portion of the Pentateuch* (Ge. xxxix.—Ex. xv.) which (above, p. 32, etc.) has led expert Egyptologists to regard it as equivalent to an authentic monument of ancient Egypt. This, so reasons Mr. Poole, shows that Ex. i.—xv. must have originated in the Mosaic period. Let us consider what that implies. (1) It destroys the old infidel cavil, that *writing* was not known so early; as if individual men had to be babies—not "heroes"—in the childhood of the peoples. (2) It destroys an imagination which more recently has traded under the name of "scholarship;"—namely, that language *must* have changed, so that no book can have been written in the Mosaic period whose Hebrew is so like that of Jeremiah as the Hebrew of the Pentateuch is. We might say, the language could be

“modernized,”—say, by an inspired editor like Ezra. But apart from that we observe, that, while a language *may* change, very suddenly, there is no *must* in the matter :—in some cases languages may long remain substantially unchanged. In Mecca to-day men understand the language of the Koran, written 1200 years ago. In the Egyptian monuments there are inscriptions, of which the writing was 1000 years apart, but of which the language shows no appreciable trace of change in all that millennium. And now we say, (3), the language of Ex. i.–xv. is, with a somewhat stronger flavour of Egyptism, just the language of the Pentateuch generally. If that section was written in the Mosaic period, the presumption is, that the whole was written in that period. Any writer in that period—who was not a lazy school-boy—going on to xv., would be sure to go on to the natural termination in xl. For the whole Book of Exodus is one, the dual-unity of Israel’s wonder-year, rounded in redemption and in consecration. It is a history completed only at xl., an Epic poem in two parts, of dual-unity indivisible as a face.

3. *The materials of the whole Book*, as we now have it, were, at that termination in the completion of the Tabernacle, in the substance of it—and it is all substance—really ready to a writer’s hand. The exceptional sentences, xvi. 35 and xl. 38, are *needed*, and can have been written by Moses. It is perhaps impossible to see how very completely that must have been the case, otherwise than by detailing part of the Book itself in its contents, part for part with that history of Israel which it sets forth. The first two Chapters are introductory. The matter of them was no doubt familiarly known to many of the “crossers” of the Red Sea (*Hebrew* means “crosser”—of the Jordan, in Abraham). What follows, from chap. iii. downward, is what now affects us. That great marvellous history lies within two years. And the Book has nothing in it but materials, regarding those two years, that would naturally come into existence within the period ; if only Israel, in this great business of God’s kingdom, exercised that business carefulness with which they had long been familiar in Egypt, where there was careful recording of all important matters. At the end of the two years, what materials of history may have thus come to be in readiness? (1) The account of the process of erecting the Tabernacle fabric, and the detail of directions before that work began, are precisely such as would have been taken down at the time by a man of business instructed in the wisdom of the Egyptians. But that, already, is, with the episodic

narrative of circumstances connected with the worship of the golden calf, sixteen of the thirty-eight chapters after the second. (2) Immediately before that (xxiv. 4, 7), we find Moses in the very act of writing the Book of the Covenant, which contains the civil laws of xxi.-xxiii., and probably the account of the Moral legislation in xix.-xx. Stepping back over one chapter (xviii.), we again find Moses engaged in writing, for a "memorial," into a book that is called *the Book* (xvii. 14) an account of that day's memorable transaction. Stepping back over one other chapter (xvi.), we reach (xv.) the great Song, which of course was taken down in writing. We thus have reached the actual Passage of the Red Sea, the morning of Israel's birth as a nation. And we have found in readiness *the whole history* after that morning, excepting about Jethro's great reform, and the great matter of the manna at Sin. But, further, we have seen that Israel are in the habit of *keeping a record of events*, taking *minutes of proceedings*, in this new kingdom of God. The very act of writing is mentioned *when the act of writing is itself a part of the solemnity* recorded: in the two cases we have referred to, and also at the renewing of the Covenant (xxxiv. 27). If they kept a record of transactions, we may be sure that it contained the matters in the two chapters we stepped over. Then, beyond the Red Sea, there are traces (See *Comm.* under xii., *Note* on vers. 14-17) of a record having been taken of the ordinance of the Passover at the time of institution in Egypt. As to the preceding history, of the Mission of Moses, and of the Plagues, it is the most likely of all to have been recorded at the time of occurrence; for the whole was gone about methodically, as a *diplomatic* procedure, in a dealing with the king of Egypt, on the part of the true King of heaven and earth.

But for our present purpose there is no real need of supposing that, literally,—what however is far from unlikely,—there was a diary of events, as a merchant puts everything daily into his account book. All that we need to see is, what we do see clearly when we look steadily, that there was a habit of careful attention to matters of real importance, such as is shown by writing; so that the materials of a simple narrative of events, such as we have in this book, *must*, at the close of those two years, have been for substance, just as it is here, in the mind, not only of Moses, and Aaron, and of the seventy elders who (xxiv. 9-11) were ennobled in Sinai, but of every intelligent Israelite alive on that day. The transactions themselves, though vast in far-extending significance, were in reality few and simple;—and

especially, they were of a character to make them easily remembered, impossible to forget. The reasonable suggestion is, that a record was kept of them all as a diary of occurrences, like the records of a Parliament's procedure in legislation. But, as regards ready prepared materials for a real contemporary history, there was no need of the formality of paper and ink. The thing was clear, distinct, fresh, on the "fleshy tables" (2 Co. iii. 3) of the hearts of tens of thousands of men; as on the day of Pentecost the resurrection of Christ, on the part of witnesses who had "*seen*" Him (1 Co. xv. 5-8), was fresh and living in the mind, not only of the eleven apostles, but of the five hundred who had met Him by appointment on the mountain in Galilee. *That preparedness, exactly and completely corresponding to the inward character of the Book, must have existed in the Mosaic period, and cannot have existed at any later period.*

4. All this is powerfully corroborated by *what is personally special in Moses himself*. Everything tending to place the authorship in his period goes to show that the author must have been Moses. That we may take widely, so as to include writing from his dictation, or under his authoritative inspection or direction, and with his authorization as well as sanction. *Hebrews* is not the less an Apostolic Epistle, if it was written with apostolic authorization, though the actual writer should not have been an Apostle, but some Apostolic man, like Apollos, or Luke, or Mark. It is only in a like sense that we as students of Exodus have any serious interest in Mosaic authorship of the Book. And looking at the matter so, we see that Mosaic authorship is a fair conclusion from the supposition that the Book was written in the Mosaic age. We know of no one but Moses in that age to whom it would naturally fall to be the writer of such a record. Peter had a Mark as travelling secretary ("interpreter," said Papias, about A.D. 125); but Moses had no such "minister" in Joshua (Ex. xxiv.), who was Captain Sword, not Captain Pen. And if any one had a gift, or even a passion, for literary composition, the awful threats against a "stranger's" intermeddling (Ex. xxix., xxx.) in sacred things, involving premonitions of the fate of Nadab and Abihu, might not be necessary for preventing unauthorized production of the fundamental central history of the origination of the kingdom of God among men. Mere natural modesty, good sense and good feeling, might suffice to keep men from usurping an office so appropriately the mediator's own; or from writing without such authorization as would practically make the authorship Mosaic.

Then, when we look directly at him, we see that appropriateness on every account. (1) It was *natural* for him to prepare such a record, of the great events in which he was the great human agent—*quorum pars magna fui*. Not merely for his own glory, or his personal vindication, but for the sake of God's kingdom, to which his life was given, and of that people, for the love of which he was ready to sacrifice the highest life itself, no other man had an interest so profound in the existence of such a record for the following ages : no other men of that time could have comprehended, as this greatest of legislators could, the vast importance of such a record, which now lies at the foundation of the civilised world. (2) It would be *easy* for him to prepare it. Though apparently no great speaker, he was "*mighty in words*" (Act. vii. 22), so that he could pour out his great soul in most noble song (Ex. xv.). His was one of those most highly gifted minds which naturally seek utterance in written composition. And God, who bestows the gifts, employs them ;—witness David, Isaiah, Paul, John, Luke, Mark. Deuteronomy is not a speech, but an historical lecture. The history in Exodus could be written by Moses almost without a conscious effort. He was the only man, probably the only creature (see note on Exodus Angelophany under xiv. 19), who perfectly knew everything in it at first hand. All that is here recorded, he would have said to Jethro in one day's interview. The writing of it could be done by him in a few days. And he had thirty-eight years, in full possession of his great powers, during which, with comparative leisure, his mind must have mainly lived in those few wondrous months. His "*Sinaitic Rock Inscription*" would be, *V' Ellēh Shēmōth*. (3) *The Book is like him*. The simple greatness of it resembles him in the simple greatness of his soul, from which there proceeded naturally (in supernaturalism) the fundamental constitution of God's kingdom, such as it remains until the second coming of the Lord. His writing about himself in the third person is a natural historical manner—witness Knox in *History* and Cæsar in *Commentaries*. What he *says* about himself is Mosaic (see under xi. 1-3). On one occasion we are told, that "the man Moses" rose to greatness—not his own :—that is a necessary explanation of the history at the point. Otherwise, there is not in the Book a syllable in his praise, nor a look of admiration of him. If there have been only one Christian that could write the Fourth Gospel without naming John the son of Zebedee, Moses is the only Israelite that could have written as the author of Exodus writes about the son of Amram.



## CHAPTER V.

## THE REVELATION, SPECIFICALLY OF REDEMPTION.

There never was a clearer case of legitimacy under the rule,—*Nec deus intersit nisi dignus vindice nodus Inciderit* (Bring not a God not needed).

BEYOND the fact, that there is a supernatural revealed in this history, there is to be observed, the *measure* in which it is there. And the measure is, like that of the soul's being in the body, "all in the whole, and all in every part." The history is full of nature, of man and of his world. The nature is completely natural: man is man, whether good or evil, always rationally free and responsible; and in the non-rational world around him there is everywhere that substantive reality of second causes, which shows that creation was not illusory, and that providence has a sphere, of sustaining and governing realities. But, as in the bush that burned and was not consumed, so in this Book, and in the real world as seen in the light of it, there glows and shines an all-pervasive thoroughgoing supernaturalism. Not only here and there, we perceive the pointed "finger of God," and His hand outstretched, in warning or entreaty, and His arm uplifted, to deliver or to smite. These are only "signs" of an omnipresent supernaturalism, in which all creatures, as in an unseen atmosphere, "live, and move, and have their being." What the Book discloses is, not simply the Being, and Providence, and Redeeming grace, of the Living God, but His being everywhere, and everywhere supreme, sovereignly "doing according to His will," "filling all in all," "working all in all."

In heathen annals there is occasional mention made of some supernatural appearance, in this or that year; which however may be only a meaningless "prodigy" or "monster," that has no intelligible connection with divine moral government of the world. Its effect on the mind of men is only vague bewilderment of wonder, as if it had been an earthquake or a comet seen by men who know nothing of the physical causation of such unusual events. But the terrible wonders of Exodus have no resemblance to mere terrific freaks of nature. They are always means to an end, that is, in the view of a sovereign Almighty, directing His omnipotence to His purpose of relieving or punishing, establishing the kingdom of God,

destroying the tyranny of evil, in the world of man. Again, in the representation of pious Homer—"the Bible of the Greeks"—divinity is seen working :—say—in the vengeance of Apollo on account of the injury and insult inflicted on his priests. The Achæans are troubled by his pestilential arrows of sunstroke "far-darting," and the Trojans have respite from persecution of the foe. But the supernaturalism, in the intervention of it, comes far short of the prescription even of literary criticism (Prof. Seeley) for an epic poem, that its true hero shall be Providence. The intervention is interference, or even meddling, rather than government. It is partial, arbitrary, intermittent. It is intrusion of an alien force, as if a giant's hand had been thrust in among the delicate machinery and springs of a watch. But in Exodus, the Providence, chasing evil away before it as night flees from the sunrise, and genial as the atmosphere in spring, is all-pervasive as the sun fills the world's life through the year.

There thus was begun in Egypt, and for the true life of the world, a deliverance from the dark supernaturalism of Egypt with her dead gods and her atheistic natural magic ; which at the same time is deliverance from the deeper darkness of a naturalism that not only is hopeless because godless, but even sunk so low as to be beneath superstition. That supernaturalism, which animates and illuminates the history, "all and in all," has to be recognised in order even that the history may be understood. A man may believe that there is no supernatural. But the question, for one desiring to understand this Book, is, not, what this or that reader may believe, but, what the writer says. And what the writer says is, that God, the supreme supernatural, fills the history with His omnipresence and all-powerful working, as the life of the world is filled with atmosphere and sunshine. If we do not recognise that supernatural, as filling the whole history, we cannot really *see* any detail of the story in its true life. It is like trying to see without light, or to live without breathing vital air. To study the history without the supernaturalism, is, to handle a body without a soul, that in our handling of it moulders and crumbles into dust. To explain away its miracles of wisdom and power, would be, to explain the history into nothing, but a mere threadless collection of anecdotes, mostly without a meaning or point ; with a joint action that is only that of a mechanical automaton, which may interest or amuse by its variety of movement really soulless, and occasion side glances of reflection on the trickeries of the mover. To refuse to see the supernatural in this Book as the one great all-control-

ling sovereign agency in the history, would be, not, to prepare the mind for a real study of Exodus, but, to close the eyes of understanding (Lu. xxiv. 16, 45, cp. Eph. i. 18).

But we now observe, further and especially, that the all-pervasive supernaturalism of Exodus is itself all pervaded by *Redemption*. This we hear from the Bush in the wilderness. This we see in the work progressively in Egypt, all through the campaign of the prophecies and the miracles. Those have no part of their characteristic meaning except in connection with Redemption, as the one grand purpose of all God's working, both in Egypt and in Sinai. And accordingly, this is what was declared by God Himself (Ex. xii. 25-27) in that institution of the Passover, which was to be His "memorial" for all generations. The declaration was not only made by Him in Egypt: it was by Him prescribed, to be repeated continually, at every Passover season, through all generations of Israel's future history. It was to be set forth in His own words, in the hearing of children at the festival: delivered to those children, from that Heavenly Father, by the fathers of their flesh. This address to children (Ex. xii. 27) so delivered, is the only sacramental address on record from the mouth of God. And what does it say?—Redemption.

*Supernatural redemption, from a common doom of death on account of sin, by the way of bleeding sacrifice,*—that is the meaning of the Passover as declared by God. It is the meaning of the Lord's Supper, as declared by the Son of God. And it is the teaching of the Apostles, declaring to us what they have received from the Lord. Not only the original Apostles (Jn. i. 29-34), having learned from the Baptist that the Son of God is the Lamb of God, saw in the glorified Christ (1 Pe. i. 10-12) that *exodus* of Redemption which is witnessed by the Law and the Prophets. Paul, to the Gentiles, declared the same thing:—that "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us" (1 Co. v. 7), that all spiritual blessings for sinful men from the Holy God are in that "Beloved, in whom we have *the* Redemption (Revised Version rightly has *the*) in His blood, the forgiveness of sins" (Eph. i. 6, 7). Accordingly in Exodus, we find God, who so spoke in the Passover before Israel had left Egypt, similarly speaking, when He was renewing the law in the repose of Sinai (xxxiv. 6, 7). *Redemption* is the one word for that glorious declaration of the significance of His great "name,"—"Jehovah, Jehovah God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgres-

sion and sin," etc. Accordingly, that is what is set forth in the theological exposition of the Epistle to the *Hebrews* (v.-x.). There we see Moses unveiled. The Old Testament finds its own meaning, and all fulness of saving truth, in Christ. And of that grand exposition, of *Tabernacle*, regarding the one true living way of life in God, the whole sum and substance is that redemption, supernatural redemption, from a common doom of death on account of sin, by the way of bleeding sacrifice. The Passover, held once a year, was like the Nile's annual flood, for a yearly new creation of the land, by Him who made it at the first, and even from the same original source. The Nile's continuous flowing, for the land's life all round the year, corresponds to the Tabernacle service, with its daily sacrifice. And the heart and soul of the teaching of these two ordinances, laid at the foundation of Israel in the wilderness, respectively at the beginning and at the close of the rounded wonder-year of institution, is that redemption through blood (Ps. cxi. 9).

The doctrine, thus made to fill the whole of Israel's true life of faith, was exhibited *in the work of God* through Moses in Egypt. The great work was redemption. *Redemption* was the great work, on account of which God went and showed Himself in Egypt; with His finger pointing, His hand outstretched, His arm uplifted. The end of the revelation, and the grand purpose of it, was the redemption. This had been shown to Moses, in that primary revelation of Jehovah "in the Bush" (Ex. iii. 7-10).

NOTE (1).—On **the name of "Jehovah"** (which is now by scholars pronounced *Yahveh*). It here claims our special attention in the Book. There has been much discussion as to the etymological meaning of the word. Some are of opinion, that it is derived from an archaic form of the Hebrew for, "to be;" and that the corresponding meaning of it is, as in I AM THAT I AM of our Version (Ex. iii. 14), *personal self-subsistence*, of the Living one who has being in Himself. Thus the old French Version has, "The Eternal;" as the great French commentator, Calvin (on Act. xvii. 28), remarks that creatures have their being only in God, and only God has being in Himself (which again would prove that Christ is God, Col. i. 17). Others prefer to derive "Jehovah" from another form of the same old Hebrew word, so as to make it have the meaning of an ever onward movement, of *self-manifestation and self-communication*, as if, THE COMING ONE. This would correspond to the description of Christ in the question (Mat. xi. 2, 3) of the Old Testament (ver. 13) to Jesus of Nazareth, "Art *Thou* He that should come?"—where in the original the "thou" is emphatic, and "he that should come"—*hō erchomenos—The coming One*.

The circumstance, that learned men have differed about the right pronunciation

of the word, shows us that we must not allow our faith to be rooted in ancient Hebrew. Christ makes "all things new;" and it is not the dictionary that makes Bible words, but Christian truth makes the Bible dictionary. We may provisionally assume that the Bible meaning of the word "Jehovah" is, I AM. That will probably suffice to account for the Bible uses of that word. Only, we must keep in view the relative Bible doctrine, that the Being, who is thus Eternally I AM (Ps. xc. 1-3—"A prayer of Moses, the man of God"), has always in time appeared as *the coming one*; as if water from the smitten Rock had been "following men" all the way through time from its beginning. Especially in the old dispensation, as made known to Abraham and his seed, and above all, when He appeared to Moses, as on wings of eagles (Ex. xix. 4) for Israel's *redemption*, He was then and there revealed as coming, in a way of self-manifestation and self-communication, of covenant mercy, of eternal free redeeming love appearing now in time. We shall do well, then, to associate with I AM, in the meaning of the word, "Jehovah," that conception of a coming, in self-manifestation and self-communication. Plainly the conception has a place in the whole course of supernatural revelation of God's being, from the first gospel-preaching (Ge. iii. 15) downward. And Jonathan Edwards (in his most original work, *On God's chief end in Creation*) might find a place for the coming in the system of nature, without lapsing (like Goodwin, *State of the Creatures*) from the high supernaturalism of his Calvinistic thought.

The Jews had a superstition which kept them from uttering the sound of *Jehovah* (reading *adonai* in the place of it); as if a name (which "maketh known") were intended *not* to make known (*nomen a non noscendo*). And it is perhaps a misfortune for English readers of the Bible, that the Authorized Version very often has, instead of "Jehovah," as proper name of Israel's God, the description "the Lord," which is not a proper name, but a theological proposition, or commentary on this part of the word of God. The printers try to mend the matter, by putting LORD, where it stands for "Jehovah" in the Bible, into small capitals; but that does not make known *the name*,—to Pharaoh (Ex. v. 2) nor to any one else. Still, Moses cannot be veiled by authority of mortals. And in the history we can see the significance of the great name, sufficiently for our guidance to comprehension of the Book.

1. I AM. This in Egypt, with its polytheistic idolatry, had the significance of making Jehovah, Israel's God, to *be* the only God, living and true. To make it clear that He alone *is* God, the actual ruler (Da. iv. 35) of heaven and earth, in sovereign command of everything in Egypt, was one avowed leading purpose of all His wondrous works there. This meaning was in the formula, so oft recurring, "I am the LORD:" lit.,—"I, Jehovah." It was the signature to His royal proclamations (cp. Victoria R.): as if,—"Jehovah, God omnipotent, reigneth." (See its recurrence in Sinai, Ex. xxix. 46.) Such was the meaning of later prophecy, as in Isaian (*ani hu*) "I am he." It meant, that Jehovah alone is God: that "the gods" of the heathen, though they should be personal demons, are not really God; that in respect of proper deity, veritable godhead, they are "nothing." This dogma of Sinai, articulated in the Egyptian campaign of liberation, was maintained in Canaan, through a long course of polemical theology against

heathenism ; as when young David accepted the Philistine's wager of battle, and slew the giant untruth in the name of "the living God"—the *real* God (1 Sa. xvii.). And it is "the living God"—the *real* God—as contrasted with "vanities" of heathenism, that is made known in Christ, both where there is gross polytheism of "barbarians" (Lystra, Act. xiv.), and (Act. xvii.) where there is intelligently despairing naturalism of Athenians, with the sad inscription on their altar, as if cold ashes on the hearth (here ver. 18, cp. ix. 5), comes in place of that, the Burning Bush.

In Egypt the intelligent despairing had begun (cp. Eph. ii. 12). While the common people worshipped many creatures, the philosophers were aware that there can be only one Supreme Being, manifested through creatures (Ro. i. 21). Thus to their apprehension, that being is alike the *Ra*, whom the people see as a distinct person in the noon-day sun, and that *Thom*, or *Thum*, whom they see as another God in the sun when he goes down in the west. But that being was to those philosophers, not a person, the *living* God ; but only, an impersonal substance of the universe. This came to be confessed in the famous inscription, on the veiled statue of Egyptian Isis,—“I am the *thing* that is, and was, and shall be.” Moses, on the other hand, and his Israel said, that *their* God is the eternal I AM : not a mere characterless substance underlying the universe of creatures, but (Col. i. 17) a living person, transcendently distinct from the universe, while “filling all in all,” and “working all in all.” That “thing,” when the philosophers went on thinking about it, came at last to be regarded by them as a mere characterless being, “equal to nothing.” This was the deepest thought in the heart of heathenism, as represented—*e.g.*—by the Egyptian Philo Judæus, when Christ was proclaimed, not as “the *thing*,” but (Re. i. 8) as the I AM “that is, and was, and cometh (evermore), — the Almighty.” The doctrine of a *living personality* in the Supreme Being is thus a specialty of Bible religion.

2. *The Coming One.* In Ex. vi. 2-6, we find, that the declaration of this name Jehovah, as the proper name of Israel's God, was a new thing. So Pharaoh (Ex. v. 2, cp. ver. 3) may have really not known what it meant, and may have needed the explanation he received,—“*the God of the Hebrews* hath met with us.” Previously, the name of the Supreme Being among the chosen people was (Ge. xvii. 1) *El Shaddai* (“God Almighty” in our version)—which He had Himself disclosed to Abraham as His proper name. That does not show that the proper name Jehovah was previously quite unknown, as if it had now been created for its first appearance. It previously existed, for instance, in the composition of the name of Moses' own mother Jochebed,—where the *Jo* is a contraction of “Jehovah.” But from this time onward it was proclaimed, openly and widely, as the appropriate name of the God of Israel, the name which is to have the rank of being distinctively His “memorial” in all generations. Accordingly, though it must have been little heard in the generations before the Exodus, yet in Genesis, which cannot have been written before the Exodus time, the name is freely employed by the historian ;—as “Christ” occurs two or three times as a proper name in the Gospels (Mat. i. 1, 18 ; Mk. i. 1), though it did not come into ordinary use as a proper name until a generation after the “decease” (*exodus*) which He accomplished at Jerusalem.

We thus are led to look, in the history of the Exodus time, for some specialty,

some great new thing emerging, to remain for all time ; such as will account for the assumption and proclamation of that name, as with the voice of the Archangel and the trump of God. And in fact in the history we find Jehovah's own completed definition of the name (Jn. i. 18). The completed meaning of this word, He expounded in His actions (so in Jn. ii. 11, cp. i. 1). And (as we have seen) He expounded it through the two great symbols of " memorial " and " testimony." Historically, there thus is folded in the name the two things, represented by " Immanuel " and by " Jesus," which are one in the person and office of Christ. " I am " is Immanuel, and " the coming one " is Jesus. The completed meaning thus exhibited is, that He, the Almighty, the I AM that was and is and shall be, is now going forth, in self-manifestation and self-communication, to the completed accomplishment of that *Redemption*, which was the burden of the Covenant promises to the fathers. Accordingly this is what He declared in Sinai at the renewal of the Covenant (Ex. xxxiv.), in the great proclamation of His name by Himself. And this is what He had shown in the foundation of the Covenant by the actions embodied in the symbolism of the Tabernacle and the express definition of the Passover words of institution.

NOTE (2).—**Covenant.** " The Sinai Covenant " is title of one of the *Theological Dissertations* of Dr. John Erskine, who began his speech in a famous debate on Missions (1796) with, " Rax me that Bible." The Abrahamic Covenant, of grace which now has come in Christ (Jn. i. 17), is distinguished from a " Sinai Covenant," which was superinduced upon it (cp. Ga. iii. 24, etc.), as a veil was put on the shining face of Moses. This Covenant, with reference to Israel's tenure of the land of Canaan, was on the face of it a Covenant of works, whose blessings were to be enjoyed in and through a loyal service to the head of the Theocracy. But the real meaning underlying that temporal rest was, the true " rest which remaineth unto the people of God." And even the Sinai Covenant, which for a temporary purpose was on the face of it " a Covenant of works,"—treating the son and heir in his pupilage of minority like a servant,—was in the true heart of it " a Covenant of grace," the " everlasting Covenant " (Ge. xvii. 13)—as is shown behind the veil.

*Covenant*, whether of works or of grace, has always been prominent and vital in the relation of God to man, as constituted by God's revealed will (Witsius: *Economy of the Covenants*). The essential thing in it is *will*: something positive, not arising from any necessity of nature, but constituted by free determination of a person. This is folded in the meaning of the Hebrew word (*bērîth*) for Covenant,—*pactum*, " pact ;"—whether with or without a " *com* "—compact. Some high theologians question the propriety of making God a party in a Covenant with man as another party,—who thus, so to speak, has an interest and a title at law to plead, as if against God. (But why *against* ? Moses, Ex. xxxiv., xxxiii., can plead it to God.) They would prefer, to regard the Covenant of God as *monopleuron*—" one-sided "—(as a man may " covenant " with himself). Within the Trinity they will perhaps allow two parties,—God the Father covenanting with God the Son ; or, God as one party, with a Divine-human Mediator as the other. In this way they

seek to save the dignity of the Most High. He, on the other hand, is not consulting His dignity, but showing His "condescension" (cp. Phi. ii. 6-10), when He converses now with Moses "as one converses with His friend," and allows him to plead God's promises in appealing to His Covenant faithful and brings Israel along with Himself into a Covenant, signed and sealed. Individuals have been greatly moved, especially to adoring wonder of humiliation, at the Divine condescension in saying, to a corrupt guilty creature, "I will make an everlasting covenant with thee" (Is. lv. 3); and we may venture to look on the matter as the Scripture speaks of it.

The ark, which was the heart's heart of the revelation, was distinctively "of the covenant" (Nu. x. 33); and (Ex. xxxiv. 28) the moral law on the stone tables, which was in the heart of that heart's heart (Ex. xx. 2), had the very name of "the covenant" itself. Here, still, the essential conception of *will* is retained. For the moral law, though rising out of the constitution of man's nature in relation to God, is here prescribed by the Divine will; and, though the commandment be in the nature of things as old as creation, yet (1 Jn. ii. 7, 8) the obedience to it, which is to be rendered by the human covenanters, is a new thing (cp. 1 Pe. i. 14-17, etc.). In fact the obedience of unfallen spirits has in it this *supernaturalism*, of will, on their part and on God's. So if the stars be made covenanters, it is by a figure of speech (cp. "law of nature," and Darwin speaking of Natural Selection as if it had been a goddess), based upon the fact that the living personal God "doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth" (Da. iv. 35, cp. Eph. i. 11). So if the rainbow be of covenant, it is not in the bow that the blessing is repositied, but in the unchanging will that has freely so disposed.

The fact of Covenant, entering into the highest life of man from the beginning, is a great preservative against mere naturalism, to which fallen men are prone like Nebuchadnezzar (Ps. cxix. 25). But in the Covenant of grace there is set forth, not only the living personality of God here conversing with man, but, also and especially, *the redemption*, which He "sent to His people," and here and now applies. "The blood of the Covenant," (Ex. xxiv.), with which almost everything under the Mosaic constitution had to be purified (He. ix. 22), reminded men of this; like, "the new testament in my blood," in the Lord's Supper. There has been much discussion about the word for "Covenant," in the Epistle to the Hebrews, for which in some places our Version has "testament." Some question the legitimacy of this rendering in any place. The original Greek word *diathēkē*, is literally translated in the Latin, *dispositio* ("placing"). And the Bible use of the word unquestionably carries in it the conception represented by the law-Latin *dispositio* (a legal "disposition"), disponent ("placing") by *will*. The question is, whether, in connection with the death of Jesus (He. ix. 16, 17), the word does not acquire the affecting additional significance of a *testamentary* "disposition," a "will and testament," which is as it were sealed with the blood of the disponent, as it comes into full force with his (*exodus*, "departure," in) death.

In Exodus we are not brought to the point of having to determine for ourselves what new colouring the word may thus have received from the speciality of that



New Testament exodus. But even the discussion of the disputed question, about the shade of meaning in the N. T. Greek *word*, may be serviceable through detaining the attention, with exercise of discriminating understanding, in the region of the thing, that is signified and sealed, by sacred Covenant blood, alike on Sinai and on Calvary. And the essential thing is, not by necessity of nature, but by will of the living God, the real God,—*supernatural redemption, from a common doom of death by the way of bleeding sacrifice.*

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## CHAPTER VI.

### THE EVIDENCE OF THE REVELATION.

THE Revelation may have in it a self-evidence (Jn. vii. 16, 17) ; as the sun is evidenced by shining, that is, by effectively being the sun. No doubt Israelites (Jn. v. 39), in simply being placed face to face with God as revealed through His ordinances of words and sacraments, may have felt as if (Ex. xxiv. 9-11) looking into an open heaven. And the nation, in the continuance of "ordinance" and of "testimony," had a means of realizing, in effect, the "heaven" that had "surrounded it in infancy." But, in addition to the internal evidence, of what the thing is in itself, it is possible to have an external evidence, like the seal upon a letter, or the credentials of an ambassador. Such attestation of the revelation, or proof of the doctrine, may be in its nature fitted to reach only the individual first addressed ; as when in the patriarchal ages men were visited by angels, or by visions of the night or day, or by some other mode of assurance within their own minds, the nature of which may not be known to us. A *producible* evidence, fitted to reach the common mind of men, and to operate as a pleading for the religion in the open court of the world's judgment, first appeared before mankind in Egypt, in connexion with supernatural redemption of Israel. There went to Egypt, and appeared before Pharaoh and his people, as well as before the Israelites, not only the revelation, in a message from God, and the still further revelation effected in and through the work of redemption, but also, as a distinct though connected thing the external evidence of miracle and prophecy. This (on our side of the flood) was the beginning of public religious instruction, as a

systematic operation for the establishment of the kingdom of God among men, and overthrow of the opposing world-power, of wrong and falsehood, of darkness and moral evil. The instruction was addressed, not only to the Israelites, but to the Egyptians. Of those with whom God was dealing in that whole campaign of "mercy and judgment," there was not one whom He did not in the first instance approach in this way of instruction, addressing itself to the reason, the conscience, the heart. He thus showed Himself as the "good shepherd," entering by "the door," the *lawful* way, conforming to that rational constitution of man (Is. i. 18) which He had created in Him, the Word (in Jn. i. etc., *logos*, rendered "word," has also the meaning of "reason") addressing the free soul. "Come, and let us reason together," said the Creator of the universe to the "worm Jacob," and also to "the worm" upon the throne of Egypt. And the instruction, which was dogmatic, was at the same time apologetic. That is to say, it not only delivered a doctrine, regarding Jehovah as the living God, the real God, Israel's Covenant God and Redeemer; but also gave proofs of that doctrine, in the shape of wondrous works performed and prophecies fulfilled, through which it could be seen that Jehovah is indeed the one true God and only Saviour.

The Bible religion is, of all the religions that have really lived among mankind, the only one that has been thus apologetic. No one of "the religions," but this, has presented itself for the judgment of mankind, on the ground of evidence that can be tested in the open court of the world, thus far depending for success on *reasoning* men out of worldliness into godliness. The Bible religion was thus apologetic in its first appearance before mankind, claiming right of sovereignty, in Egypt. The Egyptians were not invited as a people to come into God's covenant with Abraham and his seed; for that, at the time, the provision was in the process of adoption of individuals. But God had a message for Egypt. He had a purpose for Egypt to serve. And He gave Egypt the opportunity of freely conforming to that purpose, submitting to His righteous will. He gave warning, that refusal to obey His righteous will would be punished by His righteous judgment. But there was no stroke of judgment until Egypt had first been visited, and tried with instruction, which was apologetic.

The Apologetic evidence was both by prophecy and by mighty works. The common element, in respect of which both word and work were evidential, was, their being in character manifestly *extra-*

*ordinary supernatural.* They were not only supernatural, like God's works of ordinary providence. They were extraordinary, like true creation. In order to their intended effect, they had to be manifest (Jn. ii. 11), such that men could perceive them with their bodily sense of sight and hearing. But, also and especially, they had to be manifestly *extraordinary*, out of the course of the system of the world. It is the extraordinariness, the "wonder," that constitutes the properly *miraculous* evidence—"the finger of God." That was in the prophetic word as well as in the works. That is to say, the prophecy *in its fulfilment* (Ex. iii. 8), was a "sign." Prediction of what is naturally incalculable, what does not arise by necessity out of the existing condition and course of things, is competent only to the Omniscient; because only the Omnipotent can determine that contingent event beforehand, so as to make the future occurrence of it certain: *prædixit quia prædestinavit* ("He foretold because He foreordained"). Prophecy as prediction, manifested forecast of the incalculable, serving as a "sign," evidential wonder of wisdom, miracle of foresight, had a distinct place and part in the history, both in Egypt and in Sinai.

But the commanding part was that of the mighty works. Prophecy is itself a mode of public instruction; which in Israel's later ages was to expand into a system within itself, in continued operation through an epoch. Its appearance, consequently, in the exodus crisis of origination, is not so distinctive as in that later period, when it filled the air for centuries, and was almost alone. It was the first appearance of the stars in the evening twilight, to pass into further appearance of them, more clear and full and manifold when the sun was completely down. On the other hand, the mighty works in Exodus are like a true creation, which is not repeated nor continued, but is succeeded by a providence that is a specifically different manner of working. There were occasional appearances of wonder of God's working in the later ages. But there was nothing that can bear comparison with the wondrous works made known to Israel through Moses, until the coming of Christ.

NOTE (1).—**On Prophecy** (on *prophetess*, see under xv. 17-21). 1. Restricting our attention to the wonder of wisdom, prediction of the incalculable, we first observe *the fact* of it, beyond possibility of doubt. It is not only that the voice from the bush foretells, what no creature could have forecast through calculation, and yet which came exactly true according to appointment (Ex. iii. 12). All through the Egyptian campaign, there went on a foretelling before the work

fulfilling. Sometimes the work itself might be a manifest miracle of power, as in the coming of the supernatural manna, or in the death of the first-born. At other times the event might not in itself be manifestly extraordinary so as to be miraculous. The quails, for instance, might, in the order of second causes, have been a "windfall." And pious men, believing in ordinary providence, might in the windfall see a "god-send" (*hermeion*). But, just because it was naturally a "windfall," contingent event, incalculable to reason, therefore the prediction of it was a miracle, a wonder of wisdom; since in the circumstances it could not be merely a fortunate guess—one could guess what a Pharaoh might do; but—quails?

The impossibility of fortunate guessing in this case was shown especially by the *number* of the predictions, and their *connexion* with the whole work of Moses and Aaron on behalf of Jehovah's people. Such things as the plagues of frogs, and flies, and locusts, and hail, and darkness, might individually have happened in the course of nature. The plagues were mainly *on the lines* of nature, though they apparently went *further* on these lines than nature goes. But there were always circumstances that showed the presence here of something *extraordinary*. And a leading circumstance was the prediction (frequently). There was not only the prediction of this or that plague, like the cannon's flash before the impact of the ball. That was only an occasional outflashing of a whole declaration (cp. 2 Pe. i. 16, "declare"), which all was one great prediction, of Israel's deliverance and Egypt's overthrow: like the artillery advancing to clear the way on an army's front of battle. No weather wisdom, nor skill in natural magic, could have forecast even one of the things, happening as they did, in a manner so unwonted, and just "in the nick of time." But the prediction of so many things, one after another, all combining to the one predicted result, is overwhelming as a demonstration, that the mind which here is uttered is the mind of the one true living God, whom the winds and waves obey, who filleth all in all, and worketh all in all. Prophecy thus is God visibly in history.

2. In Exodus (iv.), where prophecy is being sent out into the world for the first time in our sight, there is set before us a pictorial definition of *the making of a prophet*. That is to say, with reference to *the utterance* on the part of man. It is about *the utterance* that Moses in Sinai has a difficulty. It is about the utterance that he obtains assurance from God in this picture of the making of a prophet. That concerns us, because we are "built on the foundation" of the prophets as well as of the Apostles, while Jesus Christ Himself is the chief corner-stone (Eph. ii. 20). We need to know (cp. 1 Co. xi. 23 and Jn. xv. 26, 27), not only that they have *received* a revelation or communication from God, but as to *the utterance* that they are *delivering* to us what they have received of the Lord. And in the picture of the making of a prophet, we perceive, that (2 Pe. i. 19) the "prophetic word" is "sure." For what we see in the picture is, that the word, which comes to us in the prophet's mouth, is the word *of God*.

It is a deep question, *how* God *can* employ a man, so as to convey to us through the man a word which is God's. The history shows us some ways which we can understand. Some, for example, have an objection to *dictation* on God's part to a prophet. So had Balaam. But he *had* to speak what God chose to say through

him. There may be cases in which there is no dictation. For instance, the case of the ten commandments, which were uttered with God's own voice to the people, and written with His own finger for a perpetual testimony—where Moses was not the author, but only the secretary or reporter. Again, the whole work of the Tabernacle, in the original specification by God (Ex. xxv. 9; He. viii. 5), was not dictation in the sense now intended; it was only the dictation of an architect whose words of specification are written down by a clerk. And again, the whole completed Tabernacle, as also that whole constitution of which it was a part, was a silent teaching, a visible word of God, reaching Israel; and in the production of which there was only the dictation which is folded in the nature of a plan of works, and which, perhaps without their thinking of the plan as a whole, exercises through all details a commanding influence upon every stroke of the work of every one of the operatives. Moses, again, was here not the designer but only copying clerk. Further, there may have been a good deal of dictation in the ordinary sense of the term, about which there is no difficulty. The ordinances, for example, for observance of the Passover, were spoken to Moses by God; as also were messages to Pharaoh. And there is no difficulty in understanding that to some extent Moses, like other messengers, simply repeated the words which he had received from his King. If we try to understand *how God spoke to Moses*, then we find, not only difficulty, but impossibility. We simply do not know, and cannot comprehend, how God spoke to Moses. But that is not the present question. That He did speak to Moses somehow is made known to us as a fact of the history. And, having learned as a fact, that God spoke certain words to Moses, we can have no difficulty whatever, except of our own making, in understanding that Moses delivered to men the words which he had received from the Lord.

But we know that Moses did not in all cases merely repeat the messages that had thus been prescribed to him. For instance, in the edition of the Ten Commandments which he gives in Deuteronomy (v.), he has variations from the edition of them which we find in Exodus (xx.). Again, the Collection of Civil Laws, which we find (Ex. xxi.-xxiii.) in his Book of the Covenant, has every appearance of having been a collection that was made by himself, of previously existing precepts and prescriptions, which may have all grown into use among the Israelites through generations, or may have partly been found by him in Midian or in Egypt. And all through his career, while we see a good deal of simple repetition of what God has spoken to him, we also see a course of administration, a mediatorial activity, in which he is not merely repeating, as a young child messenger repeats father's or mother's own very words. He proceeds as—an Eliezer of Damascus—a full-grown man, a faithful trusted servant over Jehovah's House (He. iii. 6), exercising the best of his own judgment and ability, speaking his own words for expression of his own thoughts. We may take as a sample the noble Song of Salvation (Ex. xv.).

It is here that we are face to face with the question that is most vitally and profoundly of importance to ourselves. Both the Apostles and the prophets on whose foundation we are built exhibit in their utterances that same personal freedom which we have seen in Moses. If at any time they be in a condition of ecstasy, so as not to have personal command of their utterance, then (2 Co. xii. 1-4; where

observe "unspeakable" means—not to be communicated) they make no communication to us. In their ordinary office (1 Co. xiv. 32), they have command of themselves; and they are never made to speak to men on God's behalf excepting in the free use of their own faculties;—not, as the demoniac victims of an unclean spirit, nor as the passive organs of an oracular heathen demon. That we see in the history of their oral teachings; and we find it in our study of their Scriptures. *What, then, are we to expect, what do we receive, in their utterance, thus human?—The word of God.*

*How that comes about*, we are not informed. Learned men have much speculation about the matter, showing how *they* would have brought the thing about. But the question is, how it was brought about in reality, in historical fact, when "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;" so that "no prophecy of the Scripture is of private interpretation;" and we are not dependent on "cunningly devised fables," but "have a more sure thing, the prophetic word, to which we shall do well to give heed, as unto a light shining in a dark place!" And to the question, how, *by what process*, that has been brought about, we have no means of giving a really solid answer. Just as we do not know, and cannot understand, by what process God can speak *to* a prophet or apostle, so we do not know, and cannot understand, by what process He can speak to us *through* a prophet or apostle.

What we do know is the *fact*: As Paul says, that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2 Ti. ii. 16), and (1 Co. ii. 13), that he and the like of him "speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." So in the exodus pictorial definition, the delineation of the constitutive essence of a prophet (Ex. iv. 13-17). What we see, as the essential fact, is that *the word is God's*. Moses is to Aaron as a God. *Consequently*, Moses shall *put words into Aaron's mouth*. Aaron is to be spokesman. But the essential thing is, that the word shall be *the word of Moses*. Now (Ex. vii. 1) in that picture, Aaron was a *prophet*—unto Moses; and when he goes to Pharaoh, Moses shall be as God to Pharaoh; Pharaoh receiving *His* word from the mouth of Aaron. The meaning of which is, that God is to *put His words into the mouth* (iv. 15, cp. ver. 12) of His prophet. It is impossible to say in a stronger manner, that the prophetic word is God's. But that is what is said about the very greatest of prophets:—Jeremiah, *e.g.* (i. 9), and Isaiah as a greater (li. 16). It is said about the supremely great prophet, who is God, if not by Isaiah in that place, yet by Moses himself as with dying breath (De. xviii. 15-18). Christ Himself so speaks in substance: not only (Jn. vii. 16) "my doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me," but "*the words that I speak unto you I speak not from myself, but the Father dwelling in me doeth the works*" (Jn. xiv. 10, Revised Version). But we keep our eye upon the strong form of expression, *putting words into a man's mouth*. And we observe in connection with it these three things. 1. It is in all the places employed to describe *the essential thing* in prophecy, the word of God. 2. In all the places, the prophets who are spoken of are *the very greatest*—Moses, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Christ. And 3. In all the places, *the speaker is Jehovah*. It is not Moses, nor Jeremiah, nor Isaiah, that so describes the making of a prophet, *God putting words into a man's mouth*. It, in every one of the places of Scripture,

is God Himself, the Maker of all prophets and all prophecy. *He* says, that He makes the prophet so, that the prophetic word is God's.

NOTE (2).—**Miracle.**—The Hebrew word (*ôth*) which is employed for description of works of this character both (Ex. iv. 8) when God promises them to Moses in the wilderness, and (viii. 23) when Moses threatens Pharaoh with them in Egypt, is a common word for "sign," which (*e.g.* Ge. i. 14) does not necessarily mean anything extraordinary; as the sun and moon are "signs," marking day and night, though it be in ordinary course of providence. Christ, too, spoke of His own miracles simply as "works," *His* "works," "the works which His Father had given Him to do." This manner of speaking brought into view the *moral character* of the miraculous working, freely undertaken and performed, as part of that whole "work" (Jn. xvii. 4) which the worker had accepted as a task. And on the part of Christ it may indicate the *effortless ease* of Omnipotence doing such things (Jn. xiv. 10) in the Son of Man; as contrasted, *e.g.*, with the toil which miracle-working may have involved for an Apostle (cp. 2 Co. xii. 12,—where "patience"—*endurance*—may be that of a soldier toiling in battle or campaign). But as Moses spoke in warning to Pharaoh of "signs," so Christ, when He specially characterized His "works," ordinarily spoke of them as "signs." And He intimated (Jn. xv. 20), that the significance, the evidential quality, of these "works" of His, was what especially left unbelievers without excuse.

The two other New Testament names for such works are "mighty works" and "wonders." The word which our Version renders "wonder" (*têras*) means, "a terrific thing." It represents a salutary feeling of awe, conducive to belief (so in the Gospel history, we find that "fear" came upon the people when the miracles were performed). But Christ never applies it to His own works; He employs it only twice;—for description (Mat. xxiv. 24) of the wonder-works of false prophets and false Christs; and (Jn. iv. 48) reproachfully, with reference to the hard carnality which has to be "blasted" with terrorism of the supernatural. Even the description, "mighty works," He applies to His own miracles only (Mat. xi. 20–23), again in reproach, of the cities "which repented not" at the view of such wonders. In Exodus, on the other hand, Jehovah employs two words (in our Version, "wonders") which have in them the meaning of, "terrific things" (*niph'lôth* in iii. 20, and see especially xxxi. 10; *moph'tim* in vii. 3 and xi. 9). So (Ex. xxxiv. 10) with reference to the heathenism of Canaan, God gives prominence to the terribleness of the unprecedented wonders (*niph'lôth*) He is to work there. Which is suggestive of a caution in our fixing upon testing "marks" of miracle (cp. Act. i. 4)—*principia cognoscendi*. Thus, some have made it a testing mark of true miracle, that it shall be *beneficent* in its immediate physical results.

That would exclude the Mosaic works from the position of true miracles. For in the plain relevant sense of the term, they were the opposite of beneficent in their immediate physical results; conforming to the type of the flood, and of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrha. On the other hand, it would include miracle of Beelzebub, in casting out devils; which unquestionably is a physically beneficent work. The works of Jesus Himself (cp. Act. x. 38) were uniformly

beneficent (cursing the fig-tree does not count, any more than cutting it down for firewood). That was in keeping with the specific character of His personal ministry (Jn. i. 17), as compared with that of Moses. The works of Moses were terrific in severity, correspondingly to the general character of his mission. But to make them on this account to be not of the one true living God, would be to disregard the teaching of Christ. What He (Mat. xii. 22-30) represented as the test of true miracle or false is, the effect of the work relatively to *the kingdoms* of Satan and of God. An evil spirit may work a beneficent miracle for an evil end;—as a bribe or lure, to lead men into Satan's kingdom, or keep them there. Thus the "signs and wonders" of the future false prophets and false Christs, which are to deceive all but the elect, whom it is impossible to deceive, are not likely to be mischievous on the face of them.

The regulative idea (of the "kingdom") proposed by Christ, for judging whether a miracle is true or false, is that of truth and righteousness, as opposed to falsehood and wrong. The test may not always be easy to apply; as also is the case with other tests, of other things. But in truth it is the only test that can be relied upon. And practically it is not difficult to apply it in relation to the case as it really stands.

Of the miracles of Bible history it can be said with truth, that those which were performed on behalf of the Bible religion had for the manifest scope of them, for their obviously intended effect, to establish the reign of truth and righteousness, and to destroy the tyranny of falsehood and wrong. And this is not less obviously true in relation to the Egyptian miracles of Moses than in relation to the Palestinian miracles of Jesus. The miracles of Jesus Himself are not truly seen when they are regarded only as the outflowings of benevolence. They are truly seen only as His "works," going to completion of His "work,"—as part of that whole ministry which was a campaign for *the redemption*—the deliverance of enslaved men from a tyranny of evil (He. ii. 14, 15). That precisely was the destination of the Egyptian campaign. It is impossible for us to know what highest good may have resulted to individual Egyptians from that visitation of the real God—the living God. The terrible works of Moses may have been the greatest blessing ever sent to the Egyptians before the coming of Christ. We do know that for mankind the results of it have been incalculably vast in beneficence, even relatively to this world; while it has led on to the eternal salvation of countless myriads of men (Re. vii.).

In Egypt (from which remotely are "Gypsies") there were multitudinous assertions of supernaturalism in speech and action. Prophecy and miracle were alleged on behalf of the Egyptian gods. And there was necromancy and magic, which to a large extent may have been, like our present-day Spiritualism, a supernaturalism without God, which perhaps is the most fatal of all the aberrations of human reason—wrecking the very *mind*. And what Moses did was, not to question the reality of these things, but to prove their falsehood. Though they should be real, their falsehood was proved by the demonstrated truth of the religion and the God of Israel. That method relieves us of the necessity of ascertaining, whether there can be supernatural work that is not done by God on behalf of the truth. How do *we* know? How *can* we know? Spirits in the body



are every day performing ordinary works that are false. For aught that we can tell—unless God expressly inform us to the contrary—there may be disembodied spirits, or unclean spirits not human, occasionally performing extraordinary works that are false. The straight course is, to try them by their fruits. For example, as to alleged “ecclesiastical” miracles. The only “ecclesiastical” miracles predicted by Christ and His apostles (in the places we have referred to) are false miracles, Satanic in their quality, fatally misleading in their effect. And the purpose of them is to support, through successful imposture, the cause of the second Beast, of the Man of Sin, of the false prophets and the false Christs. We do not need to debate about the reality of them, we can try them by the test of their scope, tendency, effect:—“Under which King?” God or Satan? Light or darkness? truth and righteousness, or, falsehood and wrong? What is the moral character, the practical tendency of *the system* with which they are appropriately associated, and which claims them for its own?

But there is a yet shorter way, — namely, to ascertain about the miracles of Moses and of Christ. If we find *them* true, we may feel that the claims of Egyptian enchanters do not concern us. If we have the sunshine, why go beyond our depth in questions that can be only about moonshine? If we have the “sure prophetic word” of God, what interest have we in inquiring about some alleged twaddle of a ghost? Thus we reason, if His Mosaic miracles be true, the Egyptian must at least be false or misleading:—“He that is not for us scattereth abroad.”

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## CHAPTER VII.

### THE MONUMENTS OF THE REVELATION.

THE two great monuments of the Passover and the Tabernacle are those of whose erection the full account is given in Exodus. Respectively, as “memorial” and as “testimony,” at the beginning and at the close of the exodus year, they suffice for monumental representation of that *annus mirabilis*. Observing them is like looking at two great Pyramids of the time of Menes before beginning to study a written History of his reign;—supposing that those Pyramids were themselves an embodiment of the history, “done into” a mountain of rock from Syene. But the traveller knows that there is a monument of Egypt more ancient than those Pyramids: namely, the Egyptian land itself; which is a “gift of the Nile,” and which bears within itself an evidence of its creation. And we, before considering those monuments,

given to the Hebrews in the cradle of their new-born nationality, will pause to observe that particular people itself, as—

NOTE (1).—**The monumental nation.** Israel's condition is in some respects like that "great and terrible wilderness," which lay between the Sinaitic sanctuary of their consecration and the Canaan of their promised rest. But it is in the approach from that wilderness—*et Tih*—that the traveller obtains the best view of the wonderful natural temple, of the Sinai mountain system, which rises in the desert of that region. And we, desiring to look at Exodus from every point of view that may furnish illustration of the history of Israel's origin, will now approach it on the side of the general external history of Israel itself, as a nation which is a monument of its own wonderful origination.

Everything about this people is wonderful, even where the "astonishment" is akin to "desolation" if not to "hissing" (Jer. xxv. 11, cp. De. xxviii. 29). And not the least wonderful thing in its history is, the fact of its continuance in clear distinctness to this hour: so that now there is an Israelitish nation far more numerous, than when David, "lifted up with pride," took the census of their multitude. It is as clear, distinct in type as when Titus led his stormers to the final assault on Jerusalem, or when Solomon delivered his great prayer at the dedication of the Temple, or when Pharaoh looked on that face of Moses which he was doomed to see no more. And the nationality is perfectly unique, as the Sinaitic face of nature, or as the old Egyptian aspect of human life. But the amazing thing is, that the nation is here alive, as when the Princess took to her kind heart that infant "of the Hebrews," wailing in his cradle among the papyrus reeds of the Great River. It is as if the Pharaoh's magicians had been sending us telephonic daily gossip over thirty centuries of time, or the mummies had begun to speak and tell us of that awful dawning, when songs of rejoicing were borne to them from beyond the Red Sea, and they were voiceless, and all but lifeless; petrified with horror, as they looked on the deadly sullen waters, where the chivalry of Egypt had sunk and disappeared.

The wonder of this wonder is, the invincible tenacity of the national type,—its adamant firmness, in a distinctness apparently ineffaceable by time: even in the bodily aspect of every man, woman, and child,—as if EXODUS had been visibly, and mysteriously indelible, on the face of every Israelitish human being that is born into the world. The mind takes in a general statement like that of Bunsen, that in Israel's exodus there began to beat the pulse of human history in the free life of nations. But when we carry that general representation into this detail, the inevitable conclusion is so startling strange that imagination refuses to obey the dictate of the judgment. We are unable to picture to ourselves as a prosaic real thing, that in this day's chaotic Hebrew baby of three months old there is *that nation*, which was immemorably ancient before the proudest "ancient" nation of our Christendom was cradled; and was in a distinct existence centuries before Homer, on the border of the most ancient Greek heroic age, had begun to sing "the song of Troy Divine." In great statesmen, philosophers, theologians, the thing seems credible: but in the commonplace Jew?

Yet there it is:—the exodus type, in clear distinctness, on those stirring, thriv-

ing, and respected neighbours, with whom we are every day exchanging greetings and rubbing shoulders, on the street. Daniel's four empires—Babylonian, Persian, Greek, and Roman—have passed away like Nebuchadnezzar and his dream. The men, and women, and children, of those ancient peoples are, like those of monumental Egypt, only antiquities, as of a dreamland of an imaginary ghostly past. But the Israelites are here, as vividly alive as we, who "are but of yesterday"—*hesterni sumus. Si monumentum quæris circumspice* ("You, who are searching for a monument, look round you"). But *this* monument is not, like Sir Christopher Wren's, of stone. It is of human living flesh and blood: not in monumental stillness, like Hero, but in exuberant fulness of varied activity. It is so familiar to us, that we cannot realize the strangeness of it. It is eighteen centuries since the nation was crushed in Palestine, as by an Avalanche that destroys a hamlet. It consequently was flung into a "Dispersion" over all the world. The fragments were everywhere "afflicted, tossed with tempest" (Is. liv. 11), as the sands are rolled in every sea, or the dust is the sport of every wind. But still, in every particle, there, in clear distinctness uneffaced and ineffaceable, is the exodus national Hebrew type. They mingle freely with other peoples in their common life of occupations and recreations; wearing their garb, speaking their tongues, practising their manners and their customs. And yet, in any human population upon earth, a Jew or Jewess is, by the least observant of mankind, distinguished at a glance from every other creature under heaven.

### 1. *The Passover.*

NOTE (2).—Leslie's "four marks." In order to be demonstrated by such an institution as an historical reality, the event needs only to have marks which we will indicate by the words, *visibility, publicity, memorial observance, and contemporaneousness* of institution—professed in the observance. 1. *Visibility*,—the alleged event must be a sensible event, such that it could have been observed with man's eyes and ears; and 2. *publicity*, it must be such as could have been observed in its occurrence by a sufficient number of witnesses. On these two marks we need not dwell: the deliverance of Israel, with the death of Egypt's first-born, was of course not a thing "done in a corner" (Act. xxvi. 26): it took place in the personal knowledge of two nations (one of which is here to bear witness still). 3. Of third mark, *memorial observance*, there is no doubt. The very form of observance, as laid down in this Book (Ex. xii. 25-27), which the Israelites have always accepted in its prescription of this form as a law, includes a distinct rehearsal of the essence of the great event. The spiritual essence of it, *what took place in the mind of God*, passing over Israel, so that they escaped the common doom of death, cannot be perceived with the bodily senses. But *the fact of Israel's own escape with life, and of the death-cry of the Egyptian first-born*, is commemorated in the very heart of the observance; and it is a thing that could be observed with men's bodily senses, as well as any fact of ordinary experience in common life. 4. With reference to the fourth mark, Leslie makes a slip in his initial statement (he is writing in the freedom of a letter to a friend—*circa* A.D. 1710), which, however, does not really enter into the argument as expounded by him (he is a great master of argument). His slip consists in saying, that the memorial observance must *have been* instituted at the time of the alleged event.

How can we know *that*? That implies the very thing in question. The right statement (the ground on which he really proceeds in his actual argument) is, that *the observance* shall *profess* to have come down from that primæval time. Thus, in observing the Lord's Supper, with its "In that night," and "till He come," we *profess to be observing* what has been observed by Christians from the beginning: the observance *claims*, on the face of it, and in the heart of it, to have come down from the first age of Christianity. So as to the Passover—say, at the time of building the First Temple, what is required is, not any proof or allegation (of antiquity) from outside of the observance; but only, *in the nature of the observance itself*, that profession of primæval antiquity, or claim to have come down from the Mosaic age.

If the argument be a good one, it obviously is of very great value. Leslie applies it to the resurrection of Christ. And a real demonstration of the historical reality of such events as that resurrection, and Israel's wonderful deliverance, at once turns whole libraries of infidelity into waste paper. Now Conyers Middleton (*circa* A.D. 1750), a very keen antiquarian scholar, of a naturally sceptical bent, who distinguished himself by exposing traditionary illusions in connexion with the history of Bible religion in the world, confessed that, after having had his eyes about him for twenty years, he had been unable to discover so much as one event not really historical that has Leslie's four marks.

Leslie might say, that such an event is inconceivable. That is the point of his contention. He does not say that an event that has not the marks may not be historically real. What he maintains is, that any event which has them all *must* be really historical; that it *cannot* be otherwise; that it is *impossible* for an event without historical reality to have the four marks. And this we may perceive if we imagine an attempt to set the Passover observance on foot *for the first time* at any period later than the Mosaic age,—say, in Solomon's time. We can see, as soon as we think of the matter, that such a later origination of the festival would have been simply impossible. There would be a fatal obstacle in the nature of the observance itself, as claiming to be of primæval antiquity. That is to say, it said to all Israel of Solomon's time,—*You and your fathers have been always observing this festival yearly until now.* How could any one believe that? Leslie, in his lively way, puts the case of a man's proposing, as the rite, that every one should every year cut a joint off one of his fingers. How could men be got to believe that they and their fathers *had been* doing this thing every year? The non-observance in the wilderness itself (Am. v. 25) is only non-appearance of the stream at the very fountain. The argument carries us *to* the fountain. It shows us that the observance dates from the Mosaic age. And that suffices for the conclusion in question.

## 2. *The Tabernacle*—of "testimony."

*Simplex munditiis!*—this untranslatable expression appears to mean, a noble simple beauty, of which the distinctive is the beauty of simple nobleness. The realized ideal of a spiritual beauty in

material form appears to be in that wilderness Dwelling of Jehovah, the "man of war," Israel's Captain of salvation, Redeemer King and God. The distinctive office of the Tabernacle was, to set forth the abiding *spiritual significance* of the appearances at Israel's wonderful origination into nationality, while the Passover kept recalling to men's memory, with proof, the wonderful history of that origin as a *fact*. But even in order to be a continuous testimonial instruction, the Tabernacle was effectively an historical remembrancer. And in some respects it has been a more effective memorial than even the Passover.

For while the Passover has, in respect of form, passed away, it may be said that the Tabernacle, in respect of its essential form (cp. Platonic *morphē*, and see the *true* tabernacle in He. viii. 3, the archetypal), not only is imperishable, but has become more fully manifested among men on account of the evanescence of the material fabric; as the saintly soul—the *man*—is seen more clearly when the body wears away. Though the conventional ascription of "frailty" to the Tabernacle is a mistake, yet in destination it was natively an evanescent thing, like those passing shadows, "ever becoming, never being" (Plato), through which there flit across our mind in time the eternal "ideas," whose proper home is the bosom of God. This Platonism of Redemption, as a thing eternal, manifested temporarily through an "example and shadow," is the essence (He. viii. 5) of that Epistle to the Hebrews which essentially is exposition of the Tabernacle (only, according to *Hebrews*, the thing revealed is emphatically by *will* of God.—See on *Covenant*, pp. 70 sqq.). And it is by means of the evanescent material that the "example and shadow" have caused to dwell among us (Jn. i. 14) what essentially is eternal spirit (He. ix. 14). In effect, the way into the holiest is ever "new" (*prosphatos*, with an original reference to the condition of a sacrifice that is *newly* slain), as the way of ships upon the sea; and that, by means of the material fabric which is antiquated (that way thus is *literally*, "through the veil"). The Mosaic Tabernacle gave place to the Temple; and both, to the Synagogue or "congregation;" but in so doing they have introduced us to the temple's Lord, the Word who is God (Jn. i. 1), and who (ver. 14) was made flesh and dwelt among us (lit., "tabernacled in us," dwelt in our manhood) full of grace and truth; (so that) we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father.

Still seeking fresh approaches of interest to our study of Exodus,

we will now engage in a homely prosaic exercise, which is not without a simple dignity, as there is a well of water (cp. Jn. iv. 10) wherever an angel has touched this earth of ours.

NOTE (3).—**What became of the Exodus fabric?** The last conspicuous appearance of it on the Record is in 1 Chron. xxi. 29: where we read, that there was in David's time at Gibeon, "the *mishkan*—Tabernacle of the Lord, *which Moses made in the wilderness.*" That this is not only a Dwelling of the form prescribed in the wilderness, but the identical material fabric erected there, is plain enough in the statement of the Chronicler. And our assurance is made doubly sure by our knowledge (1 Chron. xvi. 1), that there was in existence at that time another Tabernacle, which David had caused to be made, and had brought, with great solemnity of joy, to Jerusalem, and solemnly installed there, as the Dwelling of "the ark of God" (1 Sa. iv.). There is a further accession of corroboration involved in the circumstance, that the Chronicler (in xxi. 30), so to speak, apologizes for David's not going to Gibeon, to sacrifice before the Tabernacle there, and inquire of the Lord:—he was prevented by constraint of circumstances. In the ballad of *Sir Patrick Spens*, we read of an old moon appearing with a new moon in its arms. For us here that means, not, vaguely, the temple at Jerusalem superseding the Tabernacle there—which indeed had not taken place at the time in our view;—but, the Jerusalem Tabernacle superseding the Gibeon Tabernacle. This latter, though visibly "fallen into the sere and yellow leaf," yet was not altogether antiquated, as a moon that lingers doleful after sunrise,—"superfluous lags the veteran on the stage." And the reverence shown to it, as to fallen majesty, even in that apology for David, is incidental corroboration of the express intimation, that this was the identical material fabric of Exodus.

But there are dogmatic-sceptical men, who disbelieve *because* they ought not. Accordingly, the statement of this learned and pious Chronicler, the responsible and reverent recorder of the sacred annals of God's visible kingdom, regarding a plain matter of fact, the truth about which could be known with perfect ease by him and every one else, has been made occasion of a question that means, that the Gibeon Tabernacle perhaps was *not* the one, "which Moses made in the wilderness." And under the form of discussing that perverse question, we shall once more be led over a ground of introduction to Exodus, which will thus become yet more distinctly clear in character to us approaching, as a painting in Italian ink is, through oft-repeated applications of the colouring matter, made to stand out in clear distinctness as a statue in marble or in bronze.

1. Though 1 Chron. xxi. 29 is all but the last that we hear of the Mosaic fabric, it is not nearly the last that we *see* of it. We see it reproduced and stereotyped in Solomon's temple; of which, again, through a successor, the very image of some portions have been transmitted by the Romans in their Arch of Titus;—who, however, though they came to Mount Zion, had not their understandings exercised to distinguish the distinctive things in that sacred ancient symbolism. That temple, which for our purpose is sufficiently extant in the Old Testament Book of

Kings, affords two grounds of inference regarding the ancient Tabernacle ; one, general ; and one, special.

(1.) The general ground is constituted by the emphasis laid on the circumstance of *permanence* of this Dwelling in its place, solidly fixed in stone and cedar, along with the manifestly strong feeling that the nation has of the very great importance of the matter of a suitable dwelling for Jehovah-God. This feeling shows that surely there must have been *some* dwelling of the Lord among them before ; while the peculiar emphasis laid on the permanent stability of the Temple is a presumptive proof, that the previously existing dwelling was moveable in its fabric, like "a tent." These things are sufficiently evidenced by Israel's general history at the period ; for instance, in the life and songs of David, regarded as a typical sample of true Israelitish second nature. But we now deal with them as if they had been new to us, on this one ground of the Tabernacle fabric.

(2.) The more special ground of inference has been recently placed in a clear light of solid ascertainment, by architectural measurement and calculation (Fergusson). First, it is noted that, as we saw, the main lines of the Exodus fabric are uniformly multiples of 5 cubits. And second, it is found that the corresponding main lines in the temple fabric are exactly double the length of those lines in the Tabernacle. And here the aforesaid dogmatico-sceptical nature inspires a suggestion, that it is antecedently improbable that a nation should, in building a temple, make a *replica* of a thereby antiquated tabernacle. To which it may be answered, that there is nothing in the nature of things, nor in the constitution of man, to make it likely that a nation shall *deliberately depart from* the form of an old house of God in the structure of a new one ; but that there is much to incline men naturally to cling to the old form (*morphē*, which is the essential soul express, above, p. 84), of that which has hitherto been the earthly home of the souls of them and their fathers. And Dr. Perowne, Dean of Peterborough (in *Contemporary Review* of this year—1888), who has been investigating the matter (Baconically) on the ground of facts, is, like Mr. Gillies, rewarded for his faithful discipleship (*scientia interpretatur naturæ*) by a curious demonstration, in his own Peterborough Cathedral, of that natural Platonism of the human religious affections.

Not many months ago, in course of repairs or reconstruction of that Dwelling, they came to know the plan of the original Saxon church, which had stood on that site, and is to some extent incorporated in the new building. And the curiously interesting fact is, that this proud Norman (?) has not only appropriated the material—annexed the estate—of its homely predecessor, but assumed its very form—as the Normans came to be English ; in form the Cathedral is the Church ; only, in the Cathedral the dimensions are twice the length of corresponding lines (analogues) in the Church ! This is a surprisingly and delightfully pertinent illustration of that antecedent probability, whose abode is in the nature of man. But the Jerusalem Temple shows that law, "whose seat (saith Hooker) is in the bosom of God ;"—that "idea" of a Dwelling, which is in the mind of the eternal Architect (Ex. xxv. 9). And, irrespectively of supernatural dictation, the Temple shows us that, whatever may be the antecedent probability in the general case, *in this particular case* it is improbable in the last degree, so as to be morally

impossible, that the Temple structure should not have been in *conscious and deliberate replication* of the Exodus Tabernacle. Two faces, two blades of grass, are exactly the same : only, the main lines of the one are exactly double the length of the corresponding lines in the other. Is this *by accident* ? *Credat Judæus.*

2. At Josh. xviii. 1, we see the Mosaic fabric placed at Shiloh, to which it is brought by Joshua and his Israel, here too with great solemnity, when the conquest of Canaan is so far accomplished, that the heart of heathenish opposition is now broken,—“the land was subdued before them.” After that we find it still at Shiloh (1 Sa. iv.), in highest honour, until the great catastrophe which occasioned the death of Eli. And here we resume our search with the question,—*Was this Shiloh Tabernacle of Eli's time the Gibeon Tabernacle of David's time* ? That it was so, was no doubt the opinion of the wise Chronicler. He of course had the best means of knowing about the matters of fact that were extant in his own day. But what he says about the Gibeon Tabernacle, in connexion with a memorably terrible crisis in the reign of David, must have been, regarding that Tabernacle, the general opinion among Israelites of David's time. And this again would go to show that the builders of the Temple, in their exact replication of the Exodus Tabernacle, must have regarded that Tabernacle, not as an ideal thing like Daniel's reconstruction, but a real historical building, by Moses, according to specifications of the Architect of the Universe. The nation's general opinion, as to that matter of fact, is really important evidence, regarding the very heart and soul of the nation's own corporate life-history.

Now, let us look at some individuals in the period, between that Gibeon Tabernacle and the Shiloh Tabernacle of Eli's time. We know that after Eli's death, it was removed from Shiloh ; and that it never recovered the “glory” it had lost in the removal of the ark of God from within it. During the period after that, in which it was more or less a wanderer, the lives of Eli and David are connected through Samuel, the personal friend of both. These three men were successively the chief magistrates of the nation. They all had the deepest interest in the national religion, of which the Tabernacle was the rallying point and visible symbol. Officially they were the three Messiahs—“anointed”—respectively High Priest, Prophet, and King, of Jehovah's people. In their time, there was only one Tabernacle in existence until that crisis in the reign of David. That there should have been any mistake, while they were alive, in the identification (implied in 1 Chron. xxi. 29) of Eli's Tabernacle with the Gibeon Tabernacle, is a mere impossibility. Why should any mistake be dreamed about ?

Let us now look at the period between Eli and Joshua. The force of the reasoning on the ground of the general political history of Israel, which led us to give credence to its tradition of the entrance into Canaan from the wilderness, is now multiplied tenfold. We have seen that David's Israel must have believed that the Gibeon Tabernacle was the Exodus fabric ;—a belief which must have reached them through Samuel and his Israel from Eli and his. We now ask, Is it conceivable that Eli and his Israel should have made a mistake in identifying their Shiloh Tabernacle with the Shiloh Tabernacle of Joshua and his Israel (which of course was the exodus fabric) ?

*Impossible* :—1. Joshua and his Israel manifestly regarded the location of



Jehovah's Dwelling at Shiloh as a matter of most high and sacred national importance. Shiloh, which in the period of the Judges was the heart of the nation's strength and safety, was by that location made a religious capital, like the Jerusalem of the kings. There the High Priest resided, the only permanent representative of the national unity. And the Tabernacle, home of the ark of the covenant, was what made that spot "holy ground." It was the sacred banner of the national mustering, the sign and seal of Israel's covenanted unity as a nation, the *palladium* of the beloved holy nation's life. So,

2. In Eli's time, the place is holy. Jehovah has His dwelling there. Mid terrible personal disasters, it is the desecration of that sanctity (1 Sa. iv.) that breaks the nation's heart in the bosom of a true Israelitess. Now Eli himself is nearer to Joshua's day than Samuel is, to the extent of nearly the whole of a century of life (Eli's). He must have been almost within speaking distance of the children of those who took part in the original placing of the Tabernacle here at Shiloh. As the chief magistrate for forty years, he must be familiar with everything that is deemed of any public national importance. As hereditary High Priest—the only one whose name we know since Eleazar, he has a living traditional connexion with the Tabernacle, such as must make its history familiar to him as if he had personally been the high priest ever since Aaron's time. It may be added that though, after his time, the Tabernacle, parted from the ark, was to some extent a wanderer like Noah's dove, there is no trace of its having ever once moved from Shiloh between Eli's time and Joshua's. The storms of the period would make Israel's heart all the more to be centred on that one fixed thing, as a Pharos light in stormy darkness.

We note the following proofs.—1. As to *the materials*. This fine linen, with blue, purple, and scarlet—such as were sacredly treasured in ancient princely homes of the Phæacians—is little likely to have been so copiously in the huts of rough-spun fighting farmers and shepherds in the Canaan of the Judges. It is doubtful whether in the Judges' period any native of Canaan ever saw the animal that here is called a "badger." The timber, of Shittim wood, is not Palestinian but Sinaitic. 2. As to *cost*. The careful estimates, we saw, run up towards £250,000. Solomon, for his temple building, had the revenues of a highly prosperous nation (1 Ki. iv.) in a reign of peace; along with the hoardings of David's career of conquest, in which, magnificent though he was in hero-kingliness, he could be a very miser (Ps. cxxxii.) for the future building of a Palace for Jehovah. And at the exodus Israel was laden with the Egyptian wealth of a great ancient civilisation;—wealth which, as we may see between the lines of the civil law of Sinai (Ex. xxi.-xxiii.), the individual owners, precariously nomadic in condition, might not well know how to place in safe deposit (unless they could have it somehow in heaven). We need not wonder if, with hearts overflowing in the first love of "espousals," the means of building came pouring in *superabundantly*; so that the builders had to cry, Halt!—the only strike on *that* account recorded in the industrial history of the peoples. But Israel was poor enough (on its wilderness *sustentation*, see above, pp. 47, etc.), though not "scattered" yet "peeled," when beginning to battle for a settlement in Canaan. And the collectors would have had a difficult task—of making bricks without straw—who should endeavour to wring that vast amount

from the savings of a sparse population, of men who, when they were not slaves (1 Sa. iv. 9), had to fight for a bare living with Philistines and wild beasts.

3. *The skill.* David's fingers were divinely taught to war; but it was through handling bow and arrow. And it was not through handling sword and spear, and plough and ox-goad, that his warriors could learn to do the fine and delicate gold and silver smith's work, not to mention embroidering and weaving, of Bezaleel and Aholiab. Even in the later time of peace, for the comparatively rough work of the Temple building, skilled artisans had to be sent for to Tyre. The hands which did the tabernacle work, of needle and loom and graving-tool, had an education of centuries in a land of sumptuous furniture and subtle textile fabrication.

The very *form* of the Tabernacle points to the same conclusion. It was a general's tent; or, the moveable dwelling of the military chief of a nomadic people. It was thus nobly appropriate to the circumstances of Israel's wilderness wandering, which was a campaigning, under one who had begun to achieve the name of, "Jehovah of the Armies" (*The Lord of Hosts*). The form could thereafter be translated into cedar and stone,—“borrowed” for Palestinian use by a people that had “spoiled” the Egyptians, and have made themselves the head masters of the arts of every land. And then “the sweet singer of Israel” could weave the material of associations thus arising into Songs of Zion, appropriate for the militation of the true life in all ages and all nations. No doubt it is abstractly conceivable, that the wilderness imagery should have been simply imported into Canaan on account of its intrinsic fitness for the purpose to which it was in fact applied. But that sort of literary commerce—with *heathenism* (cp. Ex. xxiii., xxxiv.)—was wholly out of keeping with the character of the people and the times and the nature of the things. The *rational* view is, that the wilderness life of song and story in Canaan is the remembered life of an historical experience in Sinai.

This is corroborated by what we can see of the relative *aspect* of Israel in the Judges' period. In Eli's time, there is no *look* of the nation's having been recently engaged in a work so memorable as building a new Dwelling of Jehovah. On the contrary, from that time there is seen to go down to David's, the tradition through the nation's heart, that the only Tabernacle in existence is the one “which Moses made in the wilderness.” In Eli's day, plainly there cannot have been so much as a thought of new Tabernacle building as having taken place for generations before. But—we saw—two or three generations back from Eli bring us into sight of Joshua, and then,—corroborative evidence, circumstantial, cumulative,—Joshua and his Israel, solemnly locating the wilderness Tabernacle at Shiloh, present no appearance of imagining that it will soon have to be rebuilt. They look as if expecting it to last on through generations beyond reckoning. And well they may: in that climate, and with the materials of this fabric. There are fabrics now existing in good preservation, most delicate in material and form and even colour, which were made in Egypt long before Israel was born at the exodus.

Why should there *not* have been a tabernacle “made by Moses in the wilderness”? Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests. Would this redeemed people, enthusiastically national covenanters with God, leave their God and Redeemer without a dwelling? And if the Lord had any house in Canaan before David's new Tabernacle, superseded by the Temple, *what was it*,

what *could* it be, if not "the mishkan of Jehovah, which Moses built in the wilderness"?

The historical argument, on grounds afforded by the structure of the Tabernacle, might be extended to the furniture of the Sanctuary, and especially the character of "that within the veil." We now will specify only the *contents of the Ark*. Of the spiritual significance of their presence (their "testimony"), we now do not speak. We will speak only of the historical evidence involved in the fact of Israel's *believing* (what no man could see), that they *were* there, in the innermost heart of that shrine which was most holy. The evidence to be found here has in it the strength of "a threefold cord." In a case of circumstantial evidence, the evidential force of three really independent circumstances is vastly greater than the sum of the separate values of the three. (No doubt it is conceivable that circumstances ostensibly distinct should be really one:—*e.g.* a forger may create three ostensibly distinct proofs.)

1. The *Tables of the Law* (see under xx. especially, initial note; De. ix. 9-17, x. 1-5). All the time that Israel *believed* that the Ten Words were there as written by God's finger, the whole nation was a *witness* (cp. Is. xliii. 10), with very great solemnity, through all its generations, to *the fact* of miracle, in the supernatural gift of this Moral Law. The direct and primary witness here was Moses. No sane man can disbelieve what Moses says about a plain matter of fact, cognizable by the bodily senses, within his own observation. He must have known, whether in fact *he* was the writer of those Ten Words, just as well as the present writer knows what hand is putting this sentence on the paper. But if Israel *believed*, that the writer of those Ten Words was God, Moses must have told them so. The nation, in maintaining the Tabernacle, solemnly declares, that Moses told them that the Ten Words on the Tables were written by God's finger. And this they did from the beginning of their professed *belief* in the existence of the Tables there; for this was the *meaning* of their existence *there*.

2. *The pot of manna* (*Comm.* on Ex. xvi. 32-36, see the notes there). Israel knew nothing about manna except from experience in the wilderness. After they entered Canaan there never was a time in which it would have been possible for them to *begin* to believe in that heavenly gift (Jn. vi. 30, 31). The manna tradition *must* have come across the Jordan from the wilderness. And the wilderness Israel, who thus at bottom are the witnesses, were perfectly qualified to judge, whether that "bread" was *natural* manna; as in our day shepherds and farmers and their wives can judge, as well as all the Faradays and Liebig's in the world, whether bread can be made by baking butter, or honey, or molasses. (The question, whether the manna was literally inside of the ark, or only within the Holy Place, is here seen to be of no material significance.)

3. *Aaron's rod which blossomed* (Nu. xvi., xvii.). Ever since there was a Tabernacle, Israel professedly *believed*, that there had been a miracle of blossoming; and the belief was corroborated by the historical supremacy of the Aaronic priesthood. But in the wilderness they could *see* a rod blossoming, just as well as they could see the blossoming of any living plant (or as George Gillespie could see Dr. William Twisse). The solemnity, of placing it in the ark, called a sharp

attention to the thing, securing a *distinct* recollection (cp. Jn. xiv. 26) of the wonderful *fact, which had been observed by them*. The deposition of that rod as a *keimēlion* in this most sacred treasury of the nation, was on the nation's part a most solemn act of witness-bearing to a miracle which it had seen with its eyes, and had gazed at (1 Jn. i. 1, cp. ver. 3), on a memorably great public occasion of deliberately testing. This completes the life-history of the nation at its fountain : 1. The law, for impulsive *regulation* of that life ; 2. the manna, for *sustentation* of it ; and 3. the High-Priesthood, for *consecration* of it, in living sacrifice to God (cp. He. x. 19-22). That testimony, regarding the "way" of Israel's life in God, involved a proof of the supernaturalism of its derivation from Him.

Regarding that "way" (*ever new—prosphatos*), one of those whose fathers passed through the Red Sea was asked, If Jesus of Nazareth be not the Coming One (Mat. xi. 2, 3), what do you make out of the Old Scriptural intimation of supernatural intervention of God in Israel's History, on a way of redemption, to be completed in a coming "day of the LORD"? He answered, that he did not believe in the historical reality of that supernaturalism. Thus, "they have Moses and the prophets : if they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead" (Lu. xvi. 31) . . . "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me" (Jn. v. 46).

But the Testimony, which was "to the Jew first," is now also "to the Gentiles." The Tabernacle and the Passover offer a solid ground of belief in Christ (Mat. xi. 27-29) ; instead of that disbelief, which is the only Reason attainable on the way of a dogmatic-scepticism, like Noah's raven resting (for a little) on a corpse. The historical exodus is a wonderful case of, *ex pede Herculem, ex ungue leonem* (a Hercules or a lion is known by foot-mark). It is a clear footprint of the Eternal on the sand of time. The footprint seen by Crusoe on the sand was proof, not only, that there was a man upon his island, but, that somehow there was *a way*, between it and a (near or far, Act. xvii. 27, 28) beyond, with open possibilities of salvation or destruction (vers. 30, 31). If there be in history, on the line of this alleged revelation, so much as *one* distinct trace of supernatural appearance or working, then "the finger of God" is there. And, with the pointed finger, He is in all history, as He was shown to be in Belshazzar's hall. Now the "signs" in Exodus are not one only, but manifold. And, as every branch of the burning bush had shining branchlets, so every main detail of the history is found to contain a system of evidence within itself ; as every star is a world full of proof of universal gravitation. The heavenly light, of proof as well as doctrine, thus is "all in the whole, and all in every part." Let us look at this great sight, remembering that where God is manifested, the ground is holy.



# THE BOOK OF EXODUS.

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## PART I.

### THE DELIVERANCE.

THE whole exodus movement was in two parts, of Deliverance, chaps. i.-xiv., and of Consecration, chaps. xv.-xl. The deliverance falls in the history under three heads: 1st, of preparation, i.-ii.; 2nd, of the campaign, iii.-xi.; and 3rd, of its triumphant close, xii.-xiv. The preparation for the deliverance was in the person—1. of oppressed Israel, i.; and 2. of Moses, ii.

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CHAP. I. 1. **N**OW these *are* the names of the children of Israel, which came into Egypt: every man

#### ISRAEL'S PREPARATION (Chap. i.).

The preparation was through oppression. But winter has in it a blessing for the autumn wheat; and Israel's winter of oppression was a sleeping summer. For this people had in it that seed which is "the word," "the word of God," "the word of the Kingdom" (Parable of the Sower). The origination of God's visible kingdom was a birth (Is. lxvi. 8), which calls for a preparation. It is the transplantation of a vine from Egypt (Ps. lxxx. 8); but the vine was first planted there, and there unrooted.

**Occasion of the Oppression (1-7).** On the historical setting of what here is indicated, see *Introduction*, especially p. 34 and p. 17. The retrospect here goes back to the original settlement in Goshen. *Now—names*: see below, under vi. 16. On *V'Ellêh Shêmôth* as title of the Book of Exodus, see *Introd.* p. 14. The *v'* (like the Gaelic *agus*) is a connecting particle of very frequent occurrence, whose meaning is naturally vague,—some sort of **transition**,—and falling to be defined in every place by the connexion in that place. In ordinary historical narration, the rendering falls to be simply, *and* (so Lev. i. 1). But here our Translators see in the transition something more than simply transition: they see the river passing into a **new reach of the stream**; and so, instead of simply, *and*, they have **now, the names—Israel**. Here they are literally, the names of the **sons of Jacob**—the individual male children of that individual. But here the names are in the very act of passing into tribal designations (Gaelic, "the clans"), while Israel passes into the national name (Clans "of the Highlands"). Of the

2 and his household came with Jacob. Reuben, Simeon, Levi,  
3, 4 and Judah, Issachar, Zebulon, and Benjamin, Dan and  
5 Naphtali, Gad and Asher. And all the souls that came out  
of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls: for Joseph was in

sons of Abraham, the father of believers (Ro. iv. 13-22), Isaac was the chosen seed of promise. Between his two sons, it was on Jacob that there fell the election of grace (Ro. ix. 6-18). In his sons we now see the chosen on its way to being "the nation" holy to the Lord (Ex. xix. 6).

NOTE.—On the names of the nation (see *Commentary* under xxxiii. 12-33). On that of *the Hebrews*, as given by the Egyptians, see under ver. 15. *Israel* means (Ge. xxxii. 24) **one who strives with God** (on which see Charles Wesley's most beautiful hymn on Jacob's wrestling with the Angel). It came to be, and is, the peculiarly appropriate distinctive name of this people, as **the seed of promise**. The name of *Jews* (*Judæi*), arising out of the formation of a distinct kingdom of Judah, has not supplanted the older name, which at the division of the nation went with the Ten Tribes. After the Babylonish captivity, the seed of Abraham were known among the Gentiles by the newer name (*Jews*); and in order to distinguish them from Gentiles, it could be employed by a very "Hebrew of the Hebrews" like the Apostle Paul. But in the New Testament use, *Israel* is the name that still is employed when there is an intended reference to their covenant relationship to God (Jn. iii. 10; 1 Co. x. 18; Ro. ix. 6).

*Egypt*, see *Introd.* p. 42. *Every—household*: lit. **house**. The subdivision of a tribe into houses-of-fathers has not yet begun. Jacob being 130 years old (Ge. xlvii. 9), the children and followings of his sons may have in all amounted to a considerable community (see below, under i. 7). Mark, as characteristic of the exodus period, groundwork of preparation for a numerical census—not simply, a genealogy. *Reuben—Asher* (cp. Re. vii. 4-8—the *last* census view of Israel). Excepting Joseph, the names here are placed in the order of **natural rank**:—(1) the children of *wives* before those of handmaids; and (2) the children of the *senior* in standing before those of the junior. 5. *And—Egypt*. The clause about Joseph is in the Septuagint, without cause, transferred to the beginning. *For*: the same *v'*, which elsewhere means "and," "now," etc.,—see note under i. 1. It is not necessary here to show cause for his not being named along with the others in vers. 2-4:—that is shown in ver. 1, by the, *which came down into Egypt with Jacob*. The *seventy souls* (cp. Ge. xlvi. 26, 27) are made up by including Jacob himself, as well as Joseph and his two sons:—**the whole Jacobite clan** (the Sept. has seventy-five). *Generation*: in common use, ancient and modern, the expression has a natural variety of meanings. Here what is described is, a **clean sweep**, of those previously existing, to clear the stage for new action:—not only there vanishes *Joseph* (the individual), but also the whole *brotherhood* (of his standing in Jacob's family), and (climax) **all that generation**. This no doubt includes all those who were alive in the lifetime of Joseph; and thus will embrace a century, one of the conventional periods of a "generation." The thing represented is, a complete disappearance of the original Israelitish settlers in Goshen. 7. *The land* here (note under *Egypt*, i. 1) is *Goshen*—a purely Scriptural name, not found on the Monuments. Tanis, which stretched east and north from the Tanaitic branch of the Nile, is doubtless "the field of Zoan"—plain of Tanis—poetical description, in Ps. lxxviii. 12, 43. A great city Zoan, in that region, which must

6 Egypt *already*. And Joseph died, and all his brethren, and  
7 all that generation. And the children of Israel were fruitful,  
and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceed-  
ing mighty; and the land was filled with them.

have been a seat of empire there near the time of the Exodus, has been identified so recently as four years ago. Regarding a Semitic occupation of this region, see *Introduction*. There must have been some native Egyptian population, especially when Israel came to be jealously watched and oppressed. But in the original settlement the Israelites presumably had substantially their own districts to themselves, for pasture and for agriculture. Their tenure of the land may have been freehold with a land-tax; the settlement made by Joseph for all Egypt. Individual Israelites may have more or less held of their respective tribes; which perhaps were connected with the imperial government as the Swiss Cantons were with the Hapsburgs. It is possible that, so long as the relations were free and friendly, the Israelites, with their natural good organization, strong and flexible, held the land under some sort of military tenure, of obligation to guard the north-eastern exposed frontier—"wardenship of the march" (cp. Ge. xliii. 32, xlvi. 34). The discipline, and martial temper, thus fostered, would make them all the more to be feared when no longer trusted (cp. "holding a wolf by the ears").

NOTE.—**On the astonishing increase of Israelitish population.** The noble custom of adoption (see below under xii. 38, cp. Nu. xi. 4) was in operation to spiritual effects from the beginning of circumcision in Abraham's household, which (Ge. xiv. 14) must have been very powerful. The "mixed multitude" which (Nu. xi.) accompanied Israel out of Egypt would be those who had not become fully assimilated; as "naturalized" American citizens are found to be in the third generation. We do not know how far, in a region where the Semitic population had been broken up, Israel's increase may have been occasioned by accessions from without, of men attracted by what they saw or heard of in this people. On the other hand, the historian, here and elsewhere, without giving any such explanation, lays emphasis upon the rate of increase as *astonishing*; such as to amaze and terrify the Egyptians, and make the Israelites into a people really formidable in strength;—though we may remember, that this may not have meant much, since the arable land of that "empire" of the Nile was not in all of greater extent than Yorkshire. Thus, as to **the process**, through which the increase took place, in intimating that Israel "multiplied and waxed exceeding mighty," the writer employs the expressions, *were fruitful*, and *increased abundantly*, which are found in Ge. i. 22, 28, and viii. 17, as if suggesting the idea of **a new creation**. This points to a strictly "extraordinary" or miraculous rapidity in the rate of increase. Even miracle has its limits of possibility in accelerating rate of increase *through birth*. The following are naturally favouring circumstances, on the line of which a "special" providence may have been traceable, though the sort of manifest "extraordinariness" which makes true miracle should not really have had place in producing the increase. 1. Proverbial **fruitfulness of women** in Egypt. This was noted by naturalists:—the greatest of whom, Aristotle, refers to the circumstance, that in Egypt a woman may bring forth four at a birth. 2. In this relation, **peculiar** fulness of vitality in the **Israelitish** race. From Abraham to this day, that has appeared historically; and the midwives observed it (Ex. ii.) in special connection with maternity. 3. **Prosperous settlement in a good land** (Ge. xlvii. 11), in circumstances fitted for prosperity of physical life. It does not appear that even at the last (Nu. xi. 5, 13) the oppressors prevented the bondsmen from sufficient use of the excellent



8 Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew  
9 not Joseph. And he said unto his people, Behold, the

nourishment with which the country was filled, especially in that Tanaitic region, of which Israel seems to have held the best land. These favouring circumstances point in a direction. But what we see in that direction is, **astonishment and terror** (the very words for miracle, see *Introd.* p. 78) of Egyptians in view of the increase; while for description of its rapidity of rate the historian employs the strongest expressions that could be applied to such a case. The after history is in full accord with what is thus represented,—a really *wonderful* rapidity of increase, showing a “very special” providence of God,—where the transition to “extraordinary” or miraculous is perhaps metaphysical rather than theological.

#### Exercise 1.

1. “Generation”—(1) Show how various natural meanings of the word may arise, giving the various uses. (2) From the yearly physical history of Egypt, illustrate the disappearance of a “generation” while the people remains.
2. With reference to an *exodus*, How does that settlement in Goshen differ—(1) From that of the Pilgrim Fathers in America; and (2) Further, from that of British colonists in Australasia?
3. With reference to the period embraced in i. 1–7—Distinguish, and give illustration of the distinction, between (1) “General” providence and “special;” and (2) “Ordinary” providence and “extraordinary.” (3) Give a case of providence that is “special” but not “extraordinary,” and one of providence that is “extraordinary” but not “special.”

**First measure of oppression** (8–14). The oppression in this first measure is seen to reach directly only the grown-up men of Israel, not the women and children. And in the first measure the king takes his Egyptian people along with him. And afterwards, though they more or less dissent from his proceedings, they share in his plagues. In the history there thus is exhibited a solidarity of “Egypt,” the whole community being regarded, and treated by God, as one moral person, of which the members are (by representation) in the head. A private Egyptian’s position was complicated by the circumstance, that the Pharaoh was a god (as now “the state” is really worshipped by some professing Christians).

8. **Now**, or *and, v'*, as in i. 1 (see note). Here what is represented is simple succession in time, and admits of **an indefinite extent** of time between ver. 7 and ver. 8. It thus gives no means of judging when the oppression was begun (On *Exodus Chronology*, see *Introd.*). *There arose—Joseph* (on the probable historical connexion, see *Introduction*). This has been generally understood to mean, not the accession of a new king in the ordinary line and manner, but the **emergence of a new dynasty** into the sovereignty. And now it is known that there was a great dynastic revolution not long before the beginning of this oppression. The expression for *a new king* here does not occur elsewhere:—a circumstance harmonizing with the view that what is meant is different from ordinary succession. So does the description, *arose up—over Egypt*. Of course the view would throw a strong light on the central expression, *which knew not Joseph*. The *knew not* might of itself mean simply, “was not acquainted with him,” or, “did not know about him.” But (cp. Ps. i. 6) it may mean, **did not favour him, had an aversion to him**—and his memory; and so, perhaps, **ignored him**. This is easily understood if we suppose, that Joseph and his great services belonged

people of the children of Israel *are* more and mightier  
 10 than we: Come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest  
 they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there  
 falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies,  
 and fight against us, and *so* get them up out of the

to the period of foreign domination in Egypt (see *Introduction*). We need not, in order to interpretation of this Book, tie ourselves to a theory of history outside of it. It suffices to see as a fact, that there was a decisive change in the monarchy, to the effect of Joseph, and no doubt his policy, ceasing to be regarded, unless with dislike:—a change which the historian views as involving the removal of a check, that had hitherto prevented the outbreaking jealous fear, which now reaches Israel with oppression as a flood. 9, 10. *His people* (see at the beginning of this section). Of course he did not directly address the whole native Egyptian population, men of Goshen; as Moses did not directly address two millions of Israelites at Sinai, he would speak to leading representative men, and lead or consult the commonalty through them. The Heb. name for Egypt, *Mitzraim*, is the dual form of *Matzor*, “a fortress.” The name may have originated in the condition of the land as known to Shemites, on the north-east border, guarded, like the Netherlands, by forts. But the dual form had a corresponding dualism in the geographical division of Egypt, into Upper and Lower (the Delta). And with this at one time coincided a duality of empire: the two crowns are combined in monumental representation of Rameses the Great. There is no need of supposing that Pharaoh’s *people* in the text includes more than those who in the *land* were connected with Israel:—though that, with a constitution such as Egypt had, *may* include the whole empire. *The people—Israel*: like Egypt, are here a corporate unity, not, a mere multitudinous aggregate of individuals. *More and mightier than we.* In Goshen, Israel might be greatly more numerous than the Egyptians, as in Hungary the Slavs are, than the Magyars. But the expression may mean only, **too many for us, unmanageably strong.** *Deal wisely* (see notes on *wisdom*, etc., under xxxi. 3). The word (*Chogma*) for wisdom here is that which in Scripture is appropriated for “sense,” such as (I Ki. iii.) Solomon sought, for administration of government; and such as appears in the “mother-wit” of the Proverbs, and the other “Sapiential” books of Scripture. As distinguished from the highest wisdom, finding best ends through best means, it is only sagacity, seeking any ends through suitable means. So the unjust steward, Lu. xvi. 1-8; and “that fox, Herod,” Lu. xiii. 32; and “the English Solomon” with his “state-craft,” if he had been sagacious, he might have risen to the cunning of a “fox,” ignoring the Providence of God. *Lest they multiply.* The Spartans, who, according to tradition in Thucydides, thinned out their slaves by assassination, went further in the same direction. *And it come—land.* The historical condition (*Introd.*, note on *History of Egypt*) shows that this dread of invasion was rational. And Israel might be tempted to take part with an invader,—of kindred race. But is it “wise” to make a discontented slave where there is most need of a faithful valiant friend? *And get them up out of.* The **ascending** here is from flat Egypt to mountainous Palestine (cp. the “mountain,” Ex. xv. 17). It thus appears that Israel, to Egypt’s knowledge, had **an aspiration toward Canaan.** The refusal to let Israel go, thus had in it a strong element of selfish greed; as when slave-owners prevented education of

11 land. Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to  
 afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh  
 12 treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses. But the more they  
 afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And  
 13 they were grieved because of the children of Israel. And

the Blacks. To repress a natural aspiration is not "wise." It is to sit on the safety-valve, if not to keep a fire-spark in the powder-magazine of a ship. *They*: who? The Egyptians, namely, Pharaoh (l'état c'est moi). *Taskmasters* (*Sarēi missim*), the Sept. has, **superintendents of works**. They were not ordinary slave-drivers (or "gangers"), but gentlemen whose office was an important public trust. One of them might have under him several or many of the actual working overseers. The "works" department of Egyptian administration was of the highest importance: between roads, canals, and mining or quarrying, the land was—economically speaking—almost kept up artificially like a ship at sea. *To afflict*: here, it is, **the purpose**. *Them*, *i.e.* Israel. *Their burdens*, *i.e.* those laid on them by the taskmasters (on *burdens*, see under ii. 11). The purpose was, to break the spirit of the Hebrews, so that they might no longer be formidable, in order to be the more conveniently useful as slaves. *They built*: lit. *he* built, *i.e.* Israel. Or, the expression may be impersonal, like the French, *on dit*, meaning, *there was built*, or, *there were built*. *Pharaoh*, see under ii. 23. *Treasure-cities*: store-cities in 1 Ki. ix. 19—"magazines" of provisions and arms (Pithom now is known to have been a store-city: this is declared emphatically by Naville, on the evidence of excavations). They were everywhere convenient for collecting and guarding the produce of the land. Near the perilous powder, they were available for resource in offensive or defensive war. Israel, toiling at these, was building his own prison and forging his own chain. *Pithom and Raamses*. Pithom has now been identified beyond a doubt. Tanis is found (1883) to have been a great capital city, peculiarly associated with Rameses II. (The Great). The Rameses of Jacob's time (Ge. xlvii. 11) may have been only the name of a region, called by a favourite name. Or, the *building* of the later time may have been a reconstruction,—perhaps, to meet the call of some new state policy. *Ra* was the Egyptian sun-god when sailing through heaven at noon: *Thom* or *Thum* was the same deity on his way down in the west. Thus, *Pi-thum* is "place of Thum" (Naville). Rameses II. (Sesostris) is now supposed to have been the oppressing Pharaoh of our text, and father of that Menephtah who was the Pharaoh of the Exodus (*Introd.*, note on *History of Egypt*). It is found that Pithom was almost wholly built of brick, and partly, of bricks that had been made without straw. Geographical details, regarding even places that cannot now be identified, are indications of personal familiarity with the locality on the writer's part. 12. *The more—the more*: lit. according—so, the rate of increase was as the severity of oppression. A writer on Population once maintained, that fecundity is promoted by poor living. The Egyptians may not have thought so; but they did not starve the Israelites:—*They were grieved—Israel*. The verb is here too weak. The Heb. word (*qātz*) has been variously rendered,—**loathing, horror**, passing (as in the Latin *horresco*) into terror. Contemptuous aversion toward aliens was always a feeling of Egyptians (cp. Ge. xlv. 34):—and is often found among heathens. To Egyptian feeling the aliens (especially the Semitic) were "atheists,"

the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with  
14 rigour. And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage,  
in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the  
field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, *was*  
with rigour.

because not owning "the gods" (of Egypt):—a like reproach from heathen ignorance was one of the painful trials of primitive Christians under the Roman Empire (Athenagoras: *Embassy*). The Israelites were the more disliked (if not abhorred) as belonging to the foreign race of Shepherds;—**Shasus**—"predatory thieves"—who had long tormented Egypt, and cruelly galled its pride. When the Hebrews grew into great physical force, that aversion deepened into dread. And the **unaccountableness, the mysteriousness**, of the rapidity of increase, apparently darkened that dread into the profounder horror, of religious affright, which afterwards emitted the alarm cry, "This is the finger of God" (see under viii. 19). 13, 14. *With rigour*: emphasis of iteration. The Heb. word (*pěřčh*), here, comes from a root which means, **to break in pieces**; indicating the design (under i. 11) to shatter the valiant manhood of a people into broken debris of a slave population. *They—bitter*: by nature, **life is sweet**, even to a slave. God may in mysterious kindness turn Naomi into Marah; but for a creature, to make bitter the sweet life of man, is a crime that has to be answered for. He for exiles can turn vinegar into wine (Ex. xxii. 21), but the human policy of *hard bondage* is against nature. The word here for *bondage* natively means, simply **service**; a thing which (Re. xxii. 3) may for a rational creature be heaven—"the lofty land." But in Heb. as in other tongues, the word "servant" (note on *service* in this ver. 14) comes to lose that nobleness of the thing, and sink into the meaning of "slave." In Egypt the (bond-) service was *hard*, so as to make sweet life into bitterness. The word here (*quashah*) for *hard*, conveys the expression of **rugged strength** (of severity)—inflexible grinding hardness of tyranny (on *anguish* in vi. 9). (This is not like the "mild" Egyptian countenance; but Pharaoh hardened his own heart.) *In mortar—field*. This has nothing to do with building the Pyramids, which as a class were finished long before this time, and are never alluded to in Scripture. What is referred to is especially the heavy toil of unskilled labourers in Egypt. (That *may* have included quarrying, but it does not appear.) *In mortar* (clay)—*i.e.* in preparing it for **brick-making**. *In bricks—i.e.* in building with the bricks when made—say, canal banks and fortress walls. *All—field*: the word for *service* here is the same as for *bondage* in the first clause of this verse (note on). *Was*—with the comma preceding, omitted in Revised Version: perhaps better so, making the concluding clause to be in (energetic) effect, **all that rigorous service which was laid on them**. Conspicuous in the toil, now as then, is (De. xi. 10) watering the land through canal runlets.

### Exercise 2.

1. Compare the present condition of Egyptian *Fellahs* with Israel's bondage.
2. A slave's condition—(1) What has it in common with a son's and with a free servant's? (2) In what does it differ from both? (3) In what do the two differ from one another?
3. Permissibility of bond-service—(1) Is it forbidden, or permitted, by moral

15 And the king of Egypt spake to the Hebrew midwives ; (of  
 16 which the name of the one *was* Shiphrah, and the name of  
 the other Puah ;) and he said, When ye do the office of a  
 midwife to the Hebrew women, and see *them* upon the stools,  
 if it *be* a son, then ye shall kill him ; but if it *be* a daughter,

law? and How? (2) What was the practice under the prophets and the  
 Apostles? And what is to be inferred from that?

4. Compare slavery with polygamy—(1) In respect of permission as appearing  
 in Scripture. (2) In respect of abolition as required by Scripture.

**Second Measure of Oppression (15-22).**—The king, who at first took his  
 people along with him, now apparently proceeds alone. Perhaps (tyrant-like) he  
 is becoming fiercely impatient through irritation of a failure that means resistance  
 to his will. Perhaps he doubts whether he can obtain the sympathy of his people  
 in the peculiar *inhumanity* of the measure which he now proposes,—*murder*, of  
*infants*, piercing the soul of mothers (Lu. ii. 35). The first “great” persecution  
 of Christians, under Nero, turned the heart of the heathen people against the  
 tyrant through revulsion from the cruelty (Tacitus). Mark here, *women* coming  
 into view, with characteristic tenderness toward infants. It may be that the  
 Goshen “Egyptians” had a considerable amount of Semitic blood in them (as  
 “Englishmen” have of Celtic). In any case there were various ties of neighbour-  
 hood which may have formed friendship. Still, they are responsible for *the*  
*action* of their king, who is simply, “Egypt.”

15. *Hebrew midwives* ; lit. **midwives of the Hebrewesses**. It has been  
 thought that they were themselves of Hebrew blood, and that their two  
 names can be traced to Heb. roots referring to personal comeliness. The  
 balance of recent expert judgment inclines toward the view, that they were  
 native Egyptians, and that *Shiphrah* and *Puah* are still (through still surviving  
 Coptic) traceable to Egyptian words having reference to child-birth. As to  
 the sufficiency of **two midwives** for so great a population, (1) they may have  
 been only *in charge of the department* of midwifery in Goshen. (2) The  
 cruel edict (see under i. 19) may have referred only to *the upper class* of  
 Hebrew families ; as Pharaoh may have felt no interest in going beyond that  
 class, to a promiscuous “massacre of innocents.” Mark the (perhaps con-  
 temptuous) use of the name of *Hebrews* coming in, as soon as we begin to  
 look through Egyptian eyes (on *Israel* under i. 1).

16. *The Hebrew women* (preceding note). Upon the view that has been  
 suggested, the expression here would refer to the Hebrew women **in question**,  
 —*i.e.* of the upper class. That, not absolutely inadmissible, is somewhat  
 forced. And there is **no need** to suppose, that a deliberate murderer of  
 infants will of course draw the line in restraint of his cruelty at one class :  
 cruelty, when it once breaks out, naturally runs amuck. *Upon the stools*.  
 The meaning of the expression can be only guessed at. The word for *stools*  
 here is dual in form ; as if, **pair of stones** (it occurs in Jer. xviii. 3—  
 “wheels”). Some suggest, two **stone disks**, such as go to making a corn  
 hand-mill (quern), with some corresponding use that cannot be expounded  
 here. Others, the **stone-bath**, perhaps meaning, a bath with a stone lid or  
 covering ; and they remind us, that in ancient heathen lands, infants doomed  
 to die were murdered in the bath immediately after birth. Others (Revised  
 Version), a sort of **couch or seat**, adapted to the condition of the patients.  
 We thus are happily becoming “rusty” in the terminology of cruelty. The

17 then she shall live. But the midwives feared God, and did  
 not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the  
 18 men children alive. And the king of Egypt called for the  
 midwives, and said unto them, Why have ye done this thing,  
 19 and have saved the men children alive? And the midwives  
 said unto Pharaoh, Because the Hebrew women *are* not as  
 the Egyptian women; for they *are* lively, and are delivered  
 20 ere the midwives come in unto them. Therefore God dealt  
 well with the midwives: and the people multiplied, and  
 21 waxed very mighty. And it came to pass, because the mid-  
 22 wives feared God, that he made them houses. And Pharaoh

thing of real importance is, that the command had reference to **the time of birth**: calling for decisive action as soon as the sex of the infant could be distinguished. 17. *Feared God*. This seems to mean simply,—were **god-fearing, conscientiously religious**. But the word (*Elohim*) for *God* here, plural in form, may have the meaning of “the gods” (cp. xxxii. Initial note). In ver. 21, however, the reference is clearly to *the* (true) God—Israel’s. Him, these women, though Egyptians, may have come to know in Hebrew homes (cp. 2 Ki. v. 2, etc.). The Heb. word for *children* here, from a root which means, to bear, is thus, “bairns.” 18, 19. *Are lively*: **have a plenitude of vital energy**; so as to be able to bring forth with ease—like wild animals, says one commentator. Travellers tell of a facility in this labour on the part of Oriental women that may seem incredible. The upper class of Hebrew women would share the hardihood of their less favoured sisters, through being accustomed to an amount and kind of wholesome exercise not known to the delicate dames of native Egyptian nurture. *They said—unto them*. True; but (vers. 17, 21) that is **not the real reason** of your action. Their statement (cp. Ge. xxxix. 9) was, though not false, yet fallacious if not sophistical. Along with pious womanly kindness, there is here a frailty of moral fibre, dangerous for man, and dishonouring to God. Still, He does not (Is. xlii. 3) break this “bruised reed” (proverbial expression for “Egypt,” in its weaker half).

20. *Therefore*. Not, for the alloy of falsehood and breach of trust; but for the gold of fearing God and regarding man. The *therefore* here is (*v'*) simply, **and** (under i. 1): here it has no real “consecutive” force, of logic or of rhetoric. *Dealt well with*: lit. “did (or was) good to.” *Multiply—mighty*: (on these expressions under i. 7; also, ver. 12, with relative note). Observe that (Ps. ii. 1-4) the augmentation steadily goes on simultaneously with the fierce endeavour to stop it. *God* (under i. 16): here it clearly is, the **true God**—of Israel. That is implied in, *He made them houses*. This would bear the construction, **He gave them children** (of their own, Ps. cxxvii.). But there is no real call to depart from the natural obvious meaning, **He raised them to be heads of families** (Ps. lxxviii. 6):—among the chosen people? (Rahab and Ruth became “mothers in Israel.”) 22. *Charged*: lit. “commanded.” To the midwives (vers. 15, 18) he simply *spoke*, or *said*. The now stronger expression may represent an augmented strength of passionate purpose. *All his people*. This was legally binding throughout Egypt. It perhaps came home with power only in Goshen,

charged all his people, saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive.

among both residents and visitors. The people, at first (ver. 10) only consulted, are now drawn, or driven: bad company, even of a king, is dangerous (1 Co. xv. 32). *Son—daughter*:—male bairn—female bairn. The *every* admits of being in application restricted to the upper class—but why? In allowing the *female* infants to live, the tyrant was not frustrating his purpose. They could not grow into formidable soldiers, and they and their children (witness infant Moses) could be reared as Egyptians. *The River*. The word (*Y'ôr*) here is Egyptian—employed as if a proper name. (*Nile* is only a classical name, never used in Scripture.) The great River continually renews the life of the land. (See Introd. chap. i.) By the Egyptians it was worshipped (cp. the Roman “father Tiber”), as to them the beneficent deity (see who it really is in Act. xiv. 17). The king may have thought to propitiate this “respector of persons” (1 Pe. i. 17; Prov. xxiv. 23), by sacrificing to him the lives of born aliens, of a race disowning the gods of Egypt. The expressions, *Ye—river* and *every—alive*, have in the Original an aspect of rapid imperious urgency:—as if, *Every man bairn, to the river fling him; but a girl—let her live*. The plan failed. Perhaps there was no hearty co-operation on the people's part. It is to be observed, that in after ages it does not appear that Israel cherished any grudge against the *Egyptian people*. *N.B.—Infanticide* (see Lecky: *History of European Morals*, vol. i.) is not uncommon among heathens. (“The dark places of the earth . . . horrid cruelty.”)

### Exercise 3.

1. Quote in full the passage, “Oh! woman, in our hours of ease,” etc. Give *three* illustrations of serviceableness to Christ on women's part in gospel history.
2. Give *three* illustrations in connection with sacraments, of care for children on God's part.
3. Give illustration of untruth in Abraham, the father of the faithful, and Ulysses the model of leal-heartedness.
4. How does faith in God tend to make one truthful toward man?

**NOTE.**—**Egypt seems to have stood highest in the ancient heathen world in respect of really “honouring” women** (1 Pe. iii. 7). Even under the Greek empire, the old Egyptian feeling seems to have retained command of the region. The strangely revolting custom of marrying a man's own sister may have risen from morbid exaggeration of a good feeling. The Greeks and Romans can hardly be said to have had a family life. After the heroic age, the Greek feeling seems to have sunk toward Oriental zenanaism. The Romans, on the other hand, though in public their children passed through imposing ceremonies, yet at home regarded them and treated them as only a higher kind of slaves. The Old Testament women are the only *class* of females in the ancient world that really had experience and enjoyment of a noble life. Where *they* have not this life, all society has death at the heart of it. The Puritanic women of our new Reformation epoch are far the highest female human beings that the world has ever seen. The best producible *sample* of this type, in its influence and happiness, is perhaps Lucy Hutchinson, in her memoir of Colonel Hutchinson, her husband. (The ideal is reproduced in the story of *The Draytons and the Davenants*.)

CHAP. II. 1. And there went a man of the house of Levi, and  
 2 took *to wife* a daughter of Levi. And the woman conceived,  
 and bare a son : and when she saw him that he *was a goodly*  
 3 *child*, she hid him three months. And when she could not  
 longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and  
 daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child

PREPARATION OF MOSES (Chap. ii.).

(See *Introduction*, p. 61.) Rash unreflecting violence in slaying an Egyptian : seeming timidity in flight, and pusillanimity in submitting to a domineering wife ; unbelieving presumption making an excuse of inability where the Almighty has undertaken and commanded ; complaining against God when Pharaoh does not yield ; carnal rage breaking the law and its tables :—Oliver Cromwell insisted on having his *warts* in his portrait. Who has so faithfully painted those blemishes in Moses ? As a rule, he completely effaces himself. But even in order to understand the causes in the public history, we must see it working in individuals, and on them, and through them.

(ii. 1-10.) EARLY LIFE.—This section is a sort of “Exodus of the infancy ;” showing a picture (1) of the individual’s whole career, and so (2) of the nation’s. The scene was no doubt in the Goshen region. There has been found among the monuments a report on that region by an officer of central government, who describes it as a truly “delightful land.” The “ministry of woman” is conspicuous in the Mosaic infancy, as in that of Samuel, and of Jesus, and of the Baptist (cp. 1 Ti. ii. 15). There is no legend regarding him like the “Gospels of the Infancy.”

1. *Daughter of Levi* ; for bearing of this on the *Chronology of Exodus*, see *Introduction*. The *passionateness* of Levi’s house could be lofty as well as tragically low (Ge. xlix. 5-7). 2. *She—saw—hid* (Sept. *they—saw—hid*). *Goodly*, lit. *good*. The Sept. “fair,” is by Stephen expanded (Act. vii. 20) into lit. “fair to God,” as if, “divinely beautiful.” His expression is suggestive of something *unearthly* in its beauty. And in He. xi. 23, where the beauty is set forth as moving his *parents* (both) to hide him, their action is ascribed to *faith*. Their faith was exercised in “not fearing the commandment of the king :” fearing and trusting God, they ran the risk of the king’s resentment rather than incur the guilt of passive complicity in the murder of their child. 3. The *when* is uncalled for : *and she went—and she took*. The word *ark* (*têbha*),—employed in the case of Noah’s ark,—is in itself simply, *box* or *chest* (regarding *arōn*, the sanctuary ark, see under xxv., etc.). *Bulrushes* (*gōme*) : the famous *papyrus* (whence, “paper”) reed of the Nile ; now almost extinct ; but long of great value, for exportation as well as home use. It is triangular in section, growing to be rather taller than a man. The light, strong stalks were made into boats, to be seen on the monuments, for the smooth river. It was an inner rind that was made into paper. *Slime* (*chemar*). Some suppose that this *asphalt* (Sept.) was imported from the Dead Sea (“the Asphaltic Lake”) for use in embalming. Others (with our Translators) have thought it is simply the Nile slime. The *slime* may have



therein; and she laid *it* in the flags by the river's brink.  
 4 And his sister stood afar off, to wit what would be done to him.  
 5 And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash *herself*  
 at the river; and her maidens walked along by the river's  
 side; and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent  
 6 her maid to fetch it. And when she had opened *it*, she saw  
 the child: and, behold, the babe wept. And she had com-  
 passion on him, and said, This *is one* of the Hebrews'

been employed to fill the interstices of the reeds of the ark, and the *pitch*, as plaster over all to make it water-tight; or, the slime, for inner coat of plaster, and the pitch, for outer. The *ark* was perhaps placed in a papyrus thicket, for protection against crocodiles; or, simply for concealment, and for detention, from being carried away down stream (anchorage). *Flags* (*sâph*): a different species of reed, which gave its name (*yâm sâph*) to what is by us rendered "the red sea" (from *colour* of the reed) (under x. 19). *River* (under i. 22). 4. *Sister* (under ii. 8): apparently, Miriam. She thus was, like Aaron, older than Moses (under ii. 7-9). Here she begins to show (Levitical) energy, which may rise to transcendental (Ex. xv. 21), or may sink (Nu. xii. 15 cp. Lu. ii. 48, 49) to abysmal—self-assertion. (Her death: Nu. xx. 1.) There has been labour to show that Moses had somehow the right of a first-born:—*e.g.* by suggesting that his mother, after the birth of Aaron and Miriam, was first sent away by her husband so as to be no wife, and then taken back so as to be a true second wife, with a family in which Moses was first born, Q. E. D. He has no need of such stays (Jn. i. 12, 13). Wellington held his birthday on the anniversary of Waterloo. *Scripture* does not make Moses a first-born in any way. *To wit: to know* (Sept., *to learn*). For *stood*, the Sept. has *spying*; which is (good) commentary, not translation. 5. *Daughter of Pharaoh*. Tradition has her name, Thermotis, and other (unhistorical) details. The point here is, royalty of soul, with womanly tenderness, working for the purpose of God. *To wash herself: bathe*. The Heb. word here employed (*rachatz*) means, washing the body; not, *e.g.*, washing clothes. *At the River: lit. on, or, on to: she descended to it, went down the steep bank*. In modern times Egyptian women of rank do not bathe in the River. That they anciently did so, is shown by the monuments. Their motive may have been partly religious, as the Nile (under ii. 22) was a deity, from whose blessing women might look for a special benefit. *When she saw—she sent: lit. and she saw—and sent*. *The maid: the maid-servant*. The word for *maid* here (*âmah*) is not that which (in plural) is for *maidens* here (*na'arah*). This word for *maiden* means simply, *girl*. The *maidens* may have been girl-companies of the Princess, "ladies in waiting." The other word (*âmah*) is employed as appropriate for female *slave*: though it may be employed (cp. "Your most obedt.," etc.) in ceremonious humility by free women. *She was* (the "lady's-maid") the servile personal attendant. 6. *She—she: who? The maid? or the mistress? Wept: was weeping* (cp. Ez. xvi. 5). *Compassion: third beat of woman's heart* in this case. *This—children: lit. of the Hebrews' children this*. How does she know? The *exposure* is one proof. But the Hebrew or Semitic type might show so early. The Egyptian type on the monuments is clearly distinct from the Nigritic: and shows that the Egyptians were not pure Hamites, but had

7 children. Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall  
 I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she  
 8 may nurse the child for thee? And Pharaoh's daughter said  
 to her, Go. And the maid went and called the child's  
 9 mother. And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, Take this  
 child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give *thee* thy  
 10 wages. And the woman took the child, and nursed it. And  
 the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter,  
 and he became her son. And she called his name Moses:  
 and she said, Because I drew him out of the water.

a large amount of Japhetic (?) blood in their veins. They classified mankind as white, red or brown (Semitic), and black. *Hebrews* (see under i. 8). 7-9. The word for *maid* here (*almah*) involves **puberty**. If this be Miriam, she must be at least twelve years older than Moses (under ii. 4). *Nurse—nurse*: lit. **suckler—suckle**;—so that a *wet-nurse* is what is in question. (Clever Miriam has no doubt made up her mind, *which*.) *The child's mother* (cp. 2 Sa. xxi. 8, 10): **she** may have been on the watch, and planned for this; perhaps knowing the princess's heart. *For me—thy wages*: this makes the foundling to be **hers**; but also, because she is good, makes her to be **his** (adoptive mother). Apparently the circumstances of this adoption were made no secret, from Moses or others. 10. *Grew*: not necessarily, to manhood; but perhaps, till the weaning time; which in the case of an Hebrew child may have been, for several years. *He became her son!* (perhaps by formal **adoption**. The New Testament has no adoption but of sons (*huiiothesia*, "son-making");—*e.g.*, not, of citizens ("naturalization" to the state). She *might* have made him only, a favoured slave; but (1 Jn. iii. 1) she does her "level best" for him. There is nothing to show that this matter was concealed from the king. See note under *Exercise 2*. Egyptian princesses had large freedom (monuments show); might have palaces and establishments of their own. In ii. 15, the (then) Pharaoh is seen going **cautiously** to work, as if Moses had then come to be an important personage. *She called—water*. *Moses* is said to be good Egyptian for "drawn out." But there is a Hebrew derivation to the same effect; so that the name may have been proposed by his (nurse-) mother. The giving of a name, when thus recorded, is significant (Re. ii. 17).

#### Exercise 4.

1. What are the three great "Rivers" in Israel's history? What places have they respectively in the life of the world? (Cp. Re. xxii. 1.)
2. Love at first sight on the part of royal personages,—Give three Scripture cases as follows, (1) On the part of a pagan, (2) on the part of an Israelite, (3) on the part of a Teacher.
3. Give from history other cases of infancy notably saved for future greatness.

NOTE.—Every **infant** has in it a reality of **greatness**, to be saved or lost, beyond the value of a world; and a possibility of special greatness (Lu. i. 15) even among the sons of God. In Luther's boyhood there was a Master who would take off his Doctor's cap in salutation of the boys, because one of them (poor thing!) might be a future Doctor. *N.B.*—As there is no word of *Aaron's* having been hid, nor look of the family's having been harassed before Moses' birth, it may be inferred that the infanticidal oppression had not lasted three years (a "brief madness"?).

11 And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown,  
that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their  
burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one  
12 of his brethren. And he looked this way and that way, and  
when he saw that *there was* no man, he slew the Egyptian,

(ii. 11-15.) THE CRISIS AT MATURITY.—At this time (cp. Acts vii. 23) Moses was “full forty years old.” He was (ver. 22) “instructed” (Revised Version) in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and mighty in words and deeds. There is a tradition of his having achieved reputation as military leader of an expedition against the Ethiopians. The authentic fact is, that he received the best education which the civilised world could give, and was known as a capable man in speech and action. The royal heart which pitied him in his perilous cradle had thus been faithful to her voluntary trust. It may have been a nail of his cross (“the reproach of *Christ*,” He. xi.) to wound that kind heart in breaking with Egypt. His home in that heart may have differed from his second forty years’ experience of Zipporah. Happily, though a poet, he was not sentimental.

11. *In those days* (Sept. *in those many days*—which is not translation, but speculative commentary); *that past-time*. *Grown*: the process in ver. 10 is now completed (“a grown person”). *Brethren*: there is an arbitrary fancy, that up to this time he did not know who or what he was (see under ii. 10). His mother (nurse) was not sworn to secrecy; and was Miriam repressible? *Going out* (inaugural *exodus*) here (cp. He. xi. 23) appears, of deliberate purpose, with a view, under power of Israelitish religious conviction, at the cost of worldly prospects and of natural affections (to those who had befriended him, the princess and others). The royal residence may have been on the Nile’s (Tanaitic) bank; and to the (Goshen) Israelites he may have been personally a stranger. *Brethren*: mark the emphasis of iteration: cp. “thy brother” in Lu. xv. The whole question of life may turn on this (Mat. xxv. 40). The new kingdom is always a *family* (He. xiii. 1), though it may expand through nationality into the widest imperialism (I Co. i. 2; Eph. iii. 15). *Their burdens*. Painful sight to one who honoured them as sons of God! The word for *burdens* here (*sibhlôth*) is found (cp. “riches”) only in plur.; and means (see under i. 13, 14), *wearing oppressive labours*. Moses may have seen the condition at its worst, when he was fresh from “the treasures of Egypt.” *That* what he was embracing (Mat. xvi. 18-26). *He spied*: looked on (so in Rev. Vers.). *An—brother*. (1) A blow, to a man, as if it had been a dog. (2) This to a son of Abraham, a child of the covenant, a brother-prince with Moses in the royalty of heaven. And that (3) by an Egyptian, an unclean outsider! *to the face* of Moses, as if in insulting defiance to the Hebrew favourite of the princess. 12. *He looked*: lit. *faced* or *turned*: perhaps we see here, agitation of a strong sensitive nature. *Slew*: *smote*. A common word for *smite* has here the effect of *slew*, because in this case it is, like the laws, “a dead hand.” *Buried*: *hid*. Not regularly interred, but simply concealed. A sand-storm, which chokes a man, may thus bury him in drift. If the work was a quarry, there might be a mass of shingle and sand as “tailing.” Moses might hope,

13 and hid him in the sand. And when he went out the second day, behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow? And he said, Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian? And Moses feared, and said, Surely this thing is known. Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian: and he sat down by a well.

if there should be discovery, that the death would be ascribed to accident. But—13. *And when—behold: and he went out the following day—and lo!* (“events thicken”). *That did the wrong:* “Satan rebuking sin.” *Thy fellow: thy neighbour* (the word in Tenth Commandment). Moses (the law) makes the point, **equality of right**. Sometimes this is better than appeal to claim upon *affection* in brotherhood. God is not “the husband” of the widow, but her “judge.” 14. *Made thee: set thee.* *Prince* here may mean, vaguely, a great person (“grandee”), with reference to official title to meddle. The *judge (Shôphet)* appears to be an Hebrew official. Though Pharaoh’s taskmasters were over them for revenue purposes (cp. the N. T. “publicans”), the Hebrews may, as in Palestine under the Romans, have been allowed to keep order among themselves by means of their own constitutions. The *killing* here is plainly **murder**, under the Sixth Commandment: that is, a private person killing one under the protection of the law. *Thou killedst:* a Hebrew slave, with a loose tongue, and an angry envious heart, is in the circumstances a dangerous acquaintance, making unsafe residence in Pharaoh’s land. *Feared—known.* There was an Egyptian law which made it a capital crime—as if accessory to the fact—to look at a murder without attempting to save the violated life. But this plea might not clear Moses:—(1) The sufferer may not have been threatened with *death* by his assailant; (2) The assailant may have been his owner, with power of life and death by law; (3) Can a *slave* have *any* rights? and (4), and above all, Ought not *the Hebrews* to be repressed in every way? To an *Egyptian* judge or jury, these reasons might be strong. 15. *Sought to slay Moses.* The turn of expression has a look of **cautious planning**, not imperial; as if Moses really were an important personage. The expression in ver. 14 may not represent merely the petulance of an insolent slave, having a fling about “beggars on horseback.” It may have been genuine envy, on account of a real grandeur, which the mean heart hates to see in a brother, and which nevertheless the blinding hatred cannot conceal from the self-torturing baseness.

#### Exercise 5.

1. “Killing no murder.” (1) Would Moses have been justified by foreseeing his own magistracy; and why? (2) Would the Good Samaritan have been justified in hanging the thieves; and why?
2. “Brother” and “fellow,” *love* and *right*. (1) Distinguish between duties of “perfect obligation” and those of “imperfect obligation.” (2) Show how a “judge” may be better than a “husband,” and a policeman than Miss Nightingale.
3. As to impelling motives: (1) State what may have been the real feelings of

16 Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters: and they came and drew *water*, and filled the troughs to water their

Moses which broke out in this action. (2) State what, as compared with these, may have been his real feelings on an occasion of his *literally* "breaking" the law. (3) What *natural character* may have appeared in those two lawless actions? And what *spiritual affections*?

NOTE.—In Egypt the grand problem of humanity, to get men to regard one another as brethren, was artificially aggravated in difficulty by a strong system of *caste*; and the religion gave its force on the side of inhumanity. Moses, who so ardently loved Israel, appears to have experienced little of true personal friendship. His "soul was like a star, and dwelt apart." His theology seems to have created him in the image of God, in respect of a sovereign affection toward those who were not naturally lovely. His first word is about equity. His first action was justice (unauthorized). His great work was law. And he passionately loved. All the elements came to be harmonized in him. But he took a long time to "grow" (vers. 10, 11); more than twice forty years.

(ii. 16–22.) THE SECLUSION OF MIDDLE LIFE.—This is the first of three famous *forties*, measuring periods of seclusion: the last, being that of the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness; and the second, being that of the only prophet who is named in the same breath with Moses; the one who is associated with him in a certain mystery of disappearance from the world, and of reappearance "in glory" upon the Mount of Transfiguration, conversing with Christ (Mk. ix.) about His *exodus* ("decease," Lu. ix. 32) which He should accomplish at Jerusalem. Only, the Mosaic Seclusion was of *long* days (years), while that of Christ and of Elias extended only to the short days. The long period may have been profitable for subduing the Mosaic temperament; Nu. xii. 3—where "meek" may really mean, "*sat upon*," which, however, did not attain to the mellow sweetness of St. Peter: "Old age ne'er cooled the Douglas' blood," cp. De. xxxiv. 7. But irrespectively of any speciality of the individual temperament of Moses, we know that seclusion often goes before great action: the arrow is drawn backward before it is launched by the bowman.

16. *Midian* (under xviii. 1, 27). Moses was here among kinsfolk, as the Midianites were sprung from Abraham. Their *land—country* or region—lay mainly beyond the Ailanitic Gulf, on the east of the Sinaitic Peninsula (see in *Introduction*, "Theatre of Events"). Moses must have taken some such route through Sinai from Goshen as Israel took forty years after. He did not need to pass through the Red Sea: he could go round the head of it along the Isthmus of Suez; when he may for once have touched the soil of Canaan, in the South. Those Midianites whom Moses joined are supposed to have resided mainly beyond the Akabah Gulf; which is narrow as a Scottish Highland salt-water "Loch." There may, by ferrying across, or travelling round the head of this gulf, have been continuous connection with the Peninsula on the west side of the gulf, where Moses will be found shepherding forty years after. One individual or tribe might have flocks on both sides of the narrow sea. Or the same flock might be taken from the one side to the other for convenience of pasturage. The largest conceivable amount of transportation in that condensed neighbourhood would be as nothing in comparison with

17 father's flock. And the shepherds came and drove them  
 away: but Moses stood up and helped them, and watered  
 18 their flock. And when they came to Reuel their father, he  
 19 said, How *is it that* ye are come so soon to-day? And they  
 said, An Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shep-  
 herds, and also drew *water* enough for us, and watered the  
 20 flock. And he said unto his daughters, And where *is* he?  
 why *is it that* ye have left the man? call him, that he may  
 21 eat bread. And Moses was content to dwell with the man:  
 22 and he gave Moses Zipporah his daughter. And she bare  
*him* a son, and he called his name Gershom: for he said, I  
 have been a stranger in a strange land.

what is familiar in more spacious domains. But great history can go into little space in humble guise (—a manger). *Dwelt—sat down*. The same word in both places: lit. *sat*: thus our “sit” passes both into “set” and into “settle.” *A well*: lit. “the well.” Perhaps “the well” known to those who knew that region. Or perhaps simply (like “the post-office”) “the *well*” of a township or encampment or pastoral station. In any case, it was where Moses naturally rested from his journeying (cp. Jn. iv. 1-42). 17. The incident here is substantially a recurrence of Jacob's experience in Ge. xxix. 1, etc. It may not have been of very rare occurrence in that condition of society. *Priest*: to suggest *prince* is needless here. The word (*cohen*) is the customary one for priest; and there is nothing to forbid the supposition that Raguel was distinctively *the* priest of Midian, or *a* priest of Midian; as Melchisedek had been of Salem. And there is nothing to necessitate the supposition that he was, like Melchisedek, a king; a supposition which may seem to be excluded by the conduct of the shepherds; though not by the occupation of his daughters;—for, in those lands, shepherding was not and is not reckoned unfit for daughters of such a local grandee, whether priest or prince (Imâm or Sheykh). Our distinction between “priest” and “prince” has hardly any meaning in a *patriarchal* society, where the chief is sacred head in all things. *Reuel*: lit. *friend* (or *fellow*) of *God*. From this and other circumstances it has been thought that Raguel, like Melchisedek, served the true God; Moses may thus have found himself spiritually at home among Midianites. (On *Raguel*, *Jethro*, *Hobab*, see under iii. 1.) 18, 19. *Egyptian*:—say, in dress, manners, speech (Mk. xiv. 70). In Egypt a Hebrew could be distinguished from an Egyptian: in Midian they might see no difference, as in France they may see no difference between an Englishman and a Scotchman. *Out of the hands*: not literally. The *enough* is not expressly in the Heb. 20. *And where—man?* In the Heb. there is energetic rapidity (“on hospitable thoughts intent”): thus,—**But his where? What for this—ye have left the man? Eat bread** (cp. Lu. xiv. 15 and Lu. xv. 2). *Bread* is for **the whole feast**: “denominatio fit a majori.” 21. *Was content*: **consented**. No doubt, he was requested. *Zipporah*: lit. bird. She does not make a pleasing impression. When her husband was in desperate trouble with God, she wounded him: he sent her back to her friends, who afterwards sent her back to him. Was there ungenial hardness, as well as maidenly reserve, in what occasioned her father's rebuke, ver. 20? *Gershom*. It is now supposed that this is

23 And it came to pass, in process of time, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried; and their cry came up unto

a form of an Egyptian word, *Gershon*; and that the allusion to the Heb. *ger* (stranger) and *shôm* (there) is not founded on etymology, but only suggested by the Egyptian sound of the words (perhaps Moses, who was not a schoolmaster, but a man and a father, did not care). The feeling, of melancholy tenderness, represented by the name, finds expression in song such as "Jerusalem the Golden." The word *parishioner* originally meant, "sojourner;" so that "Gershom" was involved in the common description of Christians.

#### Exercise 6.

1. Give other cases of seclusion, introductory to a great career. (1) In O. T. history, (2) In N. T. history, (3) In General Church History.
2. (1) State in what manner seclusion may operate upon the mind in preparing for such a career. (2) Illustrate from the national seclusion of Israel in Sinai.
3. (1) Show how seclusion may operate unwholesomely, disabling for a great career. (2) Refer to cases of violence to the nature of man under the name of separation from the world.

NOTE.—The wholesome discipline of solitude may be kept out of life by abuse of blessings. Thus (1) pleasant social intercourse allowed to exclude meditation alone with God. (2) Beneficent outgoing activity allowed to exclude quiet exercise of soul, so that Christian work is a noisy and shallow evasion of Christian life. (3) Reading books only of the Martha class, not those of the Mary type: stirring objective interest alone sought, not calm reflective depth. (4) Theological thinking that is only intellectual, not intuitional; discussion without contemplation; strenuousness without devotion.

(ii. 23-25.) GLANCE AT CONTEMPORARY HISTORY.—The cases of individuals, like Melchisedek and Raguel, drawn through their outward connection with the seed of promise into visible relationship to the kingdom of God (under xviii. 9), suggest the thought that, outside of the visible kingdom, there may be individuals who are reached by the mercy of the King. Their solitariness, and disappearance from influence in after history, illustrate the value of visible ordinances, and a visible society, for the retention and transmission of the religion. In the glance at Israel's condition, the historian may be reproducing here what was exercising the mind and heart of Moses at the time. In all the Bible history there is nothing about these Egyptian settlements, on the west side of the Sinaitic Peninsula, which are known to have existed before the exodus period. Moses (cp. Ex. iv. 14) is likely to have kept in the knowledge of Israel's experience in Goshen, even though there should have been Egyptians in Sinai ("underground railway").

23. *In process of time*: lit. **in those many days**. *The king—died*. This may have been, at the close of a very long reign:—*e.g.* as has been thought, of Rameses II. But it is not really known who was this king. The point

24 God by reason of the bondage. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, 25 with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel ; and God had respect unto *them*.

made in the history is, that the exile of Moses had lasted forty years—when there was a change of king in Egypt. Could it be the king in i. 8? He was of an age to oppress eighty years before this. The one *from whom Moses fled* may have been a successor of that oppressor. *Pharaoh is found only in Egyptian and in Scripture usage.* This betrays, in the Scripture writer, an intimacy with ancient Egypt that is wanting in ancient Greece and Rome. The etymology of the word has been variously explained. In Scripture usage it is equivalent to “the king of Egypt”—cp. “the Czar,” “the Sultan.” In the Greek-Egyptian empire, it gave place to “the Ptolemies.”

23. *Sighed.* This is *vague* distress. But the continuance of oppression works it toward a *pointed* articulation:—*Cried—cry.* The Heb. words are not the same. That for *cried* is indefinite—a sound of distress. That for *cry* is a *call*—as if, to some one for help, *unto God*: doubtless, the true God of their fathers (cp. Ps. lxxviii. 34). 24. *Heard—remembered.* Striking anthropomorphisms. But that is not all (cp. Mat. viii. 24). In fact, the *overt action* of God in helping *waits* for the overt action of man calling for help (cp. iii. 7, etc.). This is a rule of divine procedure in human experience (Ps. xxxii. 1-5). *His covenant—Jacob* (on the *oath*, see under vi. 8). On *Covenant*, see *Introd.* God's Covenant with the Patriarchs had three promises:—(1) Generally, that their seed should possess Canaan; (2) Specially (Ge. xv. 13-16) the deliverance from Egypt; (3) Above all, the grand fundamental (Ge. xii. 3) of blessing through them and that seed to mankind.

25. *Had respect unto.* The primary meaning of the word is, *to know.* This would make a meaning, full and impressive without the *them* which our translators have added. *God looked on them; and knew* (under vi. 3). The *knowing* means, not simply acquaintance with the circumstances of their condition, but compassionate *appreciation* of it (Ps. ciii. 11-14):—He entered into their case, and looked into their heart.

#### Exercise 7.

1. Compare the stoical maxim, that pain is no evil, with the Bible view as to pain.
2. In the experience of Christ show, (1) reality of evil in pain, (2) its working for good.
3. Give Scripture illustration of a use of evil in leading men to God.

**NOTE on “Anthropomorphism” of compassion.** It is like figurative speech. Figurative speech is not meaningless, but presents the meaning in a figure. Anthropomorphic sorrow is sorrow in human form. But it *is* sorrow in the bosom of God. That is incomprehensible to us. It is “anthropomorphic” in Christ weeping over Jerusalem. So, in the sympathy of Jesus, we see incarnate the pity of the Lord, who toward them that fear Him is like as a father pitying his children. Any *feeling* in God is to us inconceivable. Incarnation, dealing with Israel, shows the feeling as a fact. We do not understand it. Do we understand anything? (Jn. i. 14).



CHAP. III. I. Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the back-side of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, *even*

### The Campaign in Plan: I. CALL OF MOSES (Chap. iii.).

In the **Introduction** we have noted similar cases of miraculous manifestation of God, for the personal establishment of men in the faith, on occasions of dependence of God's kingdom on their personal establishment. The three disciples, and Paul, were in the early prime of life when they were thus visited. Jesus and John the Baptist were only thirty when they began their ministries. Moses, eighty years old (Ps. xc. is "of Moses"), may have completely despaired,—excepting one thing, and that, only a vague traditionary word. If the personal conviction and establishment of Moses be a foreshadow and first-fruits of what is to be seen in Israel; on the other hand, the low and lost condition of Israel, in utter depression of spirit and depletion of soul, is that from which the mediator had to be himself raised, before he could become a meet leader and commander.

**NOTE on the three names of Raguel, Jethro (Jèthèr in the Heb. of Ex. iv. 18), and Hobab.**—There is a difficulty in making out what persons they belong to respectively. The following are **the facts** in the case.—(1) The "father-in-law" in Nu. x. 29 may be, not Hobab but Raguel. (2) The word (*chôthen*) there translated "father-in-law" really means, *any* relation by marriage: thus, in Ex. iv. 25, 26, the *chôthen* is **husband**; and in Ge. xix. 12, a **son-in-law**. (3) All the three names have a meaning in common, or a similarity of meaning, such as if they had all belonged to one person variously regarded. Thus *Raguel* (*Reuel*), "friend of God;" *Jethro*, "excellency;" *Hobab*, "beloved." No **explanation** that has been suggested is clear. *E.g.* (1) That the Raguel of Ex. ii. 18 was grandfather of the "daughters" in ver. 16; *father* being employed (cp. "daughter of Levi" in ii. 1) in the sense of "progenitor." This is not rigorously excluded by Heb. usage of the word; but it does not fit well (dovetail) into the narrative there, ii. 16-21. (2) That he was the father of Hobab, and that the *chôthen* (in our Vers., *father-in-law*) in Nu. x. 29 (and Ju. iv. 11) should be, *brother-in-law*. This view is widely received among scholars. (3) That the *Jethro* of our text is the *Raguel* of ii. 18: the one name being a title of honour, and the other, the proper name of the same person. We need not, for comprehension of the history, decide between these explanations. The point, as regards the history, is the clear fact, of close relationship to Moses through affinity. The (2) explanation has commended itself to scholars as being the least difficult. But there is no difficulty in comprehending *the history* without any explanation of this matter.

**The direct intimation** (iii. 1-10).—In our time shepherds, of the eastern low country there, at the beginning of the season take their flocks west, to the central uplands of Sinai, where there is moisture and consequently grass. *Horeb* here may not be a particular summit or mount, but the mountain **range** or **system** in which the Sinai Mount is an individual. The description, *Mountain of God*, occurs repeatedly afterwards (Ex. xviii. 5; 1 Ki. xix. 8). Here it is given *after* the manifestation of divine presence; which (cp. ver. 5) may have been the occasion of its receiving that name of sacredness. The suggestion that Horeb had a reputation of sacredness before this consecration is countenanced by the discovery of an ancient Pagan chapel there, with an inscription that speaks of a pilgrimage thither,

2 to Horeb. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush *was*

of a time as early as Abraham's. (*Benledi* in Perthshire, Scotland, is supposed to mean Beinn-le-Dē—"Hill of God," and to have been given to the mountain in pre-Christian times, as a name of druidical sacredness.)

1. *Kept: was herding*—his habit of life. *The flock*: the Heb. here means only, **small cattle**—which might include sheep and goats. Oxen and horses are not in the present day pastured on Sinai. *To—the desert*: on the way to the (well-known) **pasturage**. *To the back side: round along the skirts*, as far as to (the individual mountain) Horeb; from Midian westward (beyond the Akabah Gulf). 2. *The angel*: or, **an angel**. The word (*mal'ach*) means **messenger**, and thus, **minister or administrator** (cp. "angel" of the churches in Re., and 1 Co. xi. 10). In ver. 4, in place of *angel* we find *God*. This has been explained as meaning, that an angel is **representative** of God (cp. Jn. x. 35). A widely prevalent view, especially in the Primitive Church, has been, that in this case, and not a few other cases in Scripture, the angel *is* God. That view is naturally associated with the Scripture doctrine of that *Word* which is God (Jn. i. 1-3); and whose incarnation (Jn. i. 14) results to us in the manifestation of God (Jn. i. 18, ii. 11)—like the luminous flame in that bush (cp. Jn. i. 4, 5, 9, 10). **Hebrews**, when (Lev. ix. 18-36) they come to know Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the Living God, can (He. i. 3) see a native propriety in His being made angel of **manifestation**, if (Phi. ii. 6-10) He stoop to "the form of a servant." **THE LORD: Jehovah** (on the word and thing, see *Introduction*).

**NOTE on the Scripture use of the two names "Jehovah" and "Elohim."**—It has been supposed, that there was a fundamental narrative, which has been incorporated in the Pentateuch, that was written before the name "Jehovah" came into use; and it has been endeavoured, by occurrence of this name in the existing Scripture, to show what parts of it belong to that fundamental document, and what have been added in the further composition of the existing Scripture. It is maintained, that there has been no such agreement in results as to warrant confidence in the process. In the present narrative, of the first appearance of the great **Name**, it is employed **seven** times; and the common name for *God* (*Elohim*, which may mean also "gods") occurs **twenty** times. Upon any supposition as to the history of the origin of the Scripture, there may be expected in it a certain distinction in the use of the two names:—**Jehovah** (**THE LORD**) being preferred where there is some reference to His covenant relationship to mankind; and **God** (*Elohim*) when the reference is simply to His natural relationship to the universe. It would be an interesting exercise to trace, in the New Testament Scriptures, the distinction in the use of the two names, "Jesus" and "Christ." In many places, where there is no special reference to what is distinctive in the meaning of the name, it may be impossible for us to determine, excepting in the way of guesswork, why the one name is employed here rather than the other. And in guesswork the witnesses do not agree except in injuring the truth.

**A bush**: lit. *the sēneh*,—supposed to be a thorny shrub, a species of acacia, common in that wilderness. Since it is God who "worketh all in all," while He "fillet all in all," a devout naturalist may in every plant see a Burning Bush, the localized Omnipresence of Him, in whom we "live, and move, and have our being." But what Moses saw was a **wonder—extra-**

- 3 not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and  
 4 see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when  
 the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto  
 him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses.  
 5 And he said, Here *am* I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither :  
 put off thy shoes from off thy feet ; for the place whereon thou

ordinary supernatural. The suggestion of what is only ordinary extinguishes *that* flame. It is notable that the manifestation of present deity was, not through the majestic oak or cedar, but through a common shrub of the wilderness (Is. liii. 1-3 ; Phi. ii. 6-8). *Fire*: both as glowing (De. iv. 24, cp. He. xii. 29) and as luminous (1 Jn. i. 5, cp. Jn. i. 9), is a natural symbol of deity, even among heathens. (The Scotch tongue has the word *beltane*, which means "Baal-fire," druidical ; and the boys' bonfire of a certain season is *sanntag*—the "peace-fire"—which may be near the skirts of *Ben-le-di*—"hill of God.") As heat, it symbolizes holiness—under the two aspects of purity and love. The purity, which (Ps. cx. 4) is love's loveliness, may operate as a consuming resentment of wrath against sin, and thus, in administrative righteousness, be vindicating justice. The love may (He. xii. 5-8) make the loved ones pass through fire. But the gold is not consumed ; the dross is. The burning without consuming is significant of the true Israel's destination (cp. 2 Co. iv. 4-11). 3. *Burnt*: what is obviously meant is, the ordinary effect of fire on wood. The absence of *that* is what makes the miracle, "wonder," *great sight* (cp. Mat. xi. 4, 5 ; Jn. xv. 20). Moses does not imagine he has made a surprising discovery in natural history ;—as, *asbestos* of our *asbestos plant*. It is the *sēnēh*. If he think it is a rare freak of nature (*lusus naturæ*), the *voice* will "correct" him (2 Ti. iii. 16). 4. THE LORD—*God* (see under iii. 2). The occurrence of the two names in one breath might be paraphrased thus :—"The Redeemer, to whom Moses was drawing near, spoke as the Creator." *Moses, Moses* (cp. Jn. x. 3) : iteration of urgency, here, in warning (cp. Ge. xxii. 11), has the Mosaic temperament to be restrained even here. *Here am I*: ready!—to hear (Ge. xxii. 11) ; —to obey? (1 Sa. iii. 4-10). 5. *Draw not nigh*: with shoes on feet—*i.e.* sandals ; (which in Egypt may have been richly adorned, but may be simple enough in Sinai). The ceremony of putting them off before approaching an important person is still adhered to in the East, even on occasion of an ordinary visit—the sandals being kept in the anteroom (cp. our removing the hat). On the Egyptian monuments are seen that ceremonial in approaching the king, who is a sort of God. Both now and then it has been deemed indispensable in drawing near to deity. It is by some thought that the meaning is, self-abasement (cp. Phi. ii. 7. In Homer's *Odyssey* a gentleman, wishing to appear in his full rank, puts on his sandals :—otherwise, he would so far be "in the form of a servant"). A more obvious meaning is (cp. He. x. 22 ; Re. xxii. 11, 17), purity, cleanness. With the shoes there is left behind that dust, or impurity of earth, which is collected in walking on earth's ways. Hence the laver on the way into the Holy Place (cp. Jn. xiii. 1-11). *Holy ground*: that spot (cp. the *tapu* of Polynesian heathenism : superstition is religious feeling misdirected—Act. xvii. 22). The reason for restriction of sanctity to particular places is now (Jn. iv. 21) done away in Christ. But the principle remains, that the place where God is manifested is (alone) holy (cp. politicians and others making "holy places" where the

- 6 standest *is* holy ground. Moreover he said, I *am* the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.
- 7 And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which *are* in Egypt, and have heard their cry by  
 8 reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and

manifestation is *departed!*). 6. *Moreover*: lit. **and** (see under i. 1). *Fathers*: the correct reading is *father*,—meaning, collectively, **paternity**, the (patriarchal) fatherhood: **expanded** in, *of Abraham—Jacob*: (“**God of our fathers**”). *Hid his face*: so Elijah, on the same “Mount of God” (Ex. xxxiii. 20; 1 Ki. xix. 13, cp. 8). Even among heathens, it was a saying, that none could see God and live. Their **panic** terror was originally, fright occasioned by perceiving *Pan*, the universal being (of deity), cp. Lu. v. 8, and Jn. xiii. 6, 12. *By reason of*: lit. **from the face of**,—as if the cry were uttered in the terror of a descending lash. *Taskmasters*: **oppressors**, the word is not that in i. 11 (see note there). It points to the subordinates, who were in personal contact with Israel: *God sees* what so moved Moses forty years ago! 8. *A good land*: the description is expanded in De. viii. 7–10, where it is said to be an exact description of the Middle Island of New Zealand. Canaan has withered under “the unspeakable Turk.” To Israel in the wilderness, the description must have appeared as of a heaven on earth (cp. 1 Pe. i. 4). *Milk and honey*: **grass** and **flowers**: Palestine was famous for both. The two—meaning wealth and beauty—are found in Pagan descriptions of a good land—*e.g.* a native Egyptian poet’s description of Goshen before the time of Moses. The Redeemer gave to Israel the Creator’s best. *Honey*, however, may be produced by the grape-bee, as well as by the flower-bee. *Large* (comparatively): **wide** or **spacious**. Egypt, for a “world-empire,” was astonishingly contracted. The main original “Egypt” (Upper Egypt, above the Delta) was only an oasis in the desert, seldom ten miles broad, and on the average about half of that, an extremely narrow green ribbon stretched across a surface of sand and rock, with a silver thread (of Nile) running along the middle of its length. That, in a boundless desert! In fertile Goshen the great population must have been close packed. Palestine, though not much larger than Wales, was in David’s time capable of accommodating some five millions, in great happiness of plenty (1 Ki. iv. 20, 25). The *ideal* Canaan, the land of promise (Ge. xv. 18–20), appears to have extended (Ps. lxxii.) far beyond, to the Euphrates. And in Israel’s realization, the failure was in respect of moral conditions on their part. It was ungodliness that made Canaan, not too narrow for them, but too hot. *Unto—Jebusites*. The peoples may have been well known in Egypt, the land of statistical accounts. Of those which were named to Abraham (Ge. xv. 18–20), some, in the intervening lapse of time, may have fallen out of conspicuousness. As to those mentioned here we note—(1) *Canaanites* may be a general description,

the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the  
 9 Jebusites. Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of  
 Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression  
 10 wherewith the Egyptians oppress them. Come now therefore,  
 and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring  
 forth my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.

as we would say "Palestinians:" specifically, *the* "Canaanites" were situated in the low lands of the Jordan valley and the Mediterranean coast. (2) *Hittites* (of "Heth"), toward the north. In the monumental history of Egypt, there appears before this time (see *Introd.*) a strong Hittite power (empire or confederation), in that North Syria, with which Pharaoh goes to war. (3) *Amorites*, mountaineers on both sides of the Jordan. *Perizzites*, scattered up and down, in little detached settlements, perhaps more or less "nomadic" (such is the condition of Maoris in the Middle Island of New Zealand). *Hivites*, to the north-east, wealthy and unwarlike. *Jebusites* retained their stronghold (which became "Jerusalem") till it was taken by storm in David's time: as long after the exodus as we are from Bannockburn! That first wrestling (cp. Eph. vi. 10, etc.) with heathenism for the good land was thus arduously protracted. 9. *I have seen*: **overt action** of the oppression (on **overt** action see under ii. 23-25). 10. *To Pharaoh*. Israel's departure is not to be by stealth (cp. Act. xvi. 37), but in a manner becoming the honour of Jehovah (thus in Ex. iv. 22, xiii. 18, xiv. 8). *I will send thee*: **thee will I send**. Perhaps Moses is asking himself, What is to be done for their deliverance, who is to go? (Mat. ix. 37).

NOTE on the expression, "the people" of God.—This description, already employed, is henceforward appropriated through all the revelation of grace (cp. 1 Pe. ii. 9, where "a peculiar people" means a people that is *distinctively God's own*, like the home-farm of a great landowner, or the Prussian kingdom of the North German emperor). This distinction, as represented by the Bible use of words, is better marked in the Revised Version than in the Authorized. On the one hand, the Heb. *am*, Gr. *laos*, which in itself means simply a people, is so employed as to have the distinctive significance of *the* people, *Jehovah's*, the "holy" nation (Ex. xix. 6). On the other hand, words whose native significance is not more vague than that of *am* or *laos*, come to mean (by contrast), not a nation in the sense of a constituted people, but only a population (if not, a populace, cp. Ps. ii. 1); as if the communities in view, having no true principle of living collective unity, were a mere *débris* of human-kind, like the sand in which Moses buried the Egyptian. The Gipsies in Britain, in so far as they are not of the nation, represent that "heathen" (*die Heiden*, "the heathfolk") into which our translators have rendered *ethné*, Gr. for "peoples" or "races;" and our "Gentiles" (*gentes*), though natively it means simply "races" or peoples, in our mind has that meaning of "heathen." (In Homer, it is *infamous* not to be of a people.)

#### Exercise 8.

1. Write a hymn entitled—"Song of the Bush."
2. "The beginning of philosophy is wonder." (1) Show what precisely was the "wonder" in the bush. (2) Show where and why the "philosophy" there had to become "theology." (3) What had the wonder and the terror to do with religion in life?
3. By what right (1) are the Palestinian peoples to be expelled from their land? and (2) the Hebrews to expel them, and take possession of it?

11 And Moses said unto God, Who *am* I, that I should go  
 12 unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of  
 Israel out of Egypt? And he said, Certainly I will be with  
 thee; and this *shall be* a token unto thee, that I have sent  
 thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt,

4. For the conquest of Canaan, what military advantage will there be in entering it by the way of the Jordan, instead of from the wilderness in the south?

NOTE on the **tenure and occupation of Canaan**. — Israel held of Jehovah under a sort of Covenant of works. This occasions confusion, to those who will not distinguish it from the Abrahamic Covenant of grace;—the veil on the face of Moses, from the shining face behind the veil. It does not appear that Israel was ever straitened in Canaan through overcrowd of population. The difference, in respect of capacity for population, that may arise from difference in modes of occupancy, may appear incredible. Under the "Peasant Proprietor" system in France it is found that seven acres are sufficient to occupy a man and support his family, so that he does not need to go out as a hired labourer (*Letters on Land Tenure*, by the late Mr. Joseph Kaye Shuttleworth). In a British colony, with a climate and soil at least as good as France, a settler who has a freehold of an hundred acres will enslave himself with mortgage in order to double or treble his holding. Before the American Civil War, in discussions about the Nebraska territory, it was stated that with free labour it would support a population four times as large as could live there with slave labour. Palestine at present is to some extent a desert through mere neglect, especially want of plantation, which is natural irrigation.

**The Message from the Bush** (iii. 11–22). On the part of Moses there appears, what might be only modesty or diffidence, but what in the next action of his (chap. iv.) becomes disclosed as a languor of faith, amounting to lack of confidence in God. It is with immediate reference to this condition of mind that there is given to Moses, for communication to Israel, and also to Pharaoh, the great NAME of Jehovah. There is an obvious parallel to this in the Transfiguration of Jesus, when Moses and Elias were present, and in the declaration out of the excellent glory, of His being the Beloved Son of God, in anticipation of His *exodus* ("decease," Lu. ix. 31) which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. (See note at close of Chap. I. of *Intro.*) The disciples, of whom the leading three were present, were no doubt terribly shaken by the Lord's foretelling His approaching shameful death; precisely when they had come to the point of Peter's great confession of Him, as being "the Christ, the Son of the Living God." This is the ROCK on which the "Church" is built (Mat. xvi. 18, where the word "church"—*ecclesia*—first occurs). That "Rock" (1 Co. x. 5) was in Sinai at the *exodus* time. And the name of Jehovah is thus historically the analogue of the name of Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God.

11. *Who—Egypt?* Egypt was at this time probably the greatest power on earth, and the only great worldly power of which Moses had real knowledge. It was not only to "beard the lion in his den;" it was as if the infant from among the bulrushes had been sent against an enemy. Pharaoh was the incarnation of earthly power gigantic: Moses, the aged, broken fugitive exile, was impotency. Coming to the rescue of "things which are not." 12. *Certainly—thee*. Into the Heb. the great name, I AM, is seen entering: cp. "I am with you" in Mat. xxviii. 20; and the *τούτῳ νίκα*—"By this, conquer"—which appeared to Constantine the Great, along with the Christian cross, to encourage him to dethrone the Paganism of the Roman empire. The

- 13 ye shall serve God upon this mountain. And Moses said unto God, Behold, *when* I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you ; and they shall say to me, What *is* his name ?
- 14 what shall I say unto them ? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM ; And he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.
- 15 And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you : this *is* my name for ever, and
- 16 this *is* my memorial unto all generations. Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me, saying, I have surely visited you,
- 17 and *seen* that which is done to you in Egypt : and I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto

word here for *I will be* (*ehyeh*) is that from which the great Name in ver. 14 is formed. *Token* : the customary for "sign" (under iv. 6-8), as in Ge. i. 14 and ix. 12. (See on external evidence of miracle, *Introd.*) (1) At the outset, the fixing of that future meeting-place would serve to give confidence to Moses, by showing a **resolute clear purpose** on the part of God, His trumpet blowing no uncertain sound. (2) And especially, in the end, the actual meeting as predicted, evincing a miracle of foresight (cp. Jn. ii. 6), would be a definitive evidence of the divinity of this revelation. So that here we see rhetorical "demonstration" passing into logical. 13. *What is His name ?* to be spoken, say, to the Egyptians ? they, having "gods many," may look for an aspect of deity in keeping with the greatness of the assumption involved in this mission :—a *sun-god, thunder-god, war-god, Fury, Fate*. But no—. 14. (On the same see *Introd.* pp. 67-69.) It is simply, **Israel's God** ; and to the King of Egypt (ver. 18), "the God of the Hebrews." *He* claims to be the only God living and true. So, under the New Testament, at Athens (Act. xvii.), in hearing of the philosophers, as at Lystra (Act. xiv.) among the "barbarians," the claim on behalf of this Redeemer is, that He alone is God Living and True. The Old Testament says, "Jehovah is God ;" and the New, "God was in Christ." All goes back to that Name. 15. *Of your fathers* : this is not Natural theology, but **covenant revelation**. *Name for ever*. The sun of salvation, which now is rising into view, is never to set : what is folded in the name of the Living God and Redeemer, is to be manifested eternally, as the true light of life. *Memorial—generations* (see in *Introd.* on the *monuments* of the Revelation). Probably no one ever used the word Jehovah, when thinking only of a first cause, and not thinking of redemption, Covenant, Israel's God, the Father of Christ. The name cannot be forgotten, and where it is remembered, the thought cannot be merely deistical. "Memory" corresponds to "name," as sunflower to sun. 16, 17. The almost verbatim **repetition** here, of what is so solemnly recorded, has a certain sacramental impressiveness. *Elders* (first appearance of "presbytery") : lit. **the old men**

the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the  
 18 Jebusites, unto a land flowing with milk and honey. And they shall hearken to thy voice: and thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him, The Lord God of the Hebrews hath met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God.

19 And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go,

(*Senatores*, "aldermen," etc.). A natural term of dignity. Among the Israelites, with their tribal organization, the natural representation, of the community in heads of families, was probably complete all through the period of sojourning; and it remained in Israel until the final dissolution of the nation. The constitution, being natural, is found rising spontaneously among communities wholesomely expanding. *Visited: Come to see and consider*—a form which (advantageously) dispenses with *seen* in the last clause. *I have said:—my word is passed* (cp. Is. lv. 10, 11, and *Pilate's* "I have written!"). 18. *And the elders*. In the following narrative they are nowhere expressly mentioned as accompanying Moses into the king's presence: perhaps the historian assumes that it does not need to be specified. *THE LORD God of:* this formula has here its full effect of, *Jehovah*, who *is the God of*—. That by implication really remains in the effect of the formula "the Lord God" through all generations, as the formula "Jesus Christ," though there be distinctly present to the mind only a proper name of the prophet of Nazareth, really has always in it the implication that the Son of Mary is the Christ of God. *The Hebrews* means, "the Crossers"—with reference, presumably, to Abraham's having come across the Jordan into Canaan (he had also "crossed" Euphrates from Mesopotamia). As in ii. 6, it may here be simply the name by which the "strangers and pilgrims" were known by native Egyptians. It is the God of these Crossers, whose proper name seems not worth knowing, who is to summon Pharaoh to do His bidding. For *sacrifice* (xxvii. 1-8, initial note) the word here (*zebech*) is that appropriate to *bleeding* sacrifice—for sin; like Noah's. Here we see that it makes the covenant religion (Ps. l. 5). *Three days' journey* (note under vi. 11). This might mean only, a day for going and a day for returning, along with one clear day for the festival. That would leave the worshippers within reach of the Egyptians, while free from alien intrusion upon their solemnity of worship. Otherwise (note under iii. 1) the proposal of a religious pilgrimage might not have appeared strange to the king. Was the proposal on their part fraudulently deceptive? (1) They did wish to make that pilgrimage for the purpose specified. (2) Perhaps they themselves did not know that they were destined never to return. Do we know what would have happened if Pharaoh had complied with their request? In any case, Pharaoh had no right to know everything (De. xxix. 29). *And I am sure; or, but I know:* the *I*, emphatic; and the *know* ("foreknowledge absolute") reposing or abutting on foreordination—*predixit qui prædestinavit* (what He foretells, He has decreed). *Let you go:* lit. *give you (leave) to go*. Even at last, the permission was not given by the tyrant's will, but extorted from his terror. 20. *Wonders*. See on



20 no, not by a mighty hand. And I will stretch out my hand,  
 and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the  
 21 midst thereof: and after that he will let you go. And I will  
 give this people favour in the sight of the Egyptians: and it  
 shall come to pass, that, when ye go, ye shall not go empty:  
 22 but every woman shall borrow of her neighbour, and of her

miracles in *Introduction*. The word here (*niphèlōth*) has reference (under xxxiv. 10) to the **terrific** in miracle as extraordinary supernatural. The **hand** of Omnipotence is everywhere, sustaining and ruling. It is **stretched out**, where there is distinctly recognisable manifestation of the Almighty in working. The "**finger of God**" (Ex. viii. 19; Lu. xi. 20) is, His power pointed, visibly and distinctly, in an extraordinary manner, in and through a work. The *smite* here is by the connexion made to have the meaning of a **judicial "stroke,"** or "**plague**" (*plague* is Gr. for "stroke"). Cp. on *judgments* under vii. 6. *In the midst thereof*—as if, in the lions' den, breaking their teeth. And more,—by the Plagues and in them, He showed Himself to be **the master of everything in Egypt**,—from the vilest reptile to the man-god on the throne, and the elemental forces of all nature there. The wide sweep of the Plagues was thus demonstrative of the completeness of His sovereignty. The truth is terrible to Egyptians (2 Thess. i. 8; Re. i. 7). 21. Here the providence, which is "ordinary" as not involving miracle, is seen to be "special," as being directed especially for the interest of God's people (Ro. viii. 28). Even when Egypt collectively is persecuting, Egyptians distributively are favouring. *Not go empty* (fulfilling prophecy, Ge. xv. 14). Ulysses was thus favoured by the Phœnicians when he was about to leave them. Alcinous the king went round among the leading people, to move them to liberal contribution. On the other hand, Menelaus enriched himself, on his way home from the Trojan war, by a predatory raid upon Egypt: which would be in Lower Egypt, centuries after the people of the same district were "spoiled" by the Israelites (these pictures of the Heroic Age are from Homer's *Odyssey*). 22. *Jewels*. The word here has also the meaning of **vessels**, or, more vaguely, **articles**. What is meant is, **portable valuables**, to serve in place of coined money, which probably had not come into use so early as the exodus. Of such wealth, the ladies of a household were natural custodiers. *On your sons and daughters*. "Sweets to the sweet." Beautiful things go naturally to youth. The **show** of wealth, in some such way, was almost the only revenue of interest that could be made out of accumulation. Old people are not wise if much in love with ornaments, which in their case is a showy funeral, in bad taste. The Israelitish females will by and by find a pious use for the Egyptian spoils (Ex. xxxviii. 8). But is it honestly come by? *Borrow* (under xii. 35). The Revised Version has, *ask*. Our Authorized Version gave occasion to gainsayers (Jude 10), because they erred, not knowing the dictionary. The Heb. word (*shāal*) is elsewhere (e.g. Ps. ii. 8) rendered simply *ask*, or request. It is **nowhere else made borrow**. One can *ask* a loan, or he can *ask* a free gift. But in this text there is nothing about either loan or gift: what is here is simply the asking. The word for *spoil* here (*natzal*) has not the meaning of purloining or thieving. Its ordinary meaning is **robbing**, taking another's property by **violence**. Such a word is sometimes employed to describe the *effect* of robbery, in leaving bareness or emptiness behind. One who fears he is accepting too much of

that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and ye shall put *them* upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and ye shall spoil the Egyptians.

what is pressed upon him says, "I am robbing you." The Israelites were to obtain the Egyptian wealth for the asking. The meaning is, what had been promised to Abraham, that they would leave Egypt "with great substance;" and also (Ex. vii. 11, xii. 16), that as to the *style* or manner of thus leaving, not poverty-stricken but wealthy, it was not to be that of men-stealing with booty, but that of an army, victorious and glorious (cp. Is. liii. 11). That they were fairly entitled to what they carried away, having worked for it in Egypt, is not to the point. Their having wrought for it did not entitle them to take it dishonestly.

#### Exercise 9.

1. Investing wealth in jewellery. (1) What are the superior advantages of depositing in a Bank? (2) Give a Scripture case of absolutely safe investment. (3) Give a Scripture offer of cent. per cent. interest. (4) Who says, "The best bank is a bank of earth, and the best share a plough-share"?
2. What indications are there in Israel's wilderness history of their having carried wealth out of Egypt?
3. Supernatural revelation (1) with reference to Ex. iii. Does the miracle prove the doctrine and the doctrine prove the miracle? Explain. (2) "Plagues" on Egypt: how could these make Psalms for Israel—that is, be occasion of suitable feelings for expression in praise of God?

NOTE on "spoiling" the Egyptians.—The disappearance of *borrow* makes antiquated, like the notes of a Bank that is broken, much of questionable casuistry. It is not wholesome not to think a thief is worse than a robber, as the compound falsehood of a white lie is worse than the simple falsehood of a black one. But when that cloud is removed we can say with a good grace, that the "spoiling" is whitened by the fact, that the Israelites had far more than worked for what they carried away with them. If Odysseus had not earned his presents by his wonderful stories, it might not have been honourable on his part to allow the simple good people's kindness to enrich him; and it would have been mean to take advantage of his favour with the king, who brought the gentle pressure of his sovereignty to bear upon the contributions. A voluntary taxation to pay a public debt of honour, is perhaps one correct description of the "spoiling."

#### The Campaign in Plan: 2. SENDING OF MOSES (Chap. iv.).

The actual warfare does not begin until Moses is face to face with the Egyptians and Pharaoh. The work which we find at the close of this chapter is only a completion of the preparation for that warfare. For, as we have seen, it is in the plan that Israel should accompany Moses, so that through this mediator the petitioner to Pharaoh should be Israel, as represented by the elders of the people. The fundamental preparation consists (2 Ti. iii. 17) in the completed equipment of the mediator himself. And, now that he has received his message, in revelation from God and of God, the completed preparation is, for the effective deliverance of that message. This is important for us, beyond the immediate interest of the exodus history; because it

CHAP. IV. 1. And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice : for they will say,

is the beginning of such communications from heaven to mankind on this side of the flood. That is to say, Moses now is the first that has been sent by God with a public message from heaven to man upon the earth. It is of deep interest for us to mark in what manner that communication is made. For the manner of the communication in this "leading" case may prepare us for appreciating, for rightly apprehending, the manner of such communications afterwards, from the same God, through other men, such as the Apostles and the prophets, or through Jesus Christ Himself, who is the chief cornerstone. For it stands to reason, that the manner that is good for one case shall be suitable for all. And in the present case, the manner is exhibited with an unprecedented vividness and fulness ; such that it appears to be intentionally set before us as the typical case, on which we ought to found our conceptions of the manner of a communication from God to a community of men, outside of His kingdom as well as inside of it. (There is the same vivid presentation of *prophecy* as of "miracle.")

With reference to the manner of the communication, the two points are, respectively, of external evidence, and of utterance ; the credentials of the ambassador, and his eloquence ; the seal upon the letter, and the style of composition. The external evidence brought into view is miracle. The utterance brought into view is prophecy. They are both exhibited, not only as gifts of God, but as being expressly designed to meet the wants of men ; so that the message may be believed, and fairly come to the mind and heart of those receiving it. For a view of the evidential office of miracle and prophecy in connection with the general system of religion, see Introduction.

**The miraculous attestation** (iv. 1-10). It is worth observing how complete and clear is the pictorial or dramatic definition of a miracle that here is given in the first appearance of such a thing in the world. A vast amount of wasted labour of thought, or of utterance, would have been saved, if men had carefully considered what is clearly exhibited in this picture, of what the Apostles finally expressed as involving the nature of "signs, and wonders, and mighty works." (1) This is a "sign." That very name is the one here given on the first occasion, repeatedly (ver. 8). And the thing is distinctly brought into view by the representation, that the purpose of the working is demonstration, visible proof, that men may believe. (2) "The wonder," or extraordinariness, is essential. If either Israel or the Egyptians imagine that the serpent is the work of a snake-charmer, or, that the purification is the work of natural medicine, then the interest is gone, the thing in question is not there at all ; both Egypt and Israel will be, not convinced, but disgusted, and perhaps enraged, by quackery. (3) Moses himself sees in the miracle an element of terror. It is not the less terrific, but the more so, to those who are against Jehovah. For the "mighty," when it is seen to be really supernatural, is in the connection understood as showing that Jehovah, working in this movement, is the Living God.

1. *They will not believe me.* Moses states what appears to him likely from

- 2 The Lord hath not appeared unto thee. And the Lord said unto him, What *is* that in thine hand? And he said, A rod.
- 3 And he said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before
- 4 it. And the Lord said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it,

the nature of the case. Taking Israel only into view, though the Egyptians really have to be considered, we observe, that Moses is a stranger to the Israelites, an aged man, who has not been seen among them for forty years; and the sort of thing he has to speak of, the very substance of his message, supernatural revelation, has not been among them, probably, for four hundred years. Besides, even when there was such revelation, in the case of Jacob and the other Patriarchs, the revelation was received personally by those who were to believe it. There never before has been since the flood a proposal to induce the community to believe in a revelation that has been received by an individual in their absence. The case is a new one. And Moses himself may have no distinct conception how it is to be provided for. He may never have thought of miracle, as a ground of other men's believing in what has been revealed to one man, until he saw and felt the miracle.

2. *A rod*: the rod of Moses was simply the **shepherd's staff** which was in his hand. The Pastoral Staff of St. Fillan, sent home some years ago from America to the Antiquarian Society of Scotland, had for many generations been secretly preserved by a family of hereditary custodiers. It has in those generations come to be overlaid, and almost buried out of sight, by reverential adornments. But the simple original fact is, that it was a **walking-stick**; just as the Bell, of this and that early evangelist, is natively a **cow-bell**, exactly of the type which can now be purchased in a store near a new colonial settlement. The staff of Moses played a great part afterwards **as a symbol**. A shepherd is a commander, and his staff is thus meet symbol of authority; as prophet, Moses was "a schoolmaster" (Gal.), whose *ferula* is essential to his office; and, in the person of Aaron, there had to be a special abiding directorship of worship, symbolized by the preserved rod in the ark. But the significance and value did not depend upon any virtue in that staff. On the contrary, it was important, if not essential, that there should be nothing in the staff but an ordinary walking-stick.

3, 4. Here the emphasis, which is not allowed to fall upon a thing so insignificant as a walking-stick in an old man's hand, is laid upon the right place. What we see is, "the rod of God" (iv. 20). Egyptian snake-charmers may (vii. 11, 12) make a serpent stiffen into a stick, and "reverse the spell," recalling it into sinuous lubricity. And that may have to be dealt with when it meets this movement. In the meantime, there is here in Sinai solitude no sleight-of-hand conjuror nor quack thaumaturgist. There is nothing but wild nature—and, nature's God. Moses is sincerely wonder-stricken and terror-stricken. As for the serpent, which may prove to be a symbol of something, what this veteran shepherd sees, with eyes that are remarkably good, is, that the serpent is of a species deadly poisonous. It may be trying to his nerve to lay hold of it by the *tail*, leaving the poisonous head free to turn round—and strike. But there is a profounder terror here, which long afterwards will shake a fisherman (Lu. v. 1-11) at the simple sight of fishes.

- 5 and it became a rod in his hand : that they may believe that the Lord God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee.
- 6 And the Lord said furthermore unto him, Put now thine hand into thy bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom : and when he took it out, behold, his hand *was* leprous as
- 7 snow. And he said, Put thine hand into thy bosom again. And he put his hand into his bosom again ; and plucked it out of his bosom, and, behold, it was turned again as his *other*
- 8 flesh. And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the first sign, that they will
- 9 believe the voice of the latter sign. And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe also these two signs, neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take of the water of the river,

It is the manifested power of God, in a work that is extraordinary supernatural ; showing Himself as if on His way to fulfilment of the first Gospel-preaching (Ge. iii. 15). So that perhaps Moses may bruise the head of serpents, as Peter will afterwards be a fisher of men. 5. *That they—unto thee.* The miracle is thus to be directed in the first instance to **Israel**. The purpose is, that they may believe in **Moses**. And the particular thing which they are to believe is, the reality of **supernatural revelation**, of God as the Covenant God—the **Gospel**. 6–8. The second miracle (cp. Jn. iv. 54 in its connection with Jn. ii. 1–11) is to be **cumulative** in effect ! the whole, in case of need, is (ver. 10) to culminate in yet a third. The mere succession of strokes, as of a hammer, will accomplish what one stroke might not. But here, as in the series of the plagues, there is a progression in the **greatness** of the work : as to the result ;—the power in all alike is infinite. *Leprosy* was the most terrible disease known to Israel. The *white* leprosy, called “Mosaic,” was deemed all but incurable. Yet, though polluting, it did not (like palsy) disable. It is remarkable that Scripture does not make it formally a type of sin. It really is so :—There is the less need of the formality. If the first miracle shows the chastening hand of God, the second shows His restoring mercy. *Sign* (see in *Introd.* and under iii. 12). Ordinary works of God are “signs,” Ge. xiv., as means of instructive guidance. They have a *voice* too (Ps. xix. 1, 2). And (Ro. i. 28) they speak about God. The extraordinary work is a “sign” in the special sense, of showing that God is there on extraordinary business,—of supernatural redemption. *This* sign has to be a “wonder.” But it must be, *significant* wonder, through manifest connection with a purpose. Purposeless wonder is a “monster” (*monstrum—cui lumen ademptum*, a blind Polyphemus)—dumb as well as blind. If the purpose be not worthy of God, who is the good supreme, it is a “lying wonder” (Mat. xxiv. 24 ; 2 Thess. ii. 10 ; Re. xiii. 14, 15). 9. *The River* (under i. 22) *Yôr*, here is really a proper name, like “Avon” (meaning “river”—so at London the Thames is “the river”). This miracle transcends the preceding two. They reach only to a wilderness serpent or an Israelitish individual : this strikes the **life of Egyptian empire** ; if the Nile cease to be for it the “river of the water of life,” Egypt will die, as if a man’s blood were turned into water. The river, besides, is one of the gods of Egypt : the miracle strikes

and pour *it* upon the dry *land*: and the water, which thou takest out of the river, shall become blood upon the dry *land*.

at **the heart of heathenism**. The Nile itself, in flood, becomes reddish: the Plagues were **in the line** of nature, but so manifestly strange there as to show, **who was master** on that line, and beyond it. *On the dry ground*: that men might see it plain.

#### Exercise 10.

1. Give the three leading Scripture words for miracle, and three cases of Scripture miracle specially illustrating these words respectively.
2. (1) When a man throws a stone into the air, is it by force of nature? If not, then by what kind of force? (2) How does man's action in throwing a ball differ from God's action in working a miracle? (3) How does the divine action in raising the dead differ from the divine action in creating a world?
3. In the first Cana miracle—(1) What precisely was the miracle in turning water into wine? (2) What did it show? (3) What was the effect of this?

NOTE as to **the proof of miracle**.—To know that miracle is impossible, one has to know that there cannot be a God. But that will not suffice: for conceivably there may be supernatural work of demons; and even those who believe in no spirit have believed in natural magic. In order to know that miracle is a fact, one has only to believe in the trustworthiness of eyes and ears (1 Jn. i. 3). Miracles are very unlikely: so is murder, but it is established as a fact "at the mouth of two or three witnesses." And in the case of one miracle, inquired into by a very able man, there were as eye-witnesses, twelve Apostles, five hundred brethren, and the man himself. Distance in time does not weaken the evidence, any more than distance in space. The evidence for the Vesuvian volcanic eruption of eighteen hundred years ago is just as good as the evidence for the Tarawera eruption fifteen thousand miles away. If it be very unlikely that the few New Zealand people whose evidence reaches London should lie without detection about an earthquake, it is not more likely that the twelve Apostles, five hundred brethren, and Paul, should lie about their having seen Christ alive after His death on the Cross. The Israelites and Egyptians had bodily senses perfectly well qualified **to bear witness**, whether the things described as Plagues really took place. It is for us **to judge** (as we shall be judged) whether these things are true miracles, proving the truth of the Gospel of redemption. The argument from Mosaic miracle is just as good for us as it was for Israel or for Egypt. If it then was shown to be true, that Jehovah, the God of Israel, is the only God, Living and True, the Redeemer of enslaved men, then it is true for all time that He is so, and that "in the fulness of the times He has come in Christ, who (He. ii. 12-14) took not on Him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham, that He might deliver them who, through the fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

**As to Utterance of the Message** (iv. 10-17). Jeremiah was exercised about utterance of God's message (Jer. i.) on account of his incapacity, and Isaiah (Is. vi.) on account of his unworthiness. Paul, too, long after he is an Apostle, approved of God (Ro. xv. 18, 19) by miracles everywhere, and (1 Co. ix. 2) having seals of God upon his ministry in the persons of believing Christians, is still found requesting the prayers of the brethren, that utterance may be given to him. And (Act. ii.) it was the grand result of that miracle, of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, which is second only to the miracle of the resurrection of Christ. The vital importance of the utterance appears from the fact, that the whole work, in its effect upon man, is to be dependent upon a word, operating on their minds, in exposition of the meaning of the work, and of the mind and heart of God as the

- 10 And Moses said unto the Lord, O my Lord, I *am* not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant; but I *am* slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.
- 11 And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind?
- 12 have not I the Lord? Now therefore go, and I will be with
- 13 thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say. And he said, O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of *him whom*

worker. It is therefore not surprising that Moses, looking forward to the course of that ministry to which he is called, should be solicitous and diffident with reference to that utterance which has to play so great a part in it, for the honour of God as well as the benefit of Israel. What occasions the anger of Jehovah is, not a sense of personal incapacity or unworthiness on the part of this man, but a leaven of that timidity which comes from half-hearted selfishness, and still more, underlying that, a lack of confidence in God, and of that zealousness of love which thinks of self (Phil. ii. 17) only as a sacrifice, to be poured out on the altar and faith of His people.

10. *O my lord* ("Alas! my master!"), pathetic appeal. The word for *lord* here is not Jehovah, but *Adonai*, meaning simply, **sovereignty**. *Slow*: lit. **heavy**—like a cart-horse as compared with a full-blood. There may in his case have been a natural impediment, perhaps aggravated by the habitual taciturnity of shepherd life. *Neither heretofore*: lit. **Neither yesterday nor the third day** (back). This may point to the period of his residence in Egypt. He may then have had painful experience of deficiency in respect of copious fit utterance, so important for a man of affairs. He was (Act. vii. 22) powerful in "words" as well as "deeds." But he is nowhere represented as making speeches, and may not have had the freedom which others enjoy, by nature or through practice. (Addison was almost ruined through inability on one occasion to *speak* in public.) He can never have been deficient in respect of the Horatian fundamental for good utterance (*Arx Poetica*), copious fulness of matter. Some, however, are burdened and hampered with that very fulness, while others are by their emptiness made rapidly fluent as the narrow shallow brook, which goes chattering on for ever, ever. Still, without the gift of utterance, there can be only a loaded gun that does not fire. 11. **THE LORD**: here it is **Jehovah**. *To whom* did Moses plead impotency in excuse? To the Omnipotent (Is. xl. 28). He has power of sight and might, to wield our natural gift, or bestow a supernatural gift (I Co. ii. 1-4), or supersede our gifts (Mat. x. 19), or put the crowning gift of man to shame (2 Pe. ii. 16—"articulate-speaking" is Homeric epithet for rationality of manhood). The *nolo episcopari* may—like requiring great pressure to sing—be a roundabout vanity as well as a downright cowardice or sloth. And the vanity, laying emphasis on *self*, instead of sole dependence upon God, may thus be presumptuous in *not* venturing. There is "a pride that apes humility." 12. *With thy mouth—say* (cp. Lu. xii. 12). The first clause might suggest, organic defect. But the second points to **the mind** as being the seat of the lumbering unreadiness. We learn to walk by walking; and Peter will sink when in walking he thinks about himself. The unreadiness of the unpractised speaker may perhaps be remedied by cauterization (Is. vi. 6). Herodotus tells about a dumb youth who cried out articulately when he saw men murdering his father. 13. *Send—send*: The

14 thou wilt send. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses, and he said, *Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he*  
 15 *will be glad in his heart. And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth,*

Heb. is highly elliptical: **send by hand, thou shalt send.** Perhaps it is a sample of the speaker's manner, of thought labouring helplessly for coherent fluency of utterance: the half-created lion "pawing to be free." The heart (Jn. vii. 24) is not timid (Scoticé, "no blate"). 14-16. *Anger—kindled* (different from the Bush fire, as in De. iv. 24). It is the Scripture phrase appropriated for description of God's feeling toward *idolatry* (the "jealousy" of Ex. xx. 5). Perhaps Moses here betrays an inward fear (Lu. xii. 5) of the power of Egypt's heathenism, as well as lack of frank ardour of readiness for battle with it (cp. David *versus* Goliath with 1 Sa. xiii. 14). *Aaron*: first mention of him. Three years older than Moses (Ex. vii. 7), he seems to have been all this time in good standing in Egypt: which may show that the infanticide was only a passing gust of capricious tyranny; which, however, was made to work for God to His elect (Ps. lxxvi. 10). The *Levite*: does not show that this tribe was *priestly* at that time. It may be a surname—MacLevi or O'Levi—showing *which* Aaron is meant. Or, this Levite Aaron may have been famous, like "Cedric the Saxon." That fervidness of temperament, which appears to have characterized his tribe, may have drawn him into public life, so as to gain for him his reputation of eloquence. *Can speak well*: lit. **speaking he shall speak** = he is a speaker (if you are not). This probably implies that, in matters affecting Israel's interest, he was a practised man of affairs. It is to be noted afterwards, that the recluse Moses soon drops him, as a general may drop a tactician who is no strategist—a show soldier (chap. xxxii.). Aaron does not become the type of Christ, but, a *kingly* priest does (Ps. cx.). In Aaron we never see real greatness; in Moses, when once he is under way, we never see littleness. *Coming forth to meet thee.* The brothers may thus appear to have maintained communication; which might not be difficult *per* "underground railway," as Goshen really bordered on the Sinaitic Peninsula. The meeting was not fortuitous (Act. x. 9): at least there was in it a "special" providence of God (see ver. 27, where *said* means, **had said**). There may have been some movement, or presentiment of approaching crisis, in Israel, with an instinct of divination pointing to Sinai for the leader. *Glad in his heart*: there is here perhaps a generosity (cp. 1 Sa. xvii. 38) which is not enduring (Num. xii. 1, etc.).

NOTE ON **Put words** (Rev. Vers. **THE words**) **in his mouth.** This is **God's description** (cp. vii. 1) **of the process in making a prophet of God.** In Aaron, to whom Moses is as God, we see **the thing in picture.** **The thing itself** is seen in Moses (ver. 13), in Jeremiah (Jer. i. 9), and in Christ (De. xviii. 15-18; Is. li. 16; Jn. xiv. 10). In Lu. xii. 12 and 2 Pe. i. 21, we may see in what manner this is brought about; namely, by the Holy Ghost, sovereignly (2 Pe. i. 20, cp. Mat. x. 20) moving the men who speak. But the point here is in the utterance, the "mouth," the "words," "put into" the mouth. What is described is, **dictation**, such that the word spoken is "*God's word*" (Is. i. 2). In all the places referred to, the strong expression, "put words in a man's mouth," has



and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do.  
 16 And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, *even* he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and  
 17 thou shalt be to him instead of God. And thou shalt take this rod in thine hand, wherewith thou shalt do signs.

reference to a prophet of the highest class; in two of the four places (Jer., Is.) it has reference to the Son of God; and in all the places, the one who employs the description is, not the author of Exodus, nor Jeremiah, nor Isaiah, but God, in words of His reported by them; while in the New Testament Christ speaks to the effect of them, with reference both to the Apostles and to Himself. In the persons of Aaron, Moses, Jeremiah, Christ, the Apostles, we see that the divine inspiration does not destroy, but employs (and therefore will not destroy, but conserves for use) the *humanity* of the speaker. But the point, the essential thing, as to inspiration of prophecy, is, *divinity* of the word spoken. Such is the view which God Himself gives here, in the act of first creating prophecy. (On Prophecy, see *Introd.* pp. 75-78.)

*What ye shall do*: as well as (above) what ye shall say. *Instead of God*: or, for a god (Ex. vii. 1). 17. *This rod—do signs*: **this here rod, tue one in my hand—do the signs.** This mediator is strictly held to his commission (cp. Jn. xiv. 10, iv. 34). And his only weapon is, not a Cambyses' or an Alexander's army of invasion of Egypt, but, that rod—the walking-stick of an aged man. To put a magical power into the stick, as if it were a Caduceus wand of Mercury, is ludicrous anticlimax. "Churchianity" is a stupid parody of heathenism. Jehovahism, Christism, make the creature to be nothing, that God may be "all in all."

NOTE.—**The inspiration of Scripture** is (2 Pe. i. 18-21) put by Peter on the same footing as that of the prophetic speech. There can be no real difference. They are two modes of *utterance*; and utterance—what reaches *us*—is the thing in question. What Peter ascribes to prophetic speech and Scripture alike is, *divinity*, to the effect of infallibility; such that we have a perfectly trustworthy guide, as compared with (ver. 16) those who have "followed cunningly devised fables." So Paul (2 Ti. iii. 13-17), referring to "evil men and seducers" (*göetes*—conjurers who may be quacks) who go on from bad to worse, deceivers and deceived, points to *divinity* of Scripture as giving it infallibility. (But as the Scriptures, like Christ, while divine are human, they must be studied accordingly: we must seek the meaning of them through the minds of their human authors, as we seek the mind of Christ in what He says and does.)

#### Exercise 11.

1. *Revelation.* (1) In a message from a father to his son at school, what is there that the messenger cannot know by nature? (2) Could there be anything on the outside of the letter proving the authorship? What? (3) Could there be a proof of authorship within the letter? What?
2. *Prophecy*, as seen in this section and in Ex. vii. 1. (1) What is it that makes prophecy, to Pharaoh, looking upon Moses as a god? (2) What is it that makes prophecy to Aaron, looking on Jehovah as God? (3) In what respect is prediction the kind of prophecy which peculiarly constitutes an external evidence like "mighty work"?
3. *Inspiration.* (1) Was Aaron a machine, when he spoke the word of Moses? (2) When Balaam spoke unwillingly, was he a free agent? (3) Are Christians necessarily excluded from working out their salvation if it be God that worketh in them both the willing and the doing? (Explain your answer to (1), (2), (3) here.)

18 And Moses went and returned to Jethro his father-in-law,  
and said unto him, Let me go, I pray thee, and return unto  
my brethren which *are* in Egypt, and see whether they be yet  
19 alive. And Jethro said to Moses, Go in peace. And the  
Lord said unto Moses in Midian, Go, return into Egypt : for  
20 all the men are dead which sought thy life. And Moses took  
his wife and his sons, and set them upon an ass, and he

NOTE on **the mysteriousness** in De. xxix. 29.—A “mystery” was what was not known to the generality, but only to the select few,—“initiated ;” such as, the secrets of a Masonic brotherhood. There is no such mystery of Christianity, though there may be mystification of false priests : all that is revealed is for all Israel. But there are things not revealed ; which are known to God, but which He has not chosen to make known to us. For instance, How it is possible for a word which is human to be divine ; or, how a man can work out his own salvation while it is God that worketh ; or, how there can be any creative agency while God worketh all things.

**External arrangements** (iv. 18–31). The proceedings of Moses now are (He. xii. 1) those of one who sets to “casting aside every weight,” in order to “run with patience the race that is set before him.” The strange incident on the journey, in which Zipporah (on whom see under iii. 22) does not shine, is obviously suggestive of his having neglected to cast aside a “sin” which might very easily “beset” him, if he was a melancholy, backward man with a shrewish, worldly wife. It was a neglect of outward Israelitish ordinance, which may have been only a characteristic and decisive indication on his part of a more general conformity to the little narrow world of his Raguel connexion : an example of the un wisdom of being “unequally yoked together with unbelievers.” His connexion with Jethro seems to have involved a dependence more than is natively in the position of a son-in-law or brother-in-law (initial note, iii. 1–10), who is eighty years of age. He no doubt was his servant ; as Jacob had been Laban’s servant. But the requisite free consent was freely given ; and the after connexion of Jethro with Moses in his greatness is honourable to the Midianite. The course of arrangements thus auspiciously begun, and ominously interrupted, was auspiciously concluded with a conference, one of many conferences (Ge. ii. 1–10) that have been held on the eve of great events in the kingdom of God.

18. *Jethro* (Marg. *Jether* : the authorities are not agreed about the textual spelling here). See initial note to iii. 1–10. Moses, while honouring Jethro’s right to a veto on the dissolution of their connexion, does not divulge his reason for desiring to dissolve it. Perhaps he had no commissioned right to divulge it to him (cp. Mat. xv. 24). Some think that Moses apprehended ridicule on account of the strange unlikelihood of his story : they do not know (cp. Ro. i. 16). *Go in peace* : = God be with you, contracted, “Good-bye.” The *brethren* may be, not only his relatives within a degree or two, but all Israel (ii. 11, cp. Ro. ix. 1). 19. About his own personal safety, Moses had betrayed no solicitude. God, whose providence has watched over him in Midian (on which note under ii. 15), now graciously gives him an apparently unsought assurance (cp. Mat. ii. 19, 20). The assurance is all the more valuable, because on the safety of Moses now depends the salvation of Israel :—“thou carriest Cæsar and his fortunes.” It has reference, not only to the king, who sought to slay him, but to the relatives of the murdered man, who may have been clamouring for public justice, or held themselves personally bound to be “avengers of blood.” 20. *An ass* (under xiii. 13) :

returned to the land of Egypt. And Moses took the rod of  
 21 God in his hand. And the Lord said unto Moses, When  
 thou goest to return into Egypt, see *that* thou do all those  
 wonders before Pharaoh which I have put in thine hand : but  
 I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go.  
 22 And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord,  
 23 Israel *is* my son, *even* my first-born : and I say unto thee,  
 Let my son go, that he may serve me : and if thou refuse to  
 let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, *even* thy first-born.  
 24 And it came to pass by the way in the inn, that the Lord

lit. the ass—as we say, “took horse.” The ass was then and there not ignoble. Long centuries after, Homer, in describing the unusually stubborn valour of a hero, Ajax assailed by Trojans and shielding the retreating Greeks, without any thought of disparagement compares him to an ass. At the exodus time, the Egyptians employed the horse only for warlike purposes. On their monuments may be seen children carried in panniers on ass-back. A man would no doubt walk though he had a cavalcade. But in the present case the party of emigrants to Egypt is a lowly one, like another (Mat. ii. 14, 15). The only thing in their outfit that is specified is—the rod ; and the only thing said about it is, that it was *God’s* rod (notes under ii. 4, 17). *Sons.* Gershom alone has been mentioned in the history. Eliezer, afterwards mentioned, may at this time be a young infant. 21. The word for *wonders* here (*môph’tim*) is by Sept. made to mean, **fearful things**. This was one of the New Testament descriptions of a miracle (*têras*, a “terrific thing”). All supernatural things are awful ; and the miracles of God are terrific to His enemies (cp. Ex. xxxiv. 10). *I will harden his heart* : yet, **employing the means of persuasion**, 2 Co. v. 11 (see under vii. 3, 4, 14, and note on *Induration* at close of this section). 22. *Say unto Pharaoh* ; it is not the **decree** of God (*voluntas decreti*) that is the rule of man’s duty, but His **command** (*voluntas precepti*). Pharaoh, as a free responsible agent, is addressed with reasonable persuasives :—(1) **The right of the true God**, to be obeyed. (2) **His especial claim**, as Israel’s God, to have that people liberated. (3) **The retaliation** that will follow upon refusal on Pharaoh’s part. *Son—first-born.* Israel (*Introd.*) was historically the first-born of nationalities (Ex. xix. 6). It is not a merely natural primogeniture that now is claimed for the chosen people (Jn. viii. 39–46). It is a spiritual *jus prerogativum*, constituted by adoption of grace, by sovereign election ; but such (*first-born*) as to imply that there were to be *others* in the Sonship (Ge. xii. 3 ; and as to *nations*, Ge. xxii. 18). This “first-born” has an implication of mankind (Re. vii.). But the point of pressure to be brought to bear on Pharaoh is, that the condition of Israel touches the honour of regal paternity in Jehovah. There thus are two kings in Egypt ; as Andrew Melville said there were in Scotland—to James VI., “God’s silly vassal.” 24–26. This strange episode brings to light a strange neglect on Moses’ part. Stephen (Act. vii.) said that Abraham received “the covenant of circumcision.” It was the religion of Abrahamites ; for which, at that time, there was no other “sign” or seal (Ro. iv. 10). Here the Mosaic neglect is represented as a **deadly** offence. God followed him supernaturally with the natural consequences of the offence. Zipporah does not appear as an “help-

- 25 met him, and sought to kill him. Then Zipporah took a sharp stone, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast *it* at his feet, and said, Surely a bloody husband *art* thou to me.
- 26 So he let him go : then she said, A bloody husband *thou art*, because of the circumcision.
- 27 And the Lord said to Aaron, Go into the wilderness to meet Moses. And he went, and met him in the mount of
- 28 God, and kissed him. And Moses told Aaron all the words of the Lord who had sent him, and all the signs which he had commanded him.
- 29 And Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the
- 30 elders of the children of Israel. And Aaron spake all the

meet" (Ge. ii. 20, cp. 2 Co. vi. 14). "Hen-pecking" seems to be the mildest description of her action (Zipporah means "bird") (see under xviii. 2). *The inn*: lit. the resting-place, may have been only the halting-place on that occasion. But in such thinly-peopled regions there are places which are habitually made resting-places by travellers. The *khan*, or house open for all travellers, like the "inn" at Bethlehem 1500 years after, is hardly to be thought of here ; they would "camp out" for the night,—perhaps at a spot well known as the resting-place for generations. *Sought to slay him*: like another Pharaoh (ii. 15). This implies a **manifest deadly peril, manifestly on account of that offence**. That is all we really know. Would there be any use in knowing more? *Sharp stone*. A **stone knife** is at this hour used for that purpose instead of a metal one, on account of some feeling connected with purity or "cleanness." *At his feet*: a **fling**, which perhaps is feminine, but is not womanly, nor good. The word for *husband* here is *chôthen*, which (see under iii. 1-10) has the comprehensive significance of any near relation by affinity. (Moses may have been known in Raguel's household as the son-in-law:—She, "a fine son-in-law, indeed!") *Bloody*: lit. **of bloods** ("filling *my* house with blood," *ipsa*). The deadly peril made it necessary to circumcise. If, however, she have saved her husband's life, it is at the cost of her child's blood. And she bores her husband by throwing that as a reproach at him. Of the *religion*, she does not appear to have any thought or feeling. If after all she was good, then she was "better than she was bonnie." Moses appears to have sent her back with the children (Ex. xviii. 2-6). Perhaps they all were really *impedimenta* in his enterprise (cp. 1 Co. vii. 25, 28, 32). She was not *winning* (1 Pe. iii. 1-5, *Rebekah* means "winsome," attractive). 27, 28. *Said*: or, **had said**. *Go—wilderness*. He could go (leisurely) **round** the Red Sea to the wilderness of Sinai (here meant); or get **ferried** across. *Mount of God* (under iii. 1). *Moses told*, etc. Here (cp. under iv. 16) we distinctly see Aaron receiving from Moses; not, directly from God. He is not taken into the *confidential* ministry of the king (Jn. xv. 15); but is dealt with through a mediator. The *kiss* here is of close **fellowship** (1 Pe. v. 14); not (Ps. ii. 12) of professed subjection. 29-31. *Moses and Aaron*: "the elder shall serve the younger;" their brotherhood is not now of "flesh and blood" (1 Cor. xv. 50). *The elders* (under iii. 16). *Aaron spoke—did*. He thus is "minister" and "prophet" of Moses (Act. xiii. 5). *The people*: here probably not simply through representation in the elders, but in open meeting, after consent of

words which the Lord had spoken unto Moses, and did the  
 31 signs in the sight of the people. And the people believed :  
 and when they heard that the Lord had visited the children  
 of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then  
 they bowed their heads and worshipped.

the elders (cp. xiii. 14-16). *And the people believed : victory* (1 Jn. v. 4).  
*Visited : seen ; observe these very words, from the mouth of God* (iii. 7  
 and 16). *Bound : solemn assent : "in the name of God. Amen !"* But it  
 is deeply pathetic (cp. Lu. vii. 16).

NOTE on **Induration**.—The famous case of hardening Pharaoh's heart is one  
 of a whole class ; and is expressly cited by Paul (Ro. ix. 19) as a sample of the  
 Sovereignty of God, "*Whom He will He hardeneth.*" In Exodus it is stated *ten*  
*times* that God hardened Pharaoh's heart ; *seven times*, that Pharaoh hardened  
 his own heart ; and several times, that the king's heart was hardened, without  
 specification of the agent. In the cases of the temptation of David and of Job,  
 Satan appears as agent, in what is also ascribed to God. With a reference to  
 Job's case, Calvin, in his discussion of the general subject (*Institutes*), says, that  
 on the part of the agents respectively there was a difference in respect of *motives* :—  
 On the part of the Chaldean robbers, the motive was, greed ; Satan's impulse was,  
 the desire to make man disobey God ; and the purpose of God was, to "tempt,"  
 in the sense in which he "tempted" Abraham, and "proved" Israel, "trying" in  
 the sense of *testing*. That observation is very important practically, but does not  
 solve the speculative difficulty,—*how can the thing be ?*

In Pharaoh's case, the efficiency of agency ascribed to God appears to be  
 directly *causal*,—to the effect of making Pharaoh a worse man. Yet in the same  
 record the deterioration is expressly said to be caused by the bad man himself,  
 and to be punished by God as a sin. We know, on the one hand, that there is  
 a *necessity of nature*, through which continuance in sinful action results in forming  
 a strengthening habit of sin—a habit (*habitus*, disposition, bent) which may be a  
 "second nature" (Ps. li. 4 ; Eph. ii. 3). The continuance in sinful action we can  
 trace to the sinner's own will. Here, then, we see *Pharaoh* hardening his own heart  
 —driving nails into his own coffin. Let us now look at the necessity of nature.  
 We see it more widely in a general tendency of all action to form habit. The  
 system of nature is worked by God sustaining and governing. He, as the First  
 Cause, sustains all the processes and forces of secondary causation in the universe.  
 The law, by whose operation action forms habit, is good in itself. But fire, which  
 is a good thing in itself, may be misapplied so as to burn a man to death. It is  
 God who burns him, and yet he is a suicide. The mere physical efficiency of  
 God, in the hardening of Pharaoh's heart, has thus in it no speculative difficulty  
 beyond that involved in the divine agency of primary causation in any case,  
 while there is a substantive reality of secondary causation,—that is, a difficulty  
 arising out of inability to comprehend.

The difficulty comes in when we consider, that the man is burning himself to  
 death. We do not expect God to discontinue the nature of fire, so that in fact it  
 shall not be fire ; to extinguish the hearth of the universe because one man is  
 bad. But we ask, Why does He not make that man good ? Paul says, that *he*  
 does not know ; but that the fact is clear, as shown in the sample case of Pharaoh,  
 "Wherefore He hath mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will  
 He hardeneth." He lays the whole stress on *will* (not shall).

This particular fact leads to the whole question of the permission of sin. Rabbi  
 Duncan one day said in his class in the hearing of the present writer, "No finite  
 intelligence can ever comprehend how a holy creature could commit sin :—or (he  
 added, after a pause, and with great energy) how a *holy God* could permit sin."

CHAP. V. I. And afterward Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my people

When Paul comes to that point, he can only say, "Oh! the depths."—The matter is not revealed: it is beyond our comprehension: we have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep.

Historically, the fact is clear, that Pharaoh was a bad man, who made himself worse and worse by obstinate persistence in evil action. Theologically, the doctrine is clear, that the man did not by his hardness dethrone God; but that, in this as in all other things, the Almighty retained command of the situation, and carried out His own purpose in His own way, "doing according to His will . . . among the inhabitants of the earth," "working (*energōn*) all things according to the counsel of His own will." Speculatively, the Maker is beyond our depth. But practically, Sir James Mackintosh (*Dissertation on the History of Ethics*) remarks, that the peoples embracing the doctrine have not been paralyzed nor enslaved by it. The truth is that notoriously, in the new world and the old, America and Europe, *they* have been the most energetically free peoples under heaven.

**Exercise 12.**

1. In the history of God's kingdom, give other cases of "last, first"—as "Moses and Aaron."
2. Describe the probable tendency of the previous lives of the two brothers respectively to form them into fitness for their foreordained work in life.
3. (1) What is the real *meaning* of circumcision (Ro. iv. 11; Ph. iii. 3)? (2) If an infant receive circumcision, which is a sacrament of salvation, is it right to prevent an infant from being baptized because salvation (of adults) is by faith? (3) If infants are admissible to heaven, is it right to exclude them from church membership on earth?

NOTE.—As to **confession** in a strange land, mark the contrast of Moses to Daniel in Babylon. Modes of unfaithfulness in that relation are, *e.g.*, a youth *in lodgings*, neglecting the forms of religion because his family is not here; those who have been *brought up in Christian households* as "children of the covenant," neglecting to declare themselves as "children of the law," by becoming communicants; *entering into marriage* without regard to Paul's warning about being "unequally yoked together with unbelievers." Some may wonder why their heart is getting so cold. Perhaps they are turning it, by those methods and means, into stone.

**Opening of the Campaign: I. FIRST SUMMONS TO PHARAOH**  
(Chap. v.).

Before proceeding to force, God employs persuasive reason. Pharaoh thereupon refuses to obey God. The circumstance, that his disobedience was foreknown and foreordained, is not referred to; as if that could cancel the reality of Pharaoh's responsible free agency, or detract from the criminality of his disobedience. Israel are paralyzed; as if an army, approaching a city in the jubilant expectation of seeing its gates fly open (2 Pe. i. 11) at the word of their king, were met by defiance, and confronted with artillery threatening death. Moses, too, is disconcerted, and makes moan of disappointment to Jehovah who has sent him.

go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness.  
 2 And Pharaoh said, Who *is* the Lord, that I should obey his  
 voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I  
 3 let Israel go. And they said, The God of the Hebrews hath  
 met with us: let us go, we pray thee, three days' journey into  
 the desert, and sacrifice unto the Lord our God, lest he fall  
 4 upon us with pestilence, or with the sword. And the king of  
 Egypt said unto them, Wherefore do ye, Moses and Aaron,  
 let the people from their works? get you unto your burdens.  
 5 And Pharaoh said, Behold, the people of the land now *are*  
 6 many, and ye make them rest from their burdens. And  
 Pharaoh commanded the same day the taskmasters of the  
 7 people, and their officers, saying, Ye shall no more give the  
 people straw to make brick, as heretofore; let them go and  
 8 gather straw for themselves. And the tale of the bricks, which  
 they did make heretofore, ye shall lay upon them; ye shall  
 not diminish *ought* thereof; for they *be* idle, therefore they cry,

1. *Thus—go.* Religious liberty here is based, not on the natural principle of liberty of conscience, as between man and man; but on the positive right of Jehovah, who has a people distinctively His own (iv. 22), to prescribe the manner of their serving Him. *Feast* (x. 9): which at the same time (ver. 3) is a sacrifice (cp. Lu. xxii. 15; Re. iii. 20). Observe that it is *God* who makes the sacrificial service festive. 2. *Who—I know not* (cp. iii. 11, and notes under iii. 11-14). Pharaoh probably (ver. 3) is simply not aware that this *Jehovah* is Israel's God. But he may mean, This **new name** makes no difference to me. But God will not be dealt with in this offhand way (Ps. xviii. 26). 3. *Of the Hebrews.* It is not likely that they mean any people—such as, all Abrahamites—more comprehensive than Israel (vers. 1, 2). For Israel alone is the Covenant people in question. They say *Hebrews* in explanation: *the Hebrews* being the name by which Israel was known to Egyptians. 4. *Your—whose?* Moses and Aaron are here made to personify Israel, and the turn of expression is a coarse personal insult—to Jehovah's ambassadors (Lu. x. 16). The word for *let from* has the meaning of, **let away**, like, children from school for a holiday: so Rev. Vers. has, *loose from*. 5. *Land—many.* What you propose is, a general stoppage of productive industry (as the Gadarenes perceive). Israel are regarded as **the occupants** of Goshen. *Land* does not need to be made, "landward part" of the region: it all was rural, with magazine cities. 6. *Officers* here (*shôtèrim*): lit. **scribes**. They were secretaries or clerks, for keeping account of everything (under 14): they are often seen, alert with writing materials, on the monuments as conspicuous figures. 7. *Straw*: for mixing in the clay, to make it cohere till hardened by baking. The marks of the straw are still visible on bricks of that period: some have been found that visibly must have been made without straw, and since 1884 it has been shown that Pithom was in considerable measure built of brick so made. *Gather straw*: not, worship God ("The Sabbath was made for man:" but not, to gather straw). 8. *Not diminish*: "keep their nose at the grindstone"—pampered mutineers!

- 9 saying, Let us go *and* sacrifice to our God. Let there more  
work be laid upon the men, that they may labour therein ; and  
let them not regard vain words.
- 10 And the taskmasters of the people went out, and their  
officers, and they spake to the people, saying, Thus saith  
11 Pharaoh, I will not give you straw. Go ye, get you straw  
where ye can find it: yet not ought of your work shall be  
12 diminished. So the people were scattered abroad throughout  
13 all the land of Egypt to gather stubble instead of straw. And  
the taskmasters hasted *them*, saying, Fulfil your works, *your*  
14 daily tasks, as when there was straw. And the officers of the  
children of Israel, which Pharaoh's taskmasters had set over  
them, were beaten, *and* demanded, Wherefore have ye not  
fulfilled your task in making brick both yesterday and to-day,  
as heretofore ?
- 15 Then the officers of the children of Israel came and cried

(ver. 18) (quoth Legree). *The Men: the fellows ! Vain words* :—that is, about the sacrificial festival. The religion is only a screen for laziness ; or at best, a delusion that would be costly. 11. *Not ought* : Revis. Ver. has *nought*, unduly weakening the expression, which means, **not a particle**, if acted on. 12. *Land of Egypt*. This apparently spreads them, indefinitely, beyond Goshen. The word for *stubble* here is suggestive of **chopped straw**. Where labour is costly, the corn-stalks may (South Australia) be left standing, *minus* the heads, which are shorn off. In Egypt, where straw was dear and labour cheap, there would be little or nothing of that. Israel had to wander far on that foraging, so humiliating in wantonness of imposition, as well as aggravating in toilsomeness. All the *land of Egypt* was accessory witness to that outrage on the manhood of Jehovah's first-born. It is time for the theology to become effectively "polemical" (*polemos*, "war"). See the tyrant and *his* master in Mat. xviii. 27, and mark the "judge" in Ge. xv. 14 ("the mills of God grind slowly"). There has been disinterred from the sand a statue, of earlier date than the exodus, representing a "taskmaster" or working overseer, in an attitude of imperiousness so vivid, that the natives instantly named that "little tyrant of his fields," the sheykh of the village. *Daily task*. The *task* here is **imposed work**, lit. **day's matter for day**, is not a bad motto for workers ; but employers ought not to think of that alone. It may have been in use, like the, "Heave, Oh !" of sailors "pulling all together." (See the present day Egyptian son of labour, *Introd.* p. 27.) On the monuments there are seen such expressions, the songs of labour for gangs of work-people. 14, 15. *Officers* (as in ver. 6). Here and onward we see that the Hebrews had **scribes** of their own, responsible for production (so that if Moses could not write books, he could get plenty of amanuenses to do it for him). In Oriental communities at this day, the rank of an *officer* does not save from the degradation of bodily punishment. To beat a free Roman citizen like a slave (Act. xvi. 37) was a capital crime (cp. *flogging* in the British army and navy). God does not disregard outrage on His image (though it should be only "carved in ebony"), 1 Pe. ii. 17. The Hebrew



unto Pharaoh, saying, Wherefore dealest thou thus with thy  
 16 servants? There is no straw given unto thy servants, and  
 they say to us, Make brick; and, behold, thy servants *are*  
 17 beaten; but the fault *is* in thine own people. But he  
 said, Ye *are* idle, *ye are* idle; therefore ye say, Let us go  
 18 *and* do sacrifice to the Lord. Go therefore now *and*  
 work: for there shall no straw be given you, yet shall ye  
 19 deliver the tale of bricks. And the officers of the children  
 of Israel did see *that they were* in evil *case*, after it was  
 said, Ye shall not minish *ought* from your bricks of your  
 daily task.

20 And they met Moses and Aaron, who stood in the way, as  
 21 they came forth from Pharaoh: and they said unto them,  
 The Lord look upon you, and judge; because ye have made  
 our savour to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the

*officers*, though servile in legal condition, were men of education, of standing in the community; and the degradation in their punishment was a cruel aggravation of it (He. xii. 2). *Cried unto Pharaoh*: it was a noble Egyptian custom, that every one seeking justice should have access to the king. How this was managed on Israel's part, as through deputation to Pharaoh's representatives, does not appear. Within the narrow limits of Egypt, men were all as if within one great city, in comparison with really wide empires. It now is ascertained that in the Tanis region, where Goshen lay, there was at this period, the age of Rameses the Great, a seat of Egyptian empire there, if not, the seat. *Thy servants*: this implies an appeal to his self-interest as well as justice;—oppression of the working-class is bad economy for a nation, demoralizing its "machinery" of production. But, 16, the appeal is to justice. *Fault is in thine own people*, is lit. **Thy people are sin**, a commentary on 2 Co. v. 21, which text is written by a Hebrew who sees Exodus there (1 Co. x. 1-5). This relieves Pharaoh personally, so as to make it easier for him to right the wrong. 17, 18. He takes the whole responsibility on himself. As for *fault*: it is only in their laziness; and he will persist in the medicinal course of plenty of work. There is manifest mockery here, intended to embitter the toil. 19. *They*: emphatic;—a bad business **for them**. *After it was said*: lit. **in its being said**,—in this determination of the matter, which they had to report to their people, and which came round to them in personal punishment. 20, 21. *Moses and Aaron*: keenly solicitous as the prime movers (Ga. v. 2). *Said—because*. The officers themselves are now unjust, ungrateful, base (Mat. vii. 6), forgetting the word and the miracles of **the LORD** whom they appeal to. *Savour—eyes*: mixed metaphor, but natural association, of eyes with nostrils, as when the smoke of Noah's sacrifice is seen (Ge. viii. 21). The word for *savour* here (note under xxix. 18) is, with "sweet," that for **divine satisfaction** with sacrifice (Eph. v. 1). For Pharaoh it was not as fragrant incense to see an altar rising to Jehovah. *To be abhorred*: lit. **to be a stinking thing**. Even apart from personal feeling of religion, a despot is abhorrent of religious freedom in the people, and of a religion that makes free (Jn. xix. 12, 15. James VI. said, "No bishop, no

eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to slay us.  
 22 And Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, Lord, where-  
 fore hast thou *so* evil-entreated this people? why *is* it *that*  
 23 thou hast sent me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak  
 in thy name, he hath done evil to this people; neither hast  
 thou delivered thy people at all.

king;” for which Charles I. answered on the scaffold). *A sword*: a reason of justice, though only pretended: so that Pharaoh’s own conscience is accusing him. The sword is a judge, trenchantly discriminative (He. iv.): not like a hammer (the army), or a “deceitful bow” (the flattering courtier, of whom self is the chief). 22, 23. *Moses*: not Aaron, *he* is not the Mediator. *Returned*: to his true home (Ps. xc. 1—observe the title of this Psalm). *Evil entreated*: leading them on the ice. *Sent me*: to mock them, with a story of the burning Bush, which they now will take for a “cunningly devised fable” (2 Pe. i. 16). *Thy—thou—thy*: Jehovah’s “name” is now in question. This is a great point (Ex. xxxiv. 4–7, cp. Jn. xvii.), which the Mediator well may plead: though Moses the man seems to be distrustful, as if he, too, had forgotten (cp. Mat. xvi. 9, 10).

### Exercise 13.

1. Is it in all cases wrong for work-people to strike work? Give your reason.
2. Has an employer in all cases a right to do what the law gives him power to do? Explain.
3. What “golden” rule would help to settle questions between employers and employed?
4. What “great commandment” shows that inhumanity is ungodliness? How?
5. What is the significance of Napoleon’s saying to the Protestant ministers, “Where conscience begins, my empire ends”?

NOTE 1.—**The land question** may be variously dealt with, but justice and generosity are of unvarying obligation. The settlement in Egypt under Joseph seems to have been formally state-ownership, but really perpetual lease, equivalent to freehold under burden of a land-tax. This underlies the feudal system—perhaps along with a certain tribal ownership (*e.g.* “the Douglas country”). Israel may at first have been free tribes paying tribute. Under the oppression they were as the field-hands on great estates of ancient Italy, or in American slave plantations, though still retaining a certain corporate unity as a “sojourning” people (on a wider Semitic occupation of that Tanis region, see *Introduction*).

NOTE 2.—**On religious guarantee of a people’s freedom** (see *Introd.* chap. ii.).—The licence of a “Book of Sports” took away the shield of religious feeling from between the people and a despot’s will. At a meeting of letterpress printers in Edinburgh, one said, Do not allow any exceptional violation of the Day of Rest: in New York, they began with exceptions under pressure, and now it is the rule there to print for Monday’s issue on the Lord’s Day, so that practically there is no Day of Rest. A Scottish minister (the late Rev. John Powrie) wrote from India—Do not base your defence of the Day of Rest on the economical advantages of it: nothing will guard it against selfish worldliness but the claim to be God’s law of the Bible. It was when the banner of revolt from *religious* tyranny was raised by a small section of Covenanters, that William of Orange saw that Britain was ripe for political emancipation.

CHAP. VI. 1. Then the Lord said unto Moses, Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh : for with a strong hand shall he let them go, and with a strong hand shall he drive them out of  
 2 his land. And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I  
 3 *am* the Lord ; and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by *the name of* God Almighty, but by my name  
 4 JEHOVAH was I not known to them. And I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of

**Opening of the Campaign : 2. VIEW OF THE SITUATION OF JEHOVAH'S CAUSE (Chap. vi.).**

He now is openly defied, so that the honour of His name is in question (cp. 1 Sa. xvii.). His people are in despairing perplexity ; since that name, in which they have trusted, has brought them no deliverance, but aggravation of their bitter shameful bondage. The kingdom of darkness among mankind appears to be triumphant in the world. It is to be noted that in the review of the situation on Israel's part, there is taken into account no force but simply that of this name. Jehovah Himself is to do the whole work of the warfare. The Israelites are only the heirs of His covenant promises, the beneficiaries of the spoils of His victory. The genealogical notice at the close of the chapter is not an exhibition of warlike force in Israel. It is only a description of the then condition, in respect of the tribal distribution of the people ; which, among other things, shows that, as material of this history there is available, not vague tradition, but distinct knowledge of the facts. The fulness of detail regarding the Levites has express reference to the selection of Levites, Moses and Aaron, to be the instruments of God in the Deliverance.

1. *Now* (see under i. 1 on the *v'*) : here emphatic from position : **the strong hand has to be shown** ;—"man's extremity is God's opportunity." *Shall he drive* : with all *his* might, doing what he now refuses. 2, 3. *I am* THE LORD : lit. JEHOVAH AM I (see on the name, *Introd.* p. 67, etc.). The formula, from this time onward, often occurs in the manner of a royal signature, of the God of Israel, attached to a proclamation to those addressed. The name of *Jochebed*, "Glory of Jehovah," in this chapter (ver. 20), appears to show that the word was not previously quite unheard, though the significance of the name was first given in Sinai for publication as that of Israel's God (see note at close of this section). *By the name of God Almighty* : lit. **as El Shaddai** (Ge. xvii. 1). Theologians make a topic of "The Ten Names" of the Supreme Being. These (see *Shorter Catechism* in its exposition of the Third Commandment) all are found on close inspection to be descriptive of attributes ; which again have their import exhibited in **works**. There is no Scripture name of God that means, mere characterless being ; like that which was behind the Egyptian veil of Isis, "the *thing* that was, and is, and shall be" (cp. Re. i. 8, and see in *Introd.* *On the name of "Jehovah,"* pp. 67-69). What is spoken of in the text is, *manifestation* of God, the *aspect* which He presents toward mankind (cp. *form* in Phi. ii. 6-8). *Known* has a deep,

Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were  
 5 strangers. And I have also heard the groaning of the children  
 of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and I have  
 6 remembered my covenant. Wherefore say unto the children  
 of Israel, I *am* the Lord, and I will bring you out from under  
 the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their  
 bondage; and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and  
 7 with great judgments. And I will take you to me for a people,  
 and I will be to you a God; and ye shall know that I *am* the  
 Lord your God, which bringeth you out from under the  
 8 burdens of the Egyptians. And I will bring you in unto the  
 land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham,  
 to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage:  
 I *am* the Lord.

9 And Moses spake so unto the children of Israel; but they  
 hearkened not unto Moses for anguish of spirit, and for cruel  
 10, 11 bondage. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Go in,  
 speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, that he let the children of

strong sense (ii. 25 with note) of comprehension and appreciation, as distinguished from merely, being aware of. 4, 5. Here are two motives: (1) covenant, (2) fatherly pity. *Land of Canaan* (under iii. 8).

NOTE on sojourning or pilgrimage. — *Pilgrimage—strangers: sojournings—sojourned* (Rev. Vers.). The word is the same. Our *pilgrim* (Fr. *pèlerin*) is the Latin *peregrinus*,—a residenter not naturalized, not invested with rights of citizenship. The Bible “sojourner” (Heb. *Ger*, Gr. *Epidēmos*) was ideally in this condition (1 Pe. ii. 11; He. xi. 13), because his appropriate citizenship is in heaven (the “lofty land”). The word *paroikos*, which in the primitive Church was descriptive thus of an *unsettled* condition of Christians on earth (see letter of the Persecuted Church of Lyons and Vienne, A.D. 177, to Asiatic Christians), has curiously come round to mean the utmost intensity of “settlement”—Bumbledom.

5. *Remembered*: He remembers **when we cry** (ii. 23, iii. 7–10, cp. Ps. xxii. 5). But there also is a remembrancer in Pharaoh's defiance. 6–8. This, *unto Israel. I am the Lord: Jehovah I*: that is enough (1 Sa. xvii. 45). Mediæval motto, “*Ni prince, etc., Je suis le Seigneur de Couci*”). The Spartans, asked for military aid by a friendly state in trouble, would send no army, but simply a general. *The name of Jehovah has everything* in it:—(1) ver. 6, redemption from Egypt, (2) ver. 7, adoption at Sinai, and (3) instatement in the inheritance of Canaan. *Stretched out arm*: not only **strength**, but that, **extended and directed** by the mind and heart (cp. Act. vii. 56). *Judgments*: the action is to be **judicial**, *punishing* the evil-doers (Ge. xv. 14, cp. under iii. 20). *I will take*: “effectual calling.” *Ye shall know*: “assurance of God's love,” *consequent* on the calling (cp. 2 Pe. i. 10). *Did swear*: lit. **did lift up my hand**, most solemnly assuring (He. vi. 18). The formal oath is recorded in Ge. xxii. 16. The *covenant* it seals, see under ii. 24. *An heritage*: as unto His children (Ro. viii. 15–17; Ga. iv. 7). *I—Lord*: “**Jehovah—I**.” This, at the beginning and close of the address to Israel (6–8), like the *V. Regina* of royal proclamation. 9–11. *Anguish*: the word (*quotzer*) here

- 12 Israel go out of his land. And Moses spake before the Lord, saying, Behold, the children of Israel have not hearkened unto me; how then shall Pharaoh hear me, who *am* of uncircumcised lips? And the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, and gave them a charge unto the children of Israel, and unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt.
- 14 These *be* the heads of their fathers' houses: The sons of Reuben the first-born of Israel; Hanoch, and Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi: these *be* the families of Reuben. And the sons of Simeon; Jemuel, and Jamin, and Ohad, and Jachin, and Zohar, and Shaul the son of a Canaanitish woman: these *are* the families of Simeon.
- 16 And these *are* the names of the sons of Levi according to their generations; Gershon, and Kohath, and Merari. And

means, lit. *shortening* (cp. *gasping* of a sharp pain). It thus may represent here, utter impatience, of what is found unbearable completely, especially when the sufferer is thrown out of his expectation of relief, a disappointment sharp and sudden taking his breath away. Especially the point here is in *spirit* (cp. the side-thrust in Lu. ii. 35) the inmost deep of men, as overcome by this *cruelty*. The word for *cruel* here is that for *hard* in i. 14 (note there). *Go out of his land* (under iii. 18). The expression does not necessarily mean more than, go to the outside of Goshen. God was not bound to let Pharaoh know everything. He gave him enough of knowledge for his own guidance in duty (De. xxix. 29). But the expression (it is Heb. for "exodus," see *Introd.* chap. i.) as here employed, without reservation or qualification, appears to mean, complete separation from Egypt:—clear away, a "flitting." After Pharaoh's refusal to obey the first request, an *enlarged* demand (witness the Sibyl with her Books) may be appropriate,—"froward to the froward." 12, 13. The shrinking here (under iv. 1, etc.) is natural after his experience of Israel (ver. 9). The argument is *a fortiori*: if there be failure with *them*, *much more* with Pharaoh. But *the excuse* (of unbelief) is the same as in Sinai (iv. 10-12). *Uncircumcised lips*: may refer to uncleanness or unworthiness of the speaker (Is. vi. 7), constituting moral unfitness to bear Jehovah's message. Perhaps not. And in any case it specially refers to the natural deficiency of Moses, pleaded as a physical disability. (Demosthenes was not kept by a stutter from being an orator, he *wanted to* be one.) There is now no record of rebuke (as in iv. 14). But there is recognition of the promised *provision* (iv. 14-16) as now made;—"and *the* LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron." *Charge: command.* 14-27 is properly—**Genealogy of the two leaders.** Consequently the *vidimus* of the people is not completed except in relation to that. The details extend to families only with a reference to that one case. In relation to the two senior tribes, defining *the place* of Levi (as third), even that detail extends only to "heads of houses." The external character of the genealogy is that of a careful extract from authentic records. 14. *Fathers' houses: familiae, divisions or subdivisions* of tribes. *The first-born*: mark the corresponding place of honour (cp. under iv. 22). 15. *A Canaanitish woman*: here see the adoption (Ro. ix. 5). 16. *Sons of*

the years of the life of Levi *were* an hundred thirty and seven  
 17 years. The sons of Gershon ; Libni and Shimi, according to  
 18 their families. And the sons of Kohath ; Amram, and Izhar,  
 and Hebron, and Uzziel. And the years of the life of Kohath  
 19 *were* an hundred thirty and three years. And the sons of  
 Merari ; Mahli and Mushi : these *are* the families of Levi,  
 20 according to their generations. And Amram took him  
 Jochebed his father's sister to wife : and she bare him Aaron  
 and Moses ; and the years of the life of Amram *were* an  
 hundred and thirty and seven years.

21 And the sons of Izhar ; Korah, and Nepheg, and Zichri.  
 22 And the sons of Uzziel ; Mishael, and Elzaphan, and Zichri.  
 23 And Aaron took him Elisheba, daughter of Amminadab,  
 sister of Naashon, to wife ; and she bare him Nadab and  
 24 Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. And the sons of Korah ;  
 Assir, and Elkanah, and Abiasaph : these *are* the families of  
 25 the Korhites. And Eleazar, Aaron's son, took him *one* of the

*Levi* : here **variously honoured**. (1) *They* are specified, as if honour had gone to their father from them (cp. *Abu-bekr*, "father of the virgin"). (2) *Minute details* about their families with the children in these. (3) Above all, culmination in *the two great leaders* (of law and of priesthood). *According to their generations* : in the lines of their genealogy or descent. In Ex. i. 1, after *V' Ellêh Shêmôth* ("these are the names") we have, "every man and his household." *One hundred years* : cp. other lives in vers. 18, 20 ; as also, those of the patriarchs, and of Moses, Aaron, Miriam. This is eminently **a long-lived race**. The proverbial vital force of the Hebrews appears to have been peculiarly great in Levi (see under i. 19, and cp. xx. 12). There are long-lived families. The late Rev. Dr. Ingram of Unst, in Shetland, had his portrait taken when in his 104th year : his father (he told the present writer) had lived 95 years, and his grandfather, 102. But that great age was **rare** in Israel : therefore, it is noted in a great history. 17. *Gershom* : oldest first. 18-20. *Amram* : this is not necessarily the Amram of ver. 20. The suggestion here, that the historian wants to make out the four generations of Ge. xv. 16, appears excessively jejune,—even for a "scholar" who has forgotten to be a man. We know that in a genealogy names may be omitted, consistently with the purpose, namely to make manifest the line of descent. As to the **numbers** in this section, see *Introd. on Exodus Chronology*. *Father's sister's wife*. This is within the prohibited degrees of Lev. xviii., which in relation to marriage excludes all within the first degree, and makes affinity count as consanguinity. What are we to think of it? (1) Amram may have done wrong. (2) The law in such cases may not have been applied with strictness until the time of rehabilitation of natural law at Sinai. *Jochebed* (as to her name, note under ver. 3). Her name may indicate that she was of a peculiarly pious family. The history of her household (cp. He. xi. 23, "by faith," "were not afraid") illustrates the proverb, that "piety, though not running in the blood, runs in the line" (cp. 2 Ti. i. 3 and 5). 23. *Elisheba*, apparently in Judah's tribe (1 Chron. ii. 3-10).

daughters of Putiel to wife; and she bare him Phinehas :  
 these *are* the heads of the fathers of the Levites according to  
 26 their families. These *are* that Aaron and Moses, to whom  
 the Lord said, Bring out the children of Israel from the land  
 27 of Egypt according to their armies. These *are* they which  
 spake to Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring out the children of  
 Israel from Egypt ; these *are* that Moses and Aaron.

28 And it came to pass, on the day *when* the Lord spake unto  
 29 Moses in the land of Egypt, that the Lord spake unto Moses,  
 saying, I *am* the Lord : speak thou unto Pharaoh king of  
 30 Egypt all that I say unto thee. And Moses said before the  
 Lord, Behold, I *am* of uncircumcised lips, and how shall  
 Pharaoh hearken unto me ?

The priestly and kingly are here seen blending, as if "coming events cast their shadows before" by anticipation (in the ancestry of Messiah, Mat. i. 3).  
 25. *Putiel*, supposed to come from an Egyptian word, *put*. It can come from Hebrew ("afflicted of God"). 26, 27. *Aaron and Moses—Moses and Aaron* : last first and first last : transition from the order of nature to that of God's new kingdom (Jn. i. 13). The plain straightforward statement of ver. 20 puts to shame the morbidly foolish invention, of a separation of husband and wife, followed by a reunion, all in order to manufacture, for the greatest man before Christ, a right of primogeniture in an obscure subdivision of Hebrews. *His nobility* was "by creation of God Almighty" (Robert Burns). 28-30 is a *résumé*. *On the day* : at the time when (as in Ge. ii. 4). *Then—me*. Bringing us up to the point of time at which Moses, charged with Jehovah's answer to the Egyptian king's defiance, (again) gave way to faint heart.

#### Exercise 14.

1. *Confidence in God*. (1) Give a case of tempting God by pleading a promise of God. (2) When are we clearly entitled to incur the peril against which there is a promise of protection ? (3) Does "faith" mean, being sure that God will save us ? And why ?
2. *Nations and God*. (1) Has a nation a right to serve God ? Give your reason. (2) If a nation have a right to serve God, can it have a right to make laws at variance with the Bible intimation of God's mind ? Give your reason. (3) On the supposition that the nation is bound to serve God in Christ, show how this may affect the duty of individual citizens, and of the nation, relatively to the law of marriage.
3. *Primogeniture*. (1) Give three Scripture cases in which the first-born was placed first, and three in which he was not. (2) Give the reason of the preference, and of the absence of it, in the cases. (3) What natural reasons are there in favour of the custom of primogeniture ? and show some case in which these do not apply.

NOTE on the statement as to the name, *Jehovah*, in vi. 3.—The substance of what seems necessary to be said on the whole subject is intimated in the *Introduction* and the notes on iii. 12-14. The statement in vi. 3, in its connection with what immediately follows, and with the framework of history at that point, shows that the publication of this name is to be regarded as a decisive new beginning in the manner of God's manifestation of Himself. The specialty of His manner of proceeding now is twofold. (1) He actually redeems His people

CHAP. VII. 1. And the Lord said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh; and Aaron thy brother shall be thy  
2 prophet. Thou shalt speak all that I command thee; and

(visible kingdom), and (2) He vindicates His claim to be owned as the only true and living God (the *only* true religion asserting supremacy). The name revealed to Abraham, *El Shaddai*, may be regarded as equivalent to Nebuchadnezzar's *Most High*, representing the divine transcendency in relation to the universe and the world. What thus remains, as *distinctive* in the manifestation to Moses and through Mosaism, is, the *redemptive* grace of God, in effective application to mankind. If we take the description, the *Covenant* God, as distinguished from the *Creator*, that may enable us to understand the varied use of "Jehovah" in Scripture.

SECOND APPEAL TO PHARAOH (vii. 1-13). The first appeal consisted in the message of Jehovah, delivered by His ambassadors, to the king of Egypt. The second appeal is constituted by miracle, in attestation of the divinity of the message, or of the divine mission of the ambassadors. This is the first occasion in history on which, on our side of the flood, the Bible religion addressed itself to the world of mankind, claiming to be received and honoured as divine. We therefore note with interest the fact, that—unlike the Sibyl—on this first occasion it offered *evidence* of its truth and divinity. That, we now find, was in the plan of the whole Egyptian Campaign. It was distinctly intimated to Moses and Aaron at the outset as being in the plan, and it appeared all through the work until the Passage of the Red Sea, that the evidence of this religion was to accompany its claim to respect and obedience. Not only the Israelites, but all the Egyptians who were reached by this work, had, all the time, placed within their view visible proof that the claim which was now being made upon them was really made by the one Living and True God, the rightful King of earth as well as heaven. The significance of the counter-demonstration of the Egyptian miracle-workers, in connection with the heathen system of religion, will fall to be considered in due place. In the present section it falls to be considered as occasioning a test of the trustworthiness of that evidence, by which Israel's religion was shown to be the religion of the Living God, the *real* God.

1. *A God* (under iii. 16): not simply in that general sense in which (Ps. lxxxii. 1, 6; see under Ex. xxi. 6) magistrates may be spoken of as "gods," but in the specific sense, of authoritatively prescribing, so that the speech of Aaron is *oracular* for Pharaoh, since in Moses he has to deal with God. *Prophet*: here, as appears from the after proceedings, not only in special, one who foretells, predicting what God has decreed, but also in general, one who *forth-tells*, declaring what God now commands. Abraham was a *prophet* (*nabhi*, Ge. xx. 7), in respect of intimacy with God, qualifying him for efficacious intercession on a man's behalf. But now, the official prophet is one, whose appropriate work it is authoritatively *to declare God's mind* to men, whether that mind be regarding the future, or the present, or, though it should be, the past. No means are left unemployed for conveying the



- Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh, that he send the  
 3 children of Israel out of his land. And I will harden Pharaoh's  
 heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of  
 4 Egypt. But Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you, that I may  
 lay my hand upon Egypt, and bring forth mine armies, *and*  
 my people the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, by  
 5 great judgments. And the Egyptians shall know that I *am* the  
 Lord, when I stretch forth mine hand upon Egypt, and bring  
 6 out the children of Israel from among them. And Moses and  
 7 Aaron did as the Lord commanded them, so did they. And  
 Moses *was* fourscore years old, and Aaron fourscore and three  
 years old, when they spake unto Pharaoh.
- 8 And the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying,  
 9 When Pharaoh shall speak unto you, saying, Show a miracle  
 for you: then thou shalt say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and  
 cast *it* before Pharaoh, *and* it shall become a serpent.

message to its destination. And a leading means employed is, an ambassador, a "messenger" duly authorized. *Send*: not simply, give him leave to, but commission him, command and authorize him (cp. vi. 1). 3, 4. "An hard saying." To Pharaoh himself it will by and by be plainly said (ix. 16), that "for this very end" God hath raised him up. *Harden* (note on *Induration*, under iv. 18-31). In iv. 21 the word (*Chasag*) means, lit. to make stiff, or, strong (cp. "stiff-necked," "unbending obstinacy"). Here it (*quâshâh*) means, to make hard ("heart of stone"), as if producing insensibility (Eph. iv. 19, 20) to rational influences (He. vi. 4-8). This is ascribed to God's action (cp. Ro. i. 18), for accomplishment of His own purpose (Mat. xiii. 13-15): that purpose being, not simply to deliver Israel, but to do this manifestly by the Lord's *hand upon Egypt*. Hence, *mine armies, and my people* (the *and* of our Version here is needless, and so a weakness). Israel is delivered as being *Jehovah's*. And this has to be shown (see on the *spoiling*, under iii. 22) by the manner of the exodus. That departure is not to be a flight, or an escape, but a triumph over prostrate enemies (*great judgments*). Thus, *that I may*: perhaps better, *and I will*. 5. Here again that *hand* (Da. v. 5-9). *When—bring out*: lit. in my stretching—and bringing. That hand, when extended, will compel a feeling of the reality, so scornfully repelled now (v. 2). 6. Exact obedience: "pure and entire." 7. This, marked as an ever memorable point of time, turning on the hinge of these two lives (on their *length* see under vi., note on *genealogy*) at this moment. The foolish representation of Moses, as a feeble old man leaning on a crutch, is the opposite of historical (De. xxxiv. 7). Did (*this*) Pharaoh ask them about their ages (Ge. xlvii. 8)? 8, 9. *Miracle*: the Heb. word here is (*môphêth*) not (*ôth*) the ordinary Old Testament word for "sign," but the vaguer one for "wonder"—perhaps, terrific wonder, like a heathen prodigy or "monster" (see on *miracle* in *Introd.*). Pharaoh, like Herod, might desire to see a miracle out of simple or morbid curiosity. *Rod*: their whole munition of war (Ge. iv. 6). See note under iv. Only to point, not, to strike: this time no one is hurt. But this is prelusive warning of the judgment strokes. 10-13. The word for *serpent* here (*tannin*) is not, as in

10 And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and they did  
 so as the Lord had commanded: and Aaron cast down his  
 11 rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a  
 serpent. Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the  
 sorcerers: now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like  
 12 manner with their enchantments. For they cast down every  
 man his rod, and they became serpents; but Aaron's rod  
 13 swallowed up their rods. And he hardened Pharaoh's heart,  
 that he hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had said.

ver. 21 and in iii., the specific Heb. word (*nachash*) for "serpent" (Ge. iii. 1). It has the generic meaning of, *long one*; and thus describes the *saurian reptiles* of Ge. i. 21 (mistranslated, "great whales") and the "dragons" (*crocodiles*) of prophecy. The Sept. has "drakōn;" which the Revised Version adopts for *tannin* in De. xxxii. 33 and Ps. xci. 13. Probably what is here in view is, *the Egyptian practice of snake-charming*, employed for purposes of imposture through mock miracle, now to be put to shameful flight on its own ground, by a genuine miracle of its own type,—as sterling money resembles counterfeit (cp. 1 Ki. xviii. 21-40). It is said that the Israelites were by the Egyptians nicknamed "snakes." *And before his servants* (cp. Act. xxvi. 26). *Wise men* (*chôqmim*) might be so called (cp. "doctor") without allusion to presumed supernaturalism of knowledge. But the description probably meant what our "wise" does in "wizard." *Magicians* (*chartûmim*) describes a more distinctly professional class or caste (not in the strict sense of "caste"—in which it did not exist in Egypt). They are "sacred scribes," perhaps entrusted on the king's behalf with a "Book of Enchantments" venerated and consulted like the Sibylline Oracles of Rome. The same name is given in Daniel to the *magi* (Da. i. 20, ii. 2), a highly respected order. Their position resembled that of the *Clerici* of the Middle Ages, with a strong bent toward physical researches, which slid into a profession of "black arts," of natural magic, for which Egypt long was famous—or infamous. Falsetto supernaturalism (cp. Act. xix. 17-19) is characteristic of credulous Paganism—*e.g.* the "spiritualism" of the present day, which has a supernaturalism without God, like the atheistic natural magic of Egypt. *With their enchantments.* Perhaps they employed "spells" or "incantations" from their "Books of Enchantment." Aaron employed only the "name" of Jehovah (cp. Act. iii. 6). The word for *sorcerers* might perhaps better be translated, *enchanters*. For it has been traced to a root which means, "to pray;" while *sorcerer*, from the Latin *sors*, has reference to casting lots. From the same root the intense (Piel) form meaning, *to mutter incantations*, corresponded to our "wizard," the degradation of our "wisdom," on its way to the shameful *finale* of "wiseacre." *His rod.* The staff of office; like the *lituus* of (Pagan) Romish priests, was perhaps an instrument of assumed intrinsic potency, different from the simple staff of Aaron. The wisdom that aims at being a wizard is apt to go farther.

#### Exercise 15.

1. Why should belief in God make men ready to believe in miracles, and unable to believe in natural magic? Does it show an unbelieving temper to say of spirit-rapping, "I do not take enough of interest in it to disbelieve it"? Why?

2. *Witchcraft.* (1) Does the Bible say that witches have supernatural power? (2) If they have not, why should they be put to death? (3) How do you understand the history as to the witch of Endor?
- Superstition.* Taking this to mean: "under disturbing influence of things unseen," (1) How comes it that atheists are superstitious, though (they say) they do not believe in anything unseen? (2) Why should a Christian be free from superstition, though (he says) the universe to him is filled with one who is "fearful in His praises"?

NOTE.—On the **demonology and black arts** here coming into view, see note on *witchcraft*, under xxii. 18. The bearing of Moses toward them in Egypt has been that of the Bible religion all through its history. The fundamental position of this religion is, that Jehovah, the Creator and Ruler of all, is the only real God, and the true first cause in all events. Of the gods of the heathen, and their works, it speaks in two ways: (1) fundamentally and essentially, they are nothing, mere vanity, spectral illusion: (2) in effect among mankind they are powerful malignant agencies, ever tending toward a tyranny of evil on the earth. All the miracles as well as prophecies, the battles as well as sermons, of this religion, are aimed at the destruction of that tyranny of evil. Its warfare is carried on, mainly and directly, like the warfare of the sunrise against night, simply by showing itself, in its doctrines and evidences, as the life which is the light of men. Those powerful malignant influences pass away before its presence, as the snow melts away in the spring sunshine. So long as they remain, it makes war upon them. The Bible history, in Egypt and in Palestine, proceeds upon the received view, that these agencies are not simply evil influences, but, more or less, evil persons, in some connection with earth and men, but not natively belonging to this mundane human system. Some have thought that the Bible demonology can be explained without supposing the reality of personal demons or heathen gods. The generality of Bible readers will never believe that, and there is no call to believe it. The light of Christianity kills the heathen superstitions. But, though the demons thus go away into the abyss, that is no reason for believing that they never were here. We are on the border of a wide comprehensive history, of a universe that is variously connected with our visible. The man who strives to reduce everything to the type of one limited experience shows more of wisacreism than of wisdom. But, *whatever* may have been that dominion of darkness, it is broken in the heart of its power by this light.

### Progress of the Campaign (vii. 14-x. 29).

About the Plagues we have no real information but in Scripture. And in the light of Scripture, we are led to dismiss from our minds various imaginations about them, which can only tend to injure the interest of historical and religious truth, by bringing it into complicity with legends and conjectures. For instance, there is a popular impression that, through the disaster of the Red Sea, Egypt must have been completely shattered as a political force. But the Bible nowhere says any such thing. It does not even say that the Pharaoh was drowned; nor, that so much as one Egyptian foot-soldier went into the Red Sea. The cavalry were lost, of that portion of the army in one district which could be got ready extempore: but an empire could survive a Balaclava ruin of its cavalry like that. Again, we find one reasoning very laboriously to connect the history of the Plagues with the yearly Nile flood, under the impression, say, that that would furnish a sort of natural basis for the work of turning the water into blood. But here we perceive that the mind of the reasoner is being coloured with a theory about a natural basis of these works. We, being aware that the history is distinctively of supernaturalism, will not begin with—throwing tit-bits to the lion of incredulity—irrationally "limiting" the Great Worker by an assumption of ours about a natural basis of His working. We will allow the duration of the period to disclose itself, if it be disclosed at all, in the facts of the real information that is given us.

Then, with reference to the supernaturalism of the Plagues, we must allow the facts to be our teachers; otherwise, our own imagination is our teacher, and we are composing fiction instead of learning history. A "plague" is a "stroke." By use and wont of languages, some such word is appropriated for designation of wide-spread visitation of deadly disease; such as the Great Plague of London, described with the unsurpassed pictorial realism of Defoe, and the Black Death of the Middle Ages, and the Great Plague of Athens, in delineation of which Thucydides has put forth all his power. The Scripture Plague is a visitation of God. It is a judicial infliction of punishment on account of the sin of the community so visited. And the Plagues of Egypt, further, were a campaign of sensible divine working for the supernatural redemption of Israel, and for the demonstration of the claim of Israel's God to be owned as the only God Living and True. And in a history which as a whole is of supernatural redemption, we have hardly any interest in portioning out in details, by lines of demarcation, precisely where ordinary providence, very specially operating for the salvation of God's elect, passes into what is in the strict sense extraordinary or miraculous.

The great event at the close, the death of Egypt's first-born, is unquestionably extraordinary supernatural, as if all the dead in Egypt had come alive out of its graves. That may serve to establish the character of the period of the Plagues, a connected course of action which it crowns,—showing that the period is a *régime* of extraordinary supernaturalism, in which miracle is the order of the day. When we look at the preceding Plagues, we observe that they are on lines of ordinary occurrence; so that, if we had simply observed one of them in isolation, not knowing anything about a moral purpose of it, we might have been disposed to regard it as only a very astonishing freak of nature. But they are not in isolation. They are so many parts of a campaign, all directed to one supernatural purpose of redemption. There is not one of them that does not terrify the Egyptians, familiar with all the natural aspects of their own land, as a thing the like of which has never been seen before in the history of the nature of Egypt's land. And, blending inseparably with them all, so as to be in the whole action of them, as the soul is in the body, there is the unmistakably miraculous element of prophecy, prediction of the incalculable, forecasting what no creature could have foreseen; and showing the forecast, whether weeks or days before, or only at the moment when the strange work is to be done. Whether there might not have been frogs or flies without miracle, we need not inquire in detail: nor, whether a man could know beforehand what these creatures were to do. The whole history is of one great miraculous working; and the working was really such, or the history is a dream. We are now inquiring as to the meaning of the history, on the assumption of its reality.

When we look at the history straight in the face, we observe some features of it which it may be well to note, were it only as a help to observation and recollection of the details. Thus, the first nine Plagues are seen to form a series ascending, on the scale of terribly manifested power, so that the last of them, in its culmination of awful grandeur, is to those before it as the proverbial "*ninth wave*," in the climax of the rhythmical movements of a storm. Then, when we look more closely, we perceive that the nine are naturally grouped into a succession of three triads, marking so many successive and progressive stages, of ascending to the culmination in the Tenth Plague (catastrophic).

Thus, while the first three plagues are common to all the land, the triad which follows it has a new feature of terror to the Egyptians, in that they alone are smitten by it, while the Israelites escape the stroke; and in the last three there was not only a tormenting of the persons of the plague-stricken, but a vast and overwhelming destruction of their property, with an appalling force as of destruction impending from the whole system of nature around them. When, yet further, we consider those triads separately within themselves, we see that within them in detail there is that same rhythmical progression of ascending, so that the third of

every three is as the *trikumia* or "third wave" of the Greeks. Other details, too numerous for formal notice, we glance at in passing, so as to see in them all so many distinct intimations of a clear intelligence pervading the whole, as when Ezekiel, in his vision of providence, saw "wheels within wheels." Thus, while in the first three it is Aaron that wields the rod, in the second three it is Moses; and in the third, as if to show that God is the only worker "all in all," that symbol is withdrawn from use. In every three the last plague comes without warning; there is warning of the second; and of the first there is a long warning, in the morning of the day. At the end of the first three the magicians perceive "the finger of God;" at the close of the second three, they openly withdraw from the field; and when the ninth is reached, after all the pride of Egypt is broken in men's hearts, Pharaoh himself is brought to submission for the time.

It is needless to multiply such observations at the outset. Already we see in the history nothing aimless or chaotic. Everything is of a crystalline definiteness in clear purpose. There is through the whole a distinctly manifested luminous power of will, moving resistless toward a predestined end. The end which these things demand is, some such thing as the exodus: a great salvation for Israel, through a great overwhelming disaster to Egypt. Unless there be some such outcome, that whole history of the plagues really comes to be nothing, as if the Nile stream had suddenly vanished away, like a mocking mirage of the desert. On the other hand, let us suppose that we are otherwise aware of the fact of an exodus, of wonderful deliverance for Israel, and awful calamity for Egypt; then the history of the plagues, such as we have it here, is seen to be precisely such a previous movement as would have led to such a *finale*. The Nile river entering the sea has not come from nowhere and from nothing. It must have had a previous course, a veritable source. The exodus requires that there should have been some very strange history, such as could result in a nation's leaving the Egyptian House of Bondage; so that, if we had not had a history, such as meets the case, in this account of the Plagues, it would have been necessary to invent some such history in order to explain the facts;—instead of explaining the facts away, in order to deny real history.

### **Progress of the Campaign: FIRST TRIAD OF THE PLAGUES (Chap. vii. 14-viii. 19).**

In the first three Plagues, as in those embraced within the other triads, there is an ascending order of severity. And another feature which the first triad has in common with the two others is, that the last of its Plagues is without warning, while the long warning of the first Plague is in the morning. On the other hand, this first triad differs from the others, in that Aaron wields the rod, that the magicians continue their opposition miracles to the last, and that its Plagues as a class are less severe than those of the other triads.

**First Plague** (vii. 14-25)—*the river turned into blood*. When the Nile flood is rising it turns from a green to a yellowish colour, and thence to *red*. This was at one time ascribed to a colouring soil brought from the upper waters; but now it is established by experiment (of Ehrenberg) that it is caused by the presence of microscopic life (cryptogams and infusoria). Thus far the Plague has a look of being in the line of nature. But the description here, of *water turned into blood* (cp. Joel ii. 31 and 2 Ki. iii. 22), presents far more of contrast than of resemblance to that reddening (cp. under vers. 17, 18). And it is far from certain that the Nile was in full flood at the time.

- 14 And the Lord said unto Moses, Pharaoh's heart *is* hardened,  
 15 he refuseth to let the people go. Get thee unto Pharaoh in  
 the morning: lo, he goeth out unto the water; and thou  
 shalt stand by the river's brink against he come; and the rod  
 which was turned to a serpent shalt thou take in thine hand.  
 16 And thou shalt say unto him, The Lord God of the Hebrews  
 hath sent me unto thee, saying, Let my people go, that they  
 may serve me in the wilderness: and, behold, hitherto thou  
 17 wouldest not hear. Thus saith the Lord, In this thou shalt  
 know that I *am* the Lord: behold, I will smite with the rod  
 that *is* in mine hand upon the waters which *are* in the river,  
 18 and they shall be turned to blood. And the fish that *is* in  
 the river shall die, and the river shall stink; and the Egyptians  
 shall loathe to drink of the water of the river.  
 19 And the Lord spake unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Take  
 thy rod, and stretch out thine hand upon the waters of Egypt,  
 upon their streams, upon their rivers, and upon their ponds,

14. *Hardened* (under iv. 21). Here the Heb. word (*khabhēdh*) means, lit. **made heavy** (Schiller said, "the gods are powerless against stupidity." But *moral* stupidity? Jn. xvi. 8). 15. *Morning*. Some say,—to see how high the flood had risen (though perhaps it was not there). Others,—to pay a morning visit to the Nile as a deity. What the history—disregarding irrelevancies—shows is, that he was **warned**—that morning—**early**. *The water*: no doubt of the River (*yōr*). *Brink*: lit. **lip**—the Nile's embankment. *Rod*: a philosopher declined to debate with an emperor, because he was "master of thirty legions." Against the Emperor Pharaoh, Aaron and Moses bring only that rod. 16. *Hath sent*: **did send**. *Wouldest not hear*: **hast not heard**. *That I—the Lord*: the grand *formula* (under vi. 6, 8). *In this*: in what? In the discolouration of the Nile flood? How could *that* (familiar thing) move Pharaoh as miraculous? *I—smite*. Through Moses or Aaron, but always it is Jehovah that smites. *The waters*: in the river, and from it (ver. 21). But at present, mark the *effects* of this turning water into blood. 18. **These** are not effects of the river's natural discolouration. *Loathe*: the Egyptians delight in the very taste of Nile water, and hardly have any other that they can drink. Their life was to be (by this "stroke") almost poisoned at its loved fountain. On the other hand, it is when the river (naturally) turns red that it is at the *acmé* of its natural goodness. 19. It is through *Aaron* that Moses acts. The detail here is in the manner of one intimately familiar with Egypt. The word for *rivers* here (*yōrim*), plural of that for "river," probably means, the main arterial canals, by which *the* river was led through the land, in so many (*yōrim*) *little Niles*. That for *ponds* is by derivation associated with **putridity**; thus probably referring to lagoons, puddles, marshes, left by the Nile after flood. That for *pools*, lit. **gatherings** (of water), corresponds to **artificial reservoirs** of water detained for supply in the dry season. The *wood* and *stone* (vessels) are employed for **filtering**; but water might be kept in vessels for daily domestic purposes. *Streams*, here first specified, may mean, the natural **branches** of the Nile;

- and upon all their pools of water, that they may become blood; and *that* there may be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in *vessels of wood*, and in *vessels of stone*.
- 20 And Moses and Aaron did so, as the Lord commanded: and he lifted up the rod, and smote the waters that *were* in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh, and in the sight of his servants; and all the waters that *were* in the river were turned to blood.
- 21 And the fish that *was* in the river died; and the river stank, and the Egyptians could not drink of the water of the river:
- 22 and there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt. And the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, neither did he hearken unto
- 23 them; as the Lord had said. And Pharaoh turned and went
- 24 into his house, neither did he set his heart to this also. And all the Egyptians digged round about the river for water to drink; for they could not drink of the water of the river.
- 25 And seven days were fulfilled, after that the Lord had smitten the river.

but more probably it is a general expression for what follows in detail. The verse is in substance an exact and exhaustive description of the very peculiar water system of Egypt—wholly different from everything known in Palestine. And that, to historic sense, is a strong presumption of authenticity of this history. *That there may be*: lit. *there shall be*. 20. *In the sight—servants*. The “solemn procession” of pulpit rhetoric and other “high art,” here only obscures the plain point of the history, that at the decisive moment Egypt was there to see. If the water was red (with flood) in natural course, what made the deep impression? Aaron's action without result? In fact, the red colour is here made the result of his action. What would Moses have to foretell (vers. 16, 17)? The natural here sets off the supernatural by clear demarcation. 21. *Throughout Egypt*: See in initial note on *The First Nine Plagues*. 22. *Did so*: what sort of imitation they achieved, with the dribbles of water at their command (ver. 25), does not appear. It would have been more to the purpose—their purpose—if they had *restored* the water from its unpleasant unwholesomeness:—**healing their god**. *As—said*: Here note the **miracle of foresight**, prediction of the incalculable; *predixit quia predestinavit* (under viii. 9). 23. *Also*: after the two warnings. 24. In Egypt, artificial processes connected with supply of water are largely in use. In Australia, they now bore for artesian wells far from any (visible) river.

#### Exercise 16.

1. *As to the well most greatly honoured*. (1) What two met there, never to part? (2) Prove that one of them follows Israel all the way. (3) What did *He* say about wells?
2. Quote an O. T. text having a reference to an *Egyptian* process in watering the land.
3. *Water as Life in God*. (1) Quote two N. T. texts referring to this. (2) Also two O. T. texts.

CHAP. VIII. 1. And the Lord spake unto Moses, Go unto Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Let my people  
 2 go, that they may serve me. And if thou refuse to let *them*  
 3 go, behold, I will smite all thy borders with frogs: and the river shall bring forth frogs abundantly, which shall go up, and come into thine house, and into thy bedchamber, and upon thy bed, and into the house of thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thine ovens, and into thy kneading-troughs:

NOTE on **the religious aspect of the Plagues.**—The Nile, which was the life of Egypt, was honoured by Egyptians as a god. The miracle of defiling and corrupting it was thus a stroke at the heart of their worldly religion, like the word of Christ in Jn. iv. 10, and troubles that shatter idols. The plagues, ranging so widely over the natural system of the land, necessarily struck the Egyptian nature worship at other points. The scope of the whole became unfolded as being, to expose the foundation of that worship as being “no god,” but “vanity,”—a helpless *thing*. We here see illustration of the general fact, that the miracles of Bible religion always *aim at* destruction of Satan’s kingdom, deliverance of man’s world from the tyranny of evil. It is only from this point of view that the miracles can be rightly seen as always beneficent. The beneficence of the Plagues appears in this light, even under their *judicial* aspect (cp. Re. xv. 3, etc.).

**Second Plague** (viii. 1-15)—*of frogs*. (In the Heb.—not in the Samaritan—vers. 1-4 are placed along with chap. vii.) The word here for *frogs* (*tšēphardim*) occurs nowhere else in Scripture excepting Psalms, which take it from this place. The animal (perhaps the word) is now represented by the Egyptian *dafod*, a small frog, very abundant in the river, and at the flood time pervading “the land.” The creature is often a serious nuisance or minor “plague,” not only through stinking when dead, but by the disgustingness of its aspect and hideousness of its croaking (which some travellers describe as “shrieking”) when alive. It crawls instead of jumping; and (like “the toad, ugly and venomous”) is coarse-skinned, and repulsive to the eye. When these loathely things crawl over the ground in yelling myriads, human life becomes hard to bear. Ancient secular history has plagues of frogs, one of which actually drove the people out of their country. Such a visitation must have been peculiarly severe upon Egyptians; for they were conspicuously cleanly and dainty in their bodily personal habits; and to them there would be something of religious horror in the distress, inasmuch as the frog—perhaps as a symbol of affluent vitality—was to them a sacred animal. (They also worshipped the ibis, a destroyer of frogs: but it is not now uncommon for worldly men to hate their god, and worship what they abominate.)

1. *My people—serve me*: observe still the **personal** reference (v. 2). 2. *Thou refuse—I will smite*: **antithesis**, thy refusing—my smiting. *Borders*: natural trope for **territories**. *Thine*: that is, because of thee. The *smite* (*nagaph*) here is the appropriate word for “plague,” a **stroke**: the specific meaning, of *divine* stroke of *judgment*, coming in from the connexion, as “the sword” in an *executioner’s* hand is “death.” 3, 4. *The River*: their Father Nile, made to **send home** their punishment. *Bring forth abundantly*: swarm (under i. 7—same word). *Go up*: like an invading army: not only swarming in the waters, but pervasive crawling through the homes. In *bed-chamber* and even *bed*. Of *all houses*, in country and town, farm-station and village. Reaching every individual of **his** *servants*, all through this *people* which is **his**. (From all quarters, ver. 5, cp. under vii. 19.) *Oven*: a large pot, heated by a fire of wood inside: bread was baked by patching



- 4 And the frogs shall come up both on thee, and upon thy people, and upon all thy servants.
- 5 And the Lord spake unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Stretch forth thine hand with thy rod over the streams, over the rivers, and over the ponds, and cause frogs to come up upon the land
- 6 of Egypt. And Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt; and the frogs came up, and covered the land of
- 7 Egypt. And the magicians did so with their enchantments, and brought up frogs upon the land of Egypt.
- 8 Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, Entreat the Lord, that he may take away the frogs from me, and from my people; and I will let the people go, that they may do
- 9 sacrifice unto the Lord. And Moses said unto Pharaoh, Glory over me: when shall I entreat for thee, and for thy servants, and for thy people, to destroy the frogs from thee and
- 10 thy houses, *that* they may remain in the river only? And he said, To-morrow. And he said, *Be it* according to thy word; that thou mayest know that *there is* none like unto the Lord
- 11 our God. And the frogs shall depart from thee, and from thy houses, and from thy servants, and from thy people; they
- 12 shall remain in the river only. And Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh; and Moses cried unto the Lord because
- 13 of the frogs which he had brought against Pharaoh. And the Lord did according to the word of Moses; and the frogs

the dough on the outer surface thus prepared (a hollow "girdle"). *Kneading-troughs*: where dough was made, and kept for baking. Everywhere, even there, that loathsome shrieking thing! (Sailors, bringing from the Mediterranean a cargo of bones, were thus afflicted with loathsome reptiles that overran the vessel, and even crawled into the men's ears when they slept (so they told the present writer, A.D. 1853). 5, 6. The plague came from **all** the Egyptian waters (under vers. 3, 4) to all the land. 7. They did not **stop** the plague; but produced an imitation. 8. Pharaoh is beginning to bend the stiff neck: (but it is elastic as glass). *Me—my people*: they and I are one: a kingly king, though ungodly in his idolatry. (So Saul, at Endor and Gilboa, touching the heart of a "sweet king of song.") 9. *Glory over me*: a peculiar expression, meaning, "I am at your service:" **name the time**: I am at your bidding, to **keep that time**. This on Moses' part is a wager of battle, and brings into distinctness the **miracle of prophecy**, prediction of the incalculable: prophecy evinces Providence—"prediction shows predestination" (under vii. 22). 10. *That thou mayest*: **in order that**. For that end the event will **keep time** with Moses' word (any one might have foretold that the frogs would disappear *some time*); so Pharaoh fixes on *to-morrow—according to thy word*: "done!" Yet he may be terrified at the thought of the thing happening, as when one has invoked a fiend. 11. A complete riddance (ver. 29, and under ix. 4): Moses burns his ships

died out of the houses, out of the villages, and out of the  
14 fields. And they gathered them together upon heaps; and  
15 the land stank. But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite,  
he hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto them; as  
the Lord had said.

behind him. 13. *Died out of*: off from. The word for villages (*chatzôth*) is connected with **fencing**. Ruins of fencing, three feet high, of immemorial antiquity, have recently been discovered in the Sinaitic Peninsula. That may have protected a tribe for a season, perhaps visited by Jethro's flock-master. Low fencing, topped with prickly shrubs (cp. dwarf-wall and railing), is now in African use against robbers and (other) beasts of prey. The *village* in our text might be a rural "township," enclosed in a fenced courtyard. The *houses*, (perhaps) **mansions**, — "station" or "steading," — as distinguished (not by the frogs, nor by "pale death, with equal foot") from clustering "hovels of the poor." 14. *Heaps*: lit. **heaps, heaps**, as if like "sand-hills" on the coast. *Stank*: even of the natural plague of frogs, the offensive smell has been found a dangerous nuisance. Egypt—though in general very healthy—is historically a sort of mother-country of "the plague;" and it has been suggested that the custom of embalming may have originated in desire to prevent corruption of death from mingling with the pure atmosphere of the idolized land. *Respite*: the Heb. word is suggestive of a **breathing time**: abused relief and opportunity (Prov. xxvii. 22). Still, *he* at least has seen, through the miracle of prediction, that the infliction was miraculous.

#### Exercise 17.

1. *Natural "order" and "beauty" (cosmos and mundus)* are two names for the world:—(1) How does this bear upon the question of the being and attributes of God? (2) Disregard of personal cleanliness, and of order about houses and grounds,—what does that indicate as to the spiritual character of a man? (3) Write a short essay on the proposition, that a slatternly woman is like a plague of frogs.
2. *Supernatural revelation as to cleanliness.* (1) Direct: give Bible laws for maintenance of a clean person and house. (2) Give a Pauline argument against moral impurity, upon the ground that God's temple ought not to be dirty.
3. *Statute law for sanitation.* (1) Show precedent, in sanitary laws of God through nature. (2) What right have the community to pull down unwholesome private residences in a city? (3) What if a man, who makes money by letting houses not fit to live in, should say, "Have I not a right to do what I will with my own?"

NOTE on **physical phariseeism**.—An extreme in rigour as to cleanness of all *outside* things, such as the outside of sepulchres, may accompany an extreme impurity of heart and soul, so thorough as to be unconscious like death. Hypocrisy, the masked condition, may in *unconsciousness* of blackness be as perfect as (1 Co. xiii. 4; Ex. xxxiv. 29) true morality is in unconsciousness of shining. The Egyptians appear to have gone to the extreme of the unconscious baseness of the "sniffy." Pharaoh, revolting from the contact of an innocent creature, whose "shrieking" is compassionated by Him who feeds the young ravens, is no more conscious of the *dirtiness* of keeping Israel in bondage than a cannibal chief, who has got arrayed in shining garments of civilisation, is aware of the filth and rags of a savage, appearing through those garments which he does

16 And the Lord said unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Stretch  
out thy rod, and smite the dust of the land, that it may  
17 become lice throughout all the land of Egypt. And they  
did so; for Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod, and

not know how to put on him. The dirtiness was the essence of the essence of the Egyptian religion, Pantheistic or Polytheistic, in worship of *a thing* in place of the Living God. Perhaps it is most quintessential in a thoroughly cultivated Christian gentlewoman who is at heart ungodly. Still, the honest old maxim holds true, that "cleanliness is next to godliness." In this relation, too, hypocrisy is a tribute paid by vice to virtue. There are districts where the transition to an evangelical country-side is marked by an aspect of superior cleanliness. The new creation has in it a Platonism of making "the true, the beautiful, and the good," to be really one.

**The Third Plague** (Ex. viii. 16-19)—*of lice*. Here we see the "third wave," the trikumia; in that the plague, which they saw in the blood, and which in the frogs invaded their homes, now reaches, and wounds, and torments *them, in their persons*. Here, at the close of the first Triad, the ministry of Aaron in the strokes of God is discontinued; and the opposition miracles of the magicians are produced no longer, though personally they are not driven off the field until (ix. 11) the closing stroke of the second Triad. And here, as in the two other Triads, the last Plague comes without warning.

The word for *lice* (*kinnim*) is found only in connection with this Plague (Sept. has *skniphes*). There is no assuring consent of interpreters as to the species of animal that is meant—in fact, they do not know;—though some take it upon them to be "prophets" where Moses has not "put the word in their mouth." Many would render it simply *lice*. A recent traveller speaks of an occasion in Egypt on which the very dust of the earth seemed to have turned into lice. Others have suggested, *mosquito*, or *midge*,—bred in stagnant water (which might be physically connected with the preceding plagues). In Scotland even, North temperate zone, a band of masons have been driven away by midges from their valued employment on a building in a Highland glen (so the minister told the present writer). In Egypt, after the Nile flood, such insects become extremely troublesome. There is one—midge-like—which enters the eyes, ears, and nostrils, piercing the skin, so as to add a stinging pain to the disgust. The *miraculousness* in this case, owned by the magicians, may have been evinced by the unparalleled *amount* of the nuisance in this case, coming *at the command* of Aaron with his rod.

We covenanted with Moses, as the source of our information, to allow *the duration* of the campaign to disclose itself in its facts. We now begin to perceive in the facts, that those whose judgment is coloured by the naturalistic red of the Nile's flood are not to be trusted as guides in a campaign of supernaturalism, but may lead into the wrong camp. The three plagues which we now have considered do not wear the aspect of occurring when the Nile is in full flood. On the contrary, they all have a look of, land **from which the flood is gone**. Those who have not seen Egypt may realize the situation if they have been, as anglers or otherwise, beside an estuarial river behind the ebbing tide, on a hot sweltering day. Fugitive crabs and flounders are to be seen there in the place of frogs, and other feelings are touched by some dead fish and many living flies. Puddles, lagoons, marshes; dying frogs in heaps on heaps; midges bred in swamp;—all these appear to speak—though perhaps not "shriek"—to a man whose ears are stuffed with a "theory"—of a land from which the flood is now departed, not of a Nile inland "sea" (Nah. iii. 8). However, we will allow the matter to disclose itself in further facts.

16. *Dust*:—"the combat deepens"—first, the **water**; second, the **half-water** animal; now, **the soil**. 17. *They did so*: without **any** warning of this

smote the dust of the earth, and it became lice in man and in beast: all the dust of the land became lice throughout all  
 18 the land of Egypt. And the magicians did so with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not: so  
 19 there were lice upon man and upon beast. Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This *is* the finger of God: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had said.

third stroke, and apparently after only a **short** warning with the second. This has a certain weird aspect of a fearfulness, as in the bargaining of the Sibyl about her Books. *In man—beast.* In this case (see initial note) it may have been literally **in** them: the torturing enemy piercing through the skin. On a perilous military expedition in India, an advanced guard of British cavalry was routed in utter helpless panic by a charge of wasps, whose tree-dwelling had been playfully pierced by an officer with his spear (*Diary of Lieut.-Gen. Sir Hope Grant, then and there in command*). Homer describes the wasp as the most valiant of creatures. But the British army—"Albion's boast"—might find a smaller enemy more formidable because more subtly penetrative and as painful to flesh and blood. There is a story of an African **lion** being driven in helpless torture by the small creatures—as Io was by the gad-fly. The text does not give them wings. What it gives is, the irresistible penetrativeness of their poisonous burning impurity in man and beast: carrying the misery *home* (Scoticé, "ben") into the inmost shrine of animal sensitiveness:—Schoolmaster Law believes in *the rod*. *All the—Egypt: All the land over, the dust was completely turned into kinnim.* This, to nature-worshippers, must have been awful as well as revolting. 18. *They could not.* Perhaps their successful imitation of the first two miracles had been the result of a sleight-of-hand, or (other) conjuring "art magic" (born in Egypt), which failed to go farther. The historian does not say what it was, but, that *it failed*. *So—beast.* With magicians confessedly non-plussed, and a man-god king sullenly silent, the land lies helpless—like Gulliver tied by Liliputians—in the humiliating torture of this plague; which is not sent away like the others, but allowed to sate itself unto death. 19. *This—God. Historically interesting as the first definition of miracle.* (Note at the close of this article.) The plural word *elohim* (under i. 17) is that most commonly employed where we have "God," in the sense of simply, **the Deity**: being thus applied as name of the one divine Being, who in His unity has a plenitude in plurality of excellences (not to say of persons). But the word is also put to the use of meaning "gods," a plurality of deities, as we speak of "the gods" (Ex. xii. 12, xx. 23, etc.). What precisely the magicians meant, we need not inquire beyond the point of the history. The point of the history is, their seeing and confessing in this Plague (1) *Miracle*, of extraordinary supernaturalism; (2) The *Miracle* proving that *God* was in the work, supernaturally showing to men His otherwise secret mind and will. But presumably there underlay this confession, of the pointed significance of the work as divine, an acknowledgment, that the God who thus had shown Himself as the real God, the living God Almighty, was *Jehovah*, the deity of the Hebrews, on behalf of whom Moses and Aaron had spoken and acted all along and also now.

20 And the Lord said unto Moses, Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh; lo, he cometh forth to the water; and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Let my

#### Exercise 18.

1. "*Finger of God.*" Explain the use of this expression, along with expressions regarding the "hand" and the "arm" of Jehovah, in connexion with Israel's deliverance.
2. What purpose or purposes might be served by the absence of warning in the case of this miracle?
3. (1) Is it presumptuous to pray for preservation "from sudden death"? Why? (2) May an event be sudden which is not unexpected? How? (3) Certainty of event, with uncertainty as to the time: what condition of mind should these produce? Illustrate from the teaching of Christ and of Paul.

#### Progress of the Campaign: SECOND TRIAD OF THE PLAGUES (Chap. viii. 20-ix. 12).

Here, as in the other two Triads, there is first a long warning, then a shorter warning, and finally no warning. Here the strokes begin to touch the property of the Egyptians as well as their persons, and in the last of the three there is an ominous threat against their life. A notable speciality of the Second Triad as compared with the first is, that the rod is no longer employed; as if to show that the works were not owing to any virtue in such an instrument, though it may please God to make use of such. Another speciality is, that now there is visible separation between the two peoples in relation to the Plagues that are in the land, the Egyptians being smitten by them while the Israelites are untouched (this is not said expressly in connection with the sixth). With these two specialities may be connected a third, namely, that now at last the enchanters abandon the field. Their conviction (viii. 19), of a divinity in the movement on Israel's behalf, working against Pharaoh, may have left them uncertain whether the mover would persist in His apparent purpose, or whether, against the natural forces of the world, He would be able to accomplish that purpose. All such doubt is now brought to an end. They abandon the field, as finally convinced that this God is irresistible—and dangerous.

**Fourth Plague** (viii. 20-31)—*of flies*. This plague is distinguished from the preceding three in various respects: (1) It is simply announced by Moses, with no symbolical action of Aaron; (2) Goshen is expressly and formally exempted from it; (3) Pharaoh gives way, to the extent of half measures of compliance, which prove to be hollow; while (4) The magicians are no longer to the front.

21. *Swarms*. The word here (*yarobh*) has been supposed to mean natively, **mixture** (or **gathering**), so that the plague would be some sort of collection of wild beasts. The Sept. Translators, Egyptian by residence, presumably had means of knowing about especially Egyptian matters of this sort. They make the *yarobh* to have been a dog-fly (*kynomya*). This insect is described by ancient writers as audacious and fierce, inflicting torture more serious

21 people go, that they may serve me : else, if thou wilt not let my people go, behold, I will send swarms of *flies* upon thee, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thy houses : and the houses of the Egyptians shall be full of  
 22 swarms of *flies*, and also the ground whereon they *are*. And I will sever in that day the land of Goshen, in which my people dwell, that no swarms of *flies* shall be there ; to the end thou mayest know that I *am* the Lord in the midst of the  
 23 earth. And I will put a division between my people and thy

than the midges. Others derive *yarobh* from a root meaning "sweetness"—whence *sucker*, as a fly will suck what is sweet. This would coincide with *dog-fly*, as an eager hungry fly is impudent (Ulysses, after shipwreck and long fasting, says apologetically, that there is nothing so impudent as the stomach ; and "dog"-faced is a Greek word for impudent). In Ps. lxxviii. 45, the *yarobh* is described as a *devourer*. What the Bible sets forth clearly is, an overwhelming force of small fierce animals, not only tormenting men, but apparently blighting vegetation. We read of a missionary family having against such a plague to fight for their house with fire ; and even of an army being broken up by such. The elaborate emphasis laid on the details in this history conveys an impression of fell intensity in the plague, like a black cloud of torture pressing heavily close on all the land. To the Egyptians it must have been specially terrible if, as has been supposed, the *yarobh* was of kin to their sacred scarabæus (*beetle*). *Let go—send*. The same word in both places ; as if a terrific play upon words, "If you do not let loose my people, I will let loose the *yarobh*." *Whereon they are* : lit. stand :—Welsh saying, that on the Last Day there will be only Welshmen "standing" in Wild Wales to answer for it. 22. *Sever—Goshen* (on the *severing*, under ix. 4 ; on *the land*, under i. 7). Here Bruce of Kinnaird (the great explorer) is cited as saying, that there is some mistake about this miracle, because in Goshen there is not the (*chemi*) black rich land, out of which the *yarobh* might be made. Travellers have not always explored heaven, and "found out the Almighty to perfection." And we do not need to go to the sources of the Nile for a matter which is in the Bible. Theologians are childish who quote such rubbish. God was working a *miracle*, which perhaps the Almighty could do without fat soil as raw material. *In the midst of the earth : in the heart of the land* (ver. 2). The separation of Goshen in respect of such a visitation was almost a visible presence of the Almighty, fencing the province all round its border. 23. Here again (under ver. 19) the prediction of the incalculable, tested by specification of the time, makes a "wonder" (Lat. *miraculum*) a foresight, and evinces the wonder of power. The suggestion, that Moses here played the conjuror, through his deep insight into natural history, illustrates the credulity of unbelief. Though the Sinai dog-flies had been familiar in intercourse and conspiracy with their Egyptian cousins, how was Moses to know and be assured of their plans for the future, and their unanimous covenanting to keep clear of Goshen? It is wonderful that a man should know the purpose of God. It is inconceivable that any creature should know the settled purpose of a fly,—to say nothing of myriad myriads of them,—and be confidently assured that they will hold by it loyally, and can unfailingly carry it out. *A division* : the word (*paduth*) has a meaning, **deliverance**,

- 24 people : to-morrow shall this sign be. And the Lord did so : and there came a grievous swarm *of flies* into the house of Pharaoh, and *into* his servants' houses, and into all the land of Egypt : the land was corrupted by reason of the swarm *of flies*.
- 25 And Pharaoh called for Moses and for Aaron, and said,  
 26 Go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land. And Moses said, It is not meet so to do ; for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the Lord our God ; lo, shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will  
 27 they not stone us ? We will go three days' journey into the wilderness, and sacrifice to the Lord our God, as he shall  
 28 command us. And Pharaoh said, I will let you go, that ye may sacrifice to the Lord your God in the wilderness ; only  
 29 ye shall not go very far away : entreat for me. And Moses said, Behold, I go out from thee, and I will entreat the Lord that the swarms *of flies* may depart from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people, to-morrow ; but let not Pharaoh deal deceitfully any more in not letting the people go to  
 30 sacrifice to the Lord. And Moses went out from Pharaoh,  
 31 and entreated the Lord. And the Lord did according to the

which may have a place here,—separation is in order to liberation. But subtleties must not distract our view from the main plain fact here,—that God makes a separation between Israelites and Egyptians, of a nature fitted to make the oppressors believe and tremble. 24. *A grievous swarm* : lit. a heavy *yarobh* :—not, a huge animal as compared with a midge, but a sore, crushing visitation of the *yarobh*—worse than an army of elephants. *Corrupted* : devastated, being destroyed, perhaps with the suggestion of loathsomeness in the visitation, as when foul *harpies* pollute the feast which they devour. 25. *Your God* ; so, Jehovah is now at least known as a God—though He still is owned only as the national deity of the Hebrews. *In the land* : that is, of Egypt. 26. *Meet* : not only in respect of the divine prescription (ver. 27), but also on account of the circumstances to be set forth. *Abomination—stone* (cp. Ge. xliii. 32). Stoning was not an Egyptian manner of putting to death by law : what Moses points to is thus, outbreking of unregulated popular passion of prejudice. The *abomination* here may mean, what is revolting to God (ver. 27). Probably it means, revolting to the Egyptians. The sacrificial victims would be. What are sacred animals in their eyes ? And the Israelites would not adopt the ceremonies deemed obligatory by Egyptians. 27. Thus placing Jehovah on the throne : as at the first (ver. 2), so to the end. 28. *Not very far* : not out of reach—so that I still may hold you chained. At heart he is not really conforming : hence the *entreat for me* is vain, except for the passing moment. 29. *To-morrow* (under *to-morrow* in ver. 23). The specification of time here shows watchful Omniscience : let not Pharaoh think in his heart he can elude *that* (Lu. xiii. 32). *Any more* (cp. vers. 8, 15). 31. *Not one* (under viii. 11,

word of Moses; and he removed the swarms of *flies* from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people; there  
32 remained not one. And Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also, neither would he let the people go.

CHAP. IX. 1. Then the Lord said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh, and tell him, Thus saith the Lord God of the  
2 Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may serve me. For if  
3 thou refuse to let *them* go, and wilt hold them still, Behold,

ix. 4). 32. Lit. "But heavy did Pharaoh make his heart on this occasion also, and he did not let the people go."

#### Exercise 19.

1. *The fly is "untameable."* (1) How would this affect the quality of evidence of a prophecy regarding flies? (2) Mention two miracles connected with untameable sea things in the ministry of Christ.
2. State reasons for regarding the *yarobh* visitation in this history as a real miracle.
3. Compare, in respect of wonderfulness, "stopping the mouths of lions" with keeping flies out of Goshen.

NOTE.—The "**restraining**" **providence** of God is brought to view by miracle. There is a certain *balance* in the system of things, which if it were disturbed life would be miserable or impossible. For instance, the forces which break out in hurricanes and volcanoes; but not only so, the feebleness of microscopic insects has to be restrained. Miracle shows that forces *might* be let loose, or restraints withdrawn, to the effect of making the world uninhabitable to man. We are aware of nothing in the system of nature to *necessitate* the requisite stability of equilibrium. The rainbow reminds us of what miracle here demonstrates; that there is Omnipotence regulative in ordinary providence.

**Fifth Plague** (ix. 1-7)—*cattle murrain*. The punishment now reaches the Egyptians in a destruction of their property in live-stock. In relation to that species of property, a number of things in this narrative, which by infidels were said to be impossible, are now, by the ancient Egyptians themselves in their monuments, shown to have been a fact; so that Moses would probably have made mistakes if he, like the infidels, had been speaking about what he did not know.

Our word "murrain" is from the Latin *mori* (to die). It has been appropriated for description of cattle-plague. A very destructive cattle-plague visited Britain within our memory. There have been in Egypt as many as four within our century. The sort of thing is not very rare, as it is not very rare to catch 153 fishes at one haul. Here, too, the miraculousness is evinced by circumstances of the event, which in itself is naturally possible: such as (1) the peculiar severity of the plague; (2) the connection of this detail with that campaign of supernaturalism as a whole; (3) the prediction of its coming and its departure, with specification of time; and (4) the exemption of Israel's cattle from the plague which was so utterly fatal to those of the Egyptians.

Notable specialities of this miracle are—(1) Peculiar emphasis laid on the specification of time; (2) more impressively marked exemption of Israel; (3) more fully manifested anticipation on God's part, justified by the event, that Pharaoh shall resist this further appeal; and (4) the circumstance that now, for the first time, the plague extends directly to destruction of life,—that is, the cattle's,—as well as of property of vast importance to an agricultural and pastoral community.

2. *Wilt hold them still:* wilt further still go on holding them fast.



the hand of the Lord is upon thy cattle which *is* in the field, upon the horses, upon the asses, upon the camels, upon the oxen, and upon the sheep: *there shall be* a very grievous  
 4 murrain. And the Lord shall sever between the cattle of Israel and the cattle of Egypt: and there shall nothing die of  
 5 all *that is* the children's of Israel. And the Lord appointed a set time, saying, To-morrow the Lord shall do this thing in  
 6 the land. And the Lord did that thing on the morrow, and all the cattle of Egypt died; but of the cattle of the children  
 7 of Israel died not one. And Pharaoh sent, and, behold, there was not one of the cattle of the Israelites dead.

3. *The hand—upon*: that strong hand is ready to **press**. *Thy cattle*: here, the live-stock of Egypt, as exhibited in the following inventory. *Murrain*: the word (*dëbhër*) here is a general expression for plague, suggestive of **sweeping destruction**. *Horses*: though not appearing on the most ancient monuments (cp. Ge. xii. 16), appear some time before the exodus period; and at this period (cp. De. xvii. 16) Egypt was famous for horses of high quality. *Asses* (under iv. 20). A foe of Exodus once maintained, that there *could* not be asses in that Egypt, because the colour would be hateful to Egyptians. The monuments show this impossibility as a plentiful fact. An inventory among them shows that one gentleman had several hundreds of *camels*: in the Pentateuch elsewhere referred to only in Ge. xii. 16. They do not clearly show on the monuments. Probably they were rare in the central land of Egypt, where, in fact, they could be of little use. The "ships of the desert" might be a valuable present to a nomad like Abraham; but to Abimelech only "a white elephant." They would be of use to Egypt on the borders, and perhaps in commercial or other intercourse with Sinai and the Euphrates valley. The mention of them here shows how rigorously *complete* was to be the visitation of the plague. *Sheep*, too, were banished from Egypt by infidelity, and are in the actual Egypt of the monuments. 4. *Sever—Egypt* (under viii. 22). *Egypt* here may mean the **Egyptians**—the name applies to people, king, and land. The plague thus may, unlike that of flies, have gone through the land of Goshen, only not touching the Israelites' cattle. Pharaoh's *sending* (ver. 7) may place only himself personally outside of Goshen, perhaps not even him. *There shall—Israel*: lit. of **all** (that belongs) to **Israel**, **there shall not die one thing** (cp. not one, viii. 31). *Die*—ominous!—death is coming in sight. 5. *A set time*. The specification of time was in every case important as evincing the miraculous in that detail. In the cattle-plague the specification may have been the more needful for that effect, because the kind of event was not in itself unprecedented in Egyptian experience. There was the more occasion—as in the case of a birth at Bethlehem—for accessory circumstances that showed "the finger of God." 6. *All*: a general visitation:—*e.g.* ver. 3 is not to be understood as meaning, that *only* the cattle that happened to be in the field was reached (as if by hail). All *kinds* were reached; but not necessarily all individuals of every kind. In De. xix. 3, "every slayer," as we afterwards find, leaves room for exceptions. And here vers. 9 and 22 show ("upon *beast*") that in fact the Egyptian cattle were not destroyed so as to leave "not a hoof" behind. *But—not one* (cp. viii. 31). 7. *Sent*: keen

And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people go.

8 And the Lord said unto Moses and unto Aaron, Take to

anxious interest. *And the heart—go.* He must have suffered cruelly (“the way of transgressors is hard”). It has been suggested that his stubbornness might be owing to his thinking that the Israelites had escaped through their skill in managing cattle. But the history does not say that he was an idiot. The suggestion, that he did not care because the cattle were not his, is not more sapient. The land was his, and the people and their property. The Pharaohs reckoned Egypt as themselves, not as Louis XIV. said, “L’Etat c’est moi,” but in the noble sense of true political headship. The plagues thus are still destroying unbelief.

#### Exercise 20.

1. *Murrain.* (1) How can the death of ancient Egyptian cattle be now destroying unbelief? (2) How could the question, “Doth God care for oxen?” be made to account for the seeming want of feeling in that murrain? (3) How could the fact of ordinary murrains be turned in favour of the credibility of a history of miraculous murrain? And, at the same time, its usefulness as miracle?
2. *Cattle.* The animals most useful to man were not in existence long before his appearance on the earth. (1) What does this show as to the preparedness of the earth for man? (2) If the animals, knowing that he was coming, *made themselves* into usefulness for him by thinking of it, what would that show as to the constitution of these animals? (3) If man cannot by taking thought add a cubit to his stature, does that show that a giraffe might not lengthen his neck—that is, create himself—by longing for tree-tops?
3. *Cruelty to animals.* (1) What do you say to the statement, that *no animal is cruel*; so that a cruel human being has no creature like him on earth but a devil? (2) Is it kindness to animals to leave them to die of old age? (3) There was no respect for the dog till Christ came: How do you account for the friendship that there now is for dogs?

NOTE on our **relationship to lower animals** (see note on *dogs* under xxiii. 1-8).—It is well that few of them die of old age—witness the misery of an aged lion (Livingstone saw one), with none to release him by the “mercy” stroke. But while they live, let us remember that the young lions seek their meat from God; and consider (Mr. Hamerton): (1) That when *we* think they are perverse and bad, we make the mistake of imagining they are *like us* in their mind, whereas they are simply bewildered by us. (2) Accordingly, let us reflect (Cardinal Newman) on the *infinity* of distance between us and those “poor relations,” so as to recall to mind that we are *fully* of kin to angels,—black or white,—because we are *rational*, like them and God. And (3) “Man is the god of his dog.” The animals about our houses show *what sort of men* their owners are. The half-human collie, the bosom friend of the shepherd’s children, becomes, when neglected and not cultivated, a savage wild beast, that has to be hunted to death like a wolf (two were shot within a week and a few miles of this present writing). The only respectful mention of the dog in ancient literature is in the *Odyssey*. The hero, back from the Trojan wars, is an aged beggar man (in disguise). He is recognised only by an aged dog, which dies—flickering out the last remaining spark of life—in a feeble attempt to welcome the returning hero. But the young laird of Ithaca, twenty years ago, stepping out on hunting days, would be familiar friendly to this fine hound.

you handfuls of ashes of the furnace, and let Moses sprinkle it  
 9 toward the heaven in the sight of Pharaoh. And it shall  
 become small dust in all the land of Egypt, and shall be a  
 boil breaking forth *with* blains upon man, and upon beast,  
 10 throughout all the land of Egypt. And they took ashes of  
 the furnace, and stood before Pharaoh; and Moses sprinkled  
 it up toward heaven; and it became a boil breaking forth  
 11 *with* blains upon man and upon beast. And the magicians  
 could not stand before Moses because of the boils; for the  
 boil was upon the magicians, and upon all the Egyptians.

**Sixth Plague** (ix. 8-12)—*of boils and blains*. The last plague of the sacred triad exhibits, like its analogue in the first triad, the trikumia of climax in severity, and likewise comes without warning. Specialities to be noted are—(1) That now the Egyptians are seriously touched in their persons with the stroke, as if in premonition of a stroke that shall be death; (2) that the magicians are now reached in their persons by this plague, and disappear before its power from the history; and (3) that there now is a solemnly express and formal enunciation of the ultimate truth of the matter as to Pharaoh's obduracy.

8, 9. The word for the *furnace* or oven of domestic economy is *tanur*. The word in our text (*kibshan*) properly means, the furnace for such work as **smelting**; and thus the *furnace* here may be a **lime-burner**. What comes from it in the text is *ashes*, which receives the more general name of *fine dust*. This fine dust is flung into the air, and is a symbol of the plague, in respect of **invisibly spreading over the land** at Jehovah's pleasure. There is no need of supposing a dust-miracle to make the ashes literally reach every corner of the land where they could serve no purpose. The purpose of the dust is accomplished when we see in it a symbol of a thing invisibly spreading through the air at God's command (see final note to this section). *A boil—blains* ("blisters"): lit. **boil breaking out (as) blains**. The word for *boils* (*shechin*) is in De. xxviii. 27, 35 ("the botch" of Egypt), in a manner suggesting that the thing is characteristic of *Egypt*, if not peculiar to it. It is etymologically associated with *burning*. In De. xxviii. 35 the thing is especially connected with the legs. It seems to have been an inflammatory sore on the surface of the body. Correspondingly, the word for *blains* (*abhabhabth*), from a root which means to **swell**, to **boil up**, would fall to mean, purulent swellings, from that sore inflamed surface. There is thus suggested a physical evil at once loathsome and dreadful, recalling to the unprofessional mind some aspects of the description of great plagues by Defoe and Thucydides.  
 11. *Magicians—Egyptians*. In 2 Ti. iii. 8, Jannes and Jambres are named, as if they were somehow known to be the magicians who had withstood Moses; and otherwise there are some faint traditionary traces of them. The original magicians, while no longer attempting opposition miracles after the first two plagues, appear to have remained on the ground, perhaps criticizing and cavilling, like the scribes, though they could not deny the fact of real miracle, and also like the Rationalists who can. *Because of the boils*. This plague drove them off the field, by touching them personally to the quick. Egyptian persons of sacred order were peculiarly careful as to bodily purity. Hence their custom of showing their whole body, and frequency of bathing, at first sight unaccountable. To men thus fanatically scrupulous about corporeal

12 And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he hearkened not unto them ; as the Lord had spoken unto Moses.

purity—the religiously “clean”—there must have been something frightful in a foul revolting disease like that suggested by our text. The **nastiness** as well as pain, on and in their very flesh, broke their spirit of opposition to the work of God (viii. 17). 12. Solemn enunciation as to hardening: (1) **the first cause** was Jehovah ; (2) Pharaoh was **a responsible agent** (thus free) ; and (3) the event had been **foreordained**.

NOTE on **the symbolism of the ashes**.—There are strained constructions, approaching to “allegorizing,” which are carefully to be avoided by those who wish to see things. (1) The ashes are made into a symbolical allusion to a sort of devil-worship ; casting the ashes of human burnt-sacrifice toward the demon for propitiation of him. The history makes no allusion to such a sacrifice ; the ashes appear to be simply the most conveniently accessible form of fine dust. (2) That allusion is made to be to burnt bricks, in satirical reflection upon the great public works of Egypt. The history has nothing about bricks, nor about burning, but only about the ashes ; *those* ashes of which a handful can most easily be got from a furnace, or from a furnace dust-heap. And the reflection with its clumsy rhetoric would have involved a mistake in fact, seeing that burnt bricks were not used in the structure of those public works. (3) A physical connection is described between the fine ashes and a noisome damp that rises from the Nile flood. If there be, the historian knows nothing about it. And Moses cares nothing about it. Where the dust came from is of no consequence to him. It has only to be *fine* furnace dust ; so as to be meet symbol of a “pestilence that walketh in darkness,” a plague spreading invisibly over the land at the bidding of God.

#### Exercise 21.

1. Mention another case in which God will inflict bodily pain as a punishment.
2. The Stoics aimed at insensibility ; is it desirable that men should be without feeling ? Give a statement of your view as to this matter.
3. Prove from Scripture (1) that Christ felt bodily pain as an evil ; and (2) that in this respect He is a model for imitation of Christians.
4. Prove that the Holy Ghost is given to make men sensitive.

#### Progress of the Campaign : THIRD TRIAD OF THE PLAGUES (Chap. ix. 13–x. 29).

The notes of season in ix. 31, 32, are important as indications of the *date* of the seventh plague. What is plainly intended there is the natural season ; that is, the date of the plague is about the middle of March. This leaves for the last four plagues about four weeks. And seven days (vii. 25) was the duration of the first plague. On two independent lines of presumptive evidence we thus are led to look toward a week as the average or normal duration of a plague. And the convergence of two independent lines is very strong as proof. The whole duration of the campaign that is thus suggested is about a quarter of a year. Now, in order to bring the earlier plagues into coincidence of time with the Nile flood, it is necessary to make the whole duration some three-quarters of a year. But the history does not give that coincidence as a fact. On the contrary (see initial note on the third plague), its description of

13 And the Lord said unto Moses, Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that

the first three plagues appears to place them after subsidence of the flood ; so that here there is a third line of circumstantial evidence in favour of the shorter duration. The colour of the flooded Nile, resembling that of blood, gives only an accidental ostensible coincidence : in reality there is the contrast of loathsome corruption to sweet health. The real colouring, which makes men see contemporaneousness, is in their eyes : that is, prepossession with "a theory" of the necessity of a natural basis for the plague ; a necessity which is certainly not evident, nor presumable as against the indications of the plain facts of the history. The prepossession means so far a bias in favour of naturalistic construction of a supernatural event—which as such is irrational in aspect. Otherwise, there is no real interest in contending for a longer duration than three months.

A comparison of this last triad with the preceding two reminds us of a character of the prediction of woes in the Apocalypse ;—the character, namely, of a progressively accumulating and expanding terror. In men's feeling of the last three plagues there must have been operative (on the nerve of soul and body) the accumulated momentum of all the terrors of what had gone before, in the two initial warnings followed by the series of six plagues. A new aspect of awfulness now appears in the circumstance, that the physical agency is no longer of local origination from within the land, but comes from the general system of the world ; as if there now had been invasion of Egypt on the part of the unseen universe beyond it (cp. the invading "army" in Joel i.—iii.). The *rod* is now resumed ; but now *the arm* is clearly seen to be that of Jehovah God Almighty in judgment.

**The Seventh Plague** (ix. 13-35)—*of hail*. The vers. 13-17 might be regarded as an introduction to this whole triad. But that would probably be out of keeping with the inartificial simplicity of the history of the plagues. The verses meetly introduce the seventh plague, which is a meet precursor of the following two. The additional amount of physical grandeur, now appearing in the plagues, is an augmentation of the terribleness of aspect. In the case of this seventh, there is express reference to the fact that the kind of thing is not unprecedented in the natural history of Egypt ; but it is said that history has no parallel to this event in respect of measure or degree. Otherwise, the supernaturalism of the visitation is evinced by the circumstances of connection with a movement supernatural as a whole, and especially by the prediction,—which is the last of the three early warnings in the course of the nine plagues.

13. *Rise—Pharaoh*. No word now of waiting for him on his way to the river : the time for ceremonious punctilio is past. 14. *At this time* : on **this** occasion : **now**. There is emphasis laid on the crisis that has been reached. *All my plagues* : their fully manifested power of destructive terror. So that *pestilence* (*dëbhër*, cp. under ver. 3) is, **sweeping destruction**. The plural, *strokes*, does not exclude the view, that only the seventh plague is spoken of ;

14 they may serve me. For I will at this time send all my  
 plagues upon thine heart, and upon thy servants, and upon  
 thy people; that thou mayest know that *there is* none like me  
 15 in all the earth. For now I will stretch out my hand, that I  
 may smite thee and thy people with pestilence; and thou  
 16 shalt be cut off from the earth. And in very deed for this  
*cause* have I raised thee up, for to show *in* thee my power;  
 and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.  
 17 As yet exaltest thou thyself against my people, that thou wilt  
 18 not let them go? Behold, to-morrow about this time I will

for that plague itself includes a system of strokes,—hail, thunder, flame; and, as we have noted, is fit to make the land “full of horrors” (cp. the “judgment” on Sodom and Gomorrha). The second and third strokes of this triad are tame as compared with the first; which is like an overwhelming storm of artillery on what is intended for the last day of a great siege. What here is meant is, that his soul is to be subdued with terror: the stubborn heart of Egypt in him is to be broken down by force. The previous visitations have been as preliminary skirmishing, comparatively superficial and isolated prelusions; now there is to be—like the rush of stormers through a breach—concentrated force of terror sweeping all before it. *Thy people*: cp. *my people*, in ver. 13. *Thine heart*. It is a tragic circumstance, that in the suffering of the plagues there is included, along with the ruling power, the community of the ruled. That is a general fact in the history of the world under providence of God, who is just. In the present case a provision is made (vers. 20, 21) for exemption from specific evil effects of that good general rule. *That—earth*. Even for the temporal happiness and worth of human life, any conceivable amount of physical suffering in Egypt that week is incommensurable, as fine dust of the balance, with the importance of its being made unmistakably clear that Jehovah the Redeemer is the only God. And the manifestation of God in His glory is in itself the only conceivable supreme end of all divine action, while it is the highest interest of the rational universe as a whole (Edwards, *God's Chief End in Creation*). 15, 16 make one sentence, “For now I stretch—that I may smite—that thou mayest—and truly for this end.” There is a remarkable stress laid here on **the end**, or final cause (cp. Ro. ix. in the connection of ver. 19 there). *All the earth*, in ver. 14, might be made *all the land* (of Egypt). But here we perceive that any thought of limitation would be foreign to the state of mind. What the mind here has regard to is, a public controversy, before the world, between Pharaoh and the living God. And the **end** is always (under ver. 4) “*that my ‘name’—earth.*” *Cut off*: here needs to have the full force of **annihilating**, causing to disappear. *Pestilence* (under 3, 14). *And in very deed*: implies, **But in truth**. *Raised thee up*: lit. **caused thee to stand**. Sept. has simply, *kept thee* (standing). Paul—who knows—(Ro. ix. 17) has, *raised thee up*. *Show in thee my power*: Heb. show thee my power (so Rev. Vers.). Still for the great end, *that—earth* (vers. 14, 15). **The exodus thus is**, so to speak, the **definitive inauguration of Jehovahism in the world** (the inauguration ode is in Ex. xv.). 17. The Heb. for *exalting* here is not that for *raised up* in ver. 16; but as if Pharaoh had placed himself as a **barrier** (“set yourself up!”) in the chosen people’s way to serve God (cp. Is. xl. 3, 4). 18. *Behold*

cause it to rain a very grievous hail, such as hath not been in  
 19 Egypt since the foundation thereof even until now. Send  
 therefore now, *and* gather thy cattle, and all that thou hast in  
 the field: *for upon* every man and beast which shall be found  
 in the field, and shall not be brought home, the hail shall  
 20 come down upon them, and they shall die. He that feared  
 the word of the Lord among the servants of Pharaoh made  
 21 his servants and his cattle flee into the houses; and he that  
 regarded not the word of the Lord left his servants and his  
 cattle in the field.

22 And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch forth thine hand  
 toward heaven, that there may be hail in all the land of  
 Egypt, upon man, and upon beast, and upon every herb of  
 23 the field, throughout the land of Egypt. And Moses stretched

—*will cause*. The rhetoric in the original is more energetic:—(“set yourself up!”) “*you* obstruct—Lo, **I** cause”—the *I* being emphatic by position. *Since*—*foundation* (under x. 6). This, relatively to (Lower) Egypt, is almost an historic human period: even Herodotus, “father of history” (*Hist. B. 11*), speculates about the formation of the Delta land (“gift of the Nile,” he calls it), as having taken place since man came into Upper Egypt. But the obvious meaning is simply as in ver. 24. *Such—Egypt* (see initial note). Not unexampled in kind, but unparalleled in magnitude. The history has nothing of asseveration of miracle, but allows the work to bear witness (cp. Mat. xi. 4).  
 19. *Send*. Plainly a warning to all Egyptians (vers. 20, 21) through Pharaoh. *Beast*: of wide import, equivalent to *cattle* in ver. 21 (“beastry”). *Gather*: the word has the force of **cause to flee**—as a shepherd’s dog causes the flock to flee—from danger. So, *made—flee*, in ver. 20. *In the field* (under ver. 14), thus, mercy mingled with judgment, while the mercy is **discriminating** as the judgment is just. On looking close into this history, we find that probably the amount of human suffering was comparatively small—being nothing like the amount of suffering caused by one “glorious war” of man’s vain ambition.  
 20, 21. *Word of the Lord*. Those who so far saw and felt that Jehovah is true God, as to act upon His warning. The expression is not to be pressed into making those Egyptians really Israelitish in habitual faith. *Flee*—equivalent to flight from deadly peril, as in lost battle. *Regarded not*: lit. **did not put his heart to**.  
 22. *Thine hand* (the *rod* reappearing, ver. 23). The Heb. expression here is quite different from that for *spreading abroad* (my hands) in ver. 29. There the meaning is, **expansion of the open palms**, as in prayer to heaven. Here (and in ver. 23) it is, **stretching out the arm** (with rod), as directing or commanding the plague to smite on earth. *Toward heaven* (cp. “thundering Jove,” the air-god): not only, to the source of rains and storms, but to the Eternal on the throne of all things. The most awful of lightning conductors, though the world does not “lay heart to it” (Ro. i. 32). Thus “the law” in Jn. i. 17 (cp. the grace in Lu. ix. 54–56, and the connection in Ro. v. 20, 21). *Every herb*: thus, completely, **all the life** that Egypt owned. *In all—throughout* (under ver. 6): the point here is, **outside of Israel’s** possession or location (ver. 26). Whether all Upper Egypt, or whether all Lower Egypt was reached by the plague, cannot be judged from

- forth his rod toward heaven ; and the Lord sent thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground : and the Lord  
 24 rained hail upon the land of Egypt. So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, very grievous, such as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation.  
 25 And the hail smote throughout all the land of Egypt all that *was* in the field, both man and beast ; and the hail smote every herb of the field, and brake every tree of the field.  
 26 Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel *were*, was there no hail.  
 27 And Pharaoh sent, and called for Moses and Aaron, and said unto them, I have sinned this time ; the Lord *is* righteous, and I and my people *are* wicked. Entreat the Lord (for *it is* enough), that there be no *more* mighty thunderings and hail ;  
 29 and I will let you go, and ye shall stay no longer. And Moses said unto him, As soon as I am gone out of the city,

the generality of expression :—all the land *in question* was reached (see initial note on the nine plagues, p. 60) ; the visitation was general *within the sphere of the operations* of this campaign. *Thunder* : lit. **voices**. (In ver. 28, *mighty thunderings* is, lit. **voices of God—elohim**). The description of thunder as Jehovah's terrible **voice** (*articulate judgment-sounding*) is congenial to the Hebrew mind (formed by this revelation of Him) : cp. Ex. xix. 16, and responses, *e.g.* Ps. xxix. 3-6. *Fire—hail*. In Lower Egypt there sometimes is rain, and even hail. Many understand the words here as meaning, that the fires collected ; *e.g.* so as to form into globes of flame. Living men have seen lightning blended with hail into apparently one continuous flaming mass. There are recorded cases of hail causing death. The *recording* of them shows that they are of rare occurrence—like “prodigies” in annals. *None like it* : all illustration from ordinary experience is only illustration of contrast. 26. (Cp. Re. vii. 1-4.) This geographical note, fixing Israel's *habitat* in Egypt, is a “speech bewraying” exodus-Israelitish authorship of the history : *Goshen* does not appear except in Scripture. 27. *The Lord—wicked* : antithesis, as if,—“**He** is in the right, **we** are in the **wrong**.” The word here for *sin*, like the common Greek N. T. word for *sin*, natively might mean simply mistake, as when an arrow misses the mark. Here, and generally in Bible usage, it appropriately means, *moral* obliquity (cp. “Israel is a deceitful bow”). Here the “righteousness” of divine procedure—“straightforward”—the Mosaic intercession and the “sinning yet more” in ver. 34 go along with Pharaoh's confession, to give a curious completeness of precision to the representation of sin as sinful. 28. The structure of the sentence is confused or obscure. There is weighty opinion in favour of the construction, —“Enough ! (of terrors for persuasion) : let the calamitous contention cease : I submit.” *Mighty thunderings* (under ver. 23). 29. *City* : This may have been **On**, or **Pithom**, or **Raamses**, or some smaller town (or “township”) occupied by the court or by the king at the time. Mr. Petrie in 1884 found that Tanis (Zoan) was really a great city of Rameses II. (the Great). There may have been a periodical yearly residence of the king in



I will spread abroad my hands unto the Lord; *and* the thunder shall cease, neither shall there be any more hail; that thou mayest know how that the earth *is* the Lord's.  
 30 But as for thee and thy servants, I know that ye will not yet  
 31 fear the Lord God. And the flax and the barley was smitten;  
 32 for the barley *was* in the ear, and the flax *was* bolled. But the wheat and the rye were not smitten; for they *were* not  
 33 grown up. And Moses went out of the city from Pharaoh, and spread abroad his hands unto the Lord; and the thunders and hail ceased, and the rain was not poured upon the  
 34 earth. And when Pharaoh saw that the rain, and the hail, and the thunders were ceased, he sinned yet more, and  
 35 hardened his heart, he and his servants. And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, neither would he let the children of Israel go; as the Lord had spoken by Moses.

rich beautiful Tanis. *Spread—hands* (under ver. 22). *The earth—Lord's*: may be rendered, **that the land** (of Egypt) **is Jehovah's** (under ver. 14). *That—know*: coincidence of petition with cessation of trouble (cp. Jn. iv. 52, 53) made a "mark" of miracle (*principium cognoscendi*), which in its nature (*principium essendi*) is "extraordinary" providence. 30. *I know*, etc. Why does he (prematurely?) **communicate** this knowledge to Pharaoh? Is it, as in the case of Hazael, to bring to the king's knowledge a disloyalty that is in his heart without his being aware of it? ("latent consciousness" made patent consciousness=blushing?). *Fear the Lord*: here lit. **fear from presence of, or from face of, Jehovah**. 31, 32. (On the notes of *season* here, see initial note on this triad, p. 80.) *Bolled*: "in the corolla." (*Boll*: "to form into a pericarp or seed-vessel."—Webster's *English Dictionary*.) The *rye* here is probably a kind of *spelt*. A coarse bread of barley was eaten, and now is eaten, by the poor in Egypt and vicinity. *Flax*, as raw material of linen cloth, was of great value, because linen was the main material of dress. From *wheat* was made the finest bread; but an intermediate quality of bread from what we may suppose to be this *spelt* was the main article of food for the mass of the people not very poor. This plague left untouched about half of the year's increase of the earth (see x. 5). *Were not grown up*: they are later in their season than barley and spelt—about a month. 34, 35. *Sinned yet more*: lit. **added on to sin** (under ver. 27). *Hardened—hardened*: the Heb. word here is varied—(1) was **made heavy**, as if became blunted in feeling (insensibility, cp. He. vi. 4-6); (2) was **made strong**, as if became resolutely obstinate (perversity, cp. 1 Pe. ii. 8). Here (see note on **Induration**, p. 132) a natural progression of moral evil (cp. Ps. i. 1, etc.), through which a "second death" of sinfulness becomes the punishment of sin:—(1) Evil action destroys capacity of feeling; and (2) in the absence of (restraining) right feeling, there is active opposition to God and good (Eph. iv. 19, 20). *N.B.*—From this point onward, **the divine agency in induration**, punishing evil action with confirmed evil disposition, becomes conspicuously manifest. Observe (Ro. ix.) that God *intended we should study the matter in this case of Pharaoh*.

**Exercise 22.**

1. Give a case of *miraculous* "weather prophecy;" and a lesson regarding spiritual life taken from the habit of weather prophecy.
2. *As to effect in this case.* (1) If the Egyptians who obeyed God in this matter did not love Him, was their obedience of any value? How, and why? (2) Suppose that Pharaoh had said to Moses, "Since I am predestinated to disobey God, I will please myself and oppress the Hebrews," what answer might be made? (3) Show that men were killed by the hail, and deserved it.
3. "*Times*" and "*seasons*":—(1) Explain the connected and distinct use of these two words in Scripture and in common speech. (2) In that exodus year in Goshen there were two sorts of "signs" of two sorts of "seasons," what? In the proverb, "There's a time for everything," is there any reference to "season"? Explain.

**NOTE on Weather.**—This, which is the proximate cause of supporting human life, God has (Ge. viii. 22; Act. xiv. 17) in a special manner reserved in His own hand. No man can forecast the weather on earth beyond some forty-eight hours. Sir William Herschel thought he might be able to find some sort of determining secondary causation of good harvests, by comparing the prices of corn with the appearance or absence of spots on the sun. Since that time, by means of records of pestilences, famines, etc., statisticians have been able to trace their way back through the economical history of some 3000 years. From indications thus furnished, it has been concluded that there is a cycle of eleven years, within which the earth has a hot year, with a (penumbral?) cold year on each side of it, and moderate years between (Prof. Archibald Geikie in conversation with the present writer). This would be valuable for fixing the duration of a lease; which apparently ought to be a multiple of eleven. But it is not of the least use for showing whether in this or in that one particular year there shall be plenty or dearth, or whether the farmers of a region may not lose their harvest within three days. On simply obtaining bread, not only the life, but the occupation, of mankind is dependent. If by a miracle bread were to rain from heaven, the human race would be miserable for lack of employment. God has promised the stable succession of the seasons. Yet he has left man visibly dependent on a sovereign providence for simple daily bread. Political Economy (a most valuable science) does not handle the question of religion, which thus was raised in Egypt and settled in Sinai (De. viii. 3).

**Eighth Plague** (x. 1-20)—*of locusts.* The narrative of this plague is very full in keeping with natural history, so as to show that here there is no ostentation of uncalled-for supernaturalism. We now have learned from the facts, that the season of this plague must have been the spring, between the ripening of barley and that of wheat,—say (in Goshen) toward the close of March. It is in the late spring and onward that those lands are most exposed to this very formidable natural plague. The main aspects of the visitation, even the dramatically abrupt *finale*, are, as here appearing, familiar in the natural history of those lands. In this case "the finger of God" appears through accessory circumstances, such as those we have noted in the preceding plagues.

Moses, now coming forward as if all oblivious of original "unreadiness," exhibits a long-suffering patience, unlike his natural Levitical impetuous fire, which he may have been learning (2 Co. iii. 18) from Jehovah's remarkable forbearance, with Moses as well as with Pharaoh; and perhaps his natural impulses are subdued by his knowing that (cp. Lu. xix. 41-44) he now is dealing with a sinner doomed to destruction, and judicially given over to a reprobate mind (see the Song of Moses and the Lamb in Re. xv. 3, 4, cp. 1). Pharaoh, who has previously made submissions which are found to be fallacious (ix. 27, 28), is now subjected to the influence of entreaties from his own servants not to persist in what is destroying his people. Again he yields; but again his yielding is only

CHAP. X. 1. And the Lord said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh; for I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his  
 2 servants, that I might show these my signs before him: and that thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son, and of thy son's son, what things I have wrought in Egypt, and my signs which I have done among them; that ye may know how that I *am*  
 3 the Lord. And Moses and Aaron came in unto Pharaoh, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord God of the Hebrews, How long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself before me? let my  
 4 people go, that they may serve me. Else, if thou refuse to let my people go, behold, to-morrow will I bring the locusts into  
 5 thy coast: and they shall cover the face of the earth, that one cannot be able to see the earth; and they shall eat the residue

that of the willow bending before the storm, to rise erect when the storm is past. So he stiffens into an oak, which cannot bend, and has to break, and be hurled away like chaff (Ps. i., ii. 10-12).

The grand description of a locust invasion in Joel i., ii., may here be profitably read for that moral impression which is the commanding interest of our history. The natural history of the locust has been very fully studied. We will refer to it only as bearing on the exposition of our text here.

1. *Hardened.* The fact of divine agency is made more awful by the manner of the introduction of it here: with the emphatic personal pronoun *I*,—"it is **my** doing" (Ro. i. 18). The word here (*khabhēdh*), the one for making heavy: the stronger word (*chasaq*, as if for "incurable obstinacy") comes in at ver. 20. The *servants*, under the same carnal influences, no doubt have in substance the same dark career. His *signs* (*Introd.* and under iv. 1-10). *Before him*: rather, **within** him (in his heart); or it may be, within it (the land). 2. The deep abiding impression upon Israel appears in the Psalms (Ps. lxxviii. 6, 7, lxxviii. 12, etc.). *What—Egypt*: or, **in what manner I have dealt with the Egyptians** (or even, **played with** them). The Heb. word refers to a practising on men which is not to their credit or advantage. *That thou—LORD.* The miracles are to remain (in memory) as evidential stars once created ever shining (Ps. cxlv. 4). 3. *To humble himself*: a severer manner of speaking than before:—the sinner has relapsed (ix. 27, 28). At the same time, it may point to the tap-root of the sin as **pride** (Ro. viii. 7). The *barrier* (under ix. 17) may thus have been proud self (*hubris*, spiritual "proud flesh"). 4. *Thou—I.* Again, sharp antithesis—a **personal** controversy. *Coast: territories.* The word for LOCUST here (*arbēh*) is from a root referring to **multitude**. 5. *Face of the earth*: (lit. **eyes of the land**). This plague is to hide from view the face of kind mother earth (*alma mater*): the vivid natural image here, and in ver. 15, is employed in only one other place of Scripture (Nu. xxii. 5, 11). *That one—earth*: either (1) by their darkening the air as with a cloud (so the Persian arrows at Marathon), or (2) by their concealing, as with a cloth, the land which they light upon and overrun. The literal effect has been witnessed under both aspects: there has been seen a cloud of locusts 500 miles in breadth, which is nearly equal to the whole length of Egypt. *The residue* (under ix. 32): about half the year's crop had escaped. Since these

of that which is escaped, which remaineth unto you from the hail, and shall eat every tree which groweth for you out of the field: and they shall fill thy houses, and the houses of all thy servants, and the houses of all the Egyptians: which neither thy fathers, nor thy fathers' fathers have seen, since the day that they were upon the earth unto this day. And he turned himself, and went out from Pharaoh. And Pharaoh's servants said unto him, How long shall this man be a snare unto us? let the men go, that they may serve the Lord their God: knowest thou not yet that Egypt is destroyed? And Moses and Aaron were brought again unto Pharaoh; and he said unto them, Go, serve the Lord your God; *but* who *are* they that shall go? And Moses said, We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds will we go; for we *must hold* a

words were written, there has been news of a locust army in Western Africa, twelve miles long, causing despair to man. *Every tree* (regarding the completeness thus represented, see under ver. 15): which groweth; rather, **which sprouteth**. At the time of the *hail* plague, some trees, not then sprouted (*green*, ver. 15), would escape the desolation. *For you*: it is **Egyptians** that are to be smitten, even through green tender trees. 6. *Houses*. It is a strangely horrible circumstance of this plague, that "a storm of locusts" will at once completely fill every part of a house, like invasion of a subtle noisome vapour. *Which—day*. Here again miracle is shown by unparalleled *amount* of a thing which is ordinary in its nature. *Since—earth* (cp. ix. 18, 24): it is quite arbitrary and useless to carry this literally to the beginning of the natural history of creation. The *question* is only of what is within the knowledge and experience of mankind. It does not necessarily even look beyond *the land* of Egypt—an *unparalleled* thing. That is to say, the question is, Is there **miracle** in this work? Is *this*, again, "the finger of God?" (viii. 19). 7. *Servants*. It is arbitrary to make them here **magicians**. These have been exhibited under their own name. The *servants* here are the king's ordinary subordinates—officers or courtiers. Their remonstrance is an impressive new symptom of a formidable crisis. *This man*: perhaps with an implication of scornful aversion,—**this fellow** (cp. Act. xxiv. 5). *Snare*: Egyptians have often seen the **helplessness** of a snared bird or lion. *The man* here does not mean, the adult males, but simply the human beings (folks). *Brought you unto Pharaoh*. No doubt he sent for them. *But who—go?* lit. **who and who are the going ones?** Who precisely are on wing for this departure? 9. The *will go* here is abrupt and peremptory. *With—herds*. From the omission of the **wives** here, the obvious inference is, that they are included in the *we*, along with their husbands. The meaning plainly is, that **the whole people** were to go bodily,—not merely a select class of representative individuals. *Flocks—herds*: completing the view of **a national migration**. Besides, flocks and herds were necessary for the intended sacrifice—which is rather small criticism. *Feast* (ver. 1): **festival**, solemn, religious. Such festivals were attended by women and children among the Egyptians themselves: such attendance was (De. xvi. 11, 14) of

- 10 feast unto the Lord. And he said unto them, Let the Lord  
 be so with you, as I will let you go, and your little ones :  
 11 look *to it*; for evil *is* before you. Not so : go now ye *that*  
*are* men, and serve the Lord; for that ye did desire. And  
 they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence.
- 12 And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand  
 over the land of Egypt for the locusts, that they may come  
 up upon the land of Egypt, and eat every herb of the land,  
 13 *even* all that the hail hath left. And Moses stretched forth  
 his rod over the land of Egypt, and the Lord brought an east  
 wind upon the land all that day, and all *that* night; *and*  
 when it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts.
- 14 And the locusts went up over all the land of Egypt, and  
 rested in all the coasts of Egypt: very grievous *were they*;  
 before them there were no such locusts as they, neither after

the substance of Israel's religion. Pharaoh thus was really prohibiting the feast according to its nature. 10, 11. It is hardly possible to understand this as meaning, that Pharaoh really blessed the people, and expressed a solicitude for their safety in circumstances of peril. The most widely received view is, that there is an undertone of menace (when Odysseus said, "My noble gentleman," the gentleman is in peril of his life), with perhaps the tragic playfulness of infatuation: "May you have such blessing from Jehovah as you shall have licence from me! To go away wholesale! I warn you, that I see you mean to wrong me (cheat him of his slaves). Only the grown males are to go. That is all you asked at first. Go, indeed! I should like to see it!" The word for *men* here is distinctly (*gəbhēr*) that for adult male. The women and children left behind would be to him for *hostages*, giving him hold of one end of the chain of those who are gone. Moses has always spoken of Jehovah's *people*: never hinted at a going without the women and children. *Were driven out*: it is not said by whom, or at whose instance. The unceremonious expulsion, as if (cp. the murder of Thomas & Becket) the king's wrathful scorn had been taken by his servants as a signal for "rabbling" these ambassadors, will be followed (ver. 16) by a "poetical justice." 12. Over the land (ver. 13, cp. ix. 22, 23), as if *beckoning the locusts* to come from beyond it. (Class motto—to the ravens—"Come to me, and I will give you flesh"). *Come up upon the land* (under ver. 14). This is poetical description of a locust invasion (Joel i., ii., is the *locus classicus*). First, appearing on the horizon as a wall of cloud: on approaching the fated land, they overspread it as a darkness. 13. *East wind*. Some would make this a *south* wind, so as to bring the locusts in the ordinary way from Ethiopia. But it is God that is bringing them extraordinarily. And "south" is not permitted by the known use of the word here employed. Further, it is naturally possible for locusts to be blown from the east, across the Red Sea. They are known to be carried by gentle breezes over wider seas; while there may have been something miraculous in the manner of their importation now. 14. *Went up* (under ver. 12). A locust army of invasion *appears to rise* on the border, over which it spreads. *Over—grievous* (under ver. 5). *Another—such*: not contradicted by Joel ii. 2; for

- 15 them shall be such. For they covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they did eat every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left: and there remained not any green thing in the trees, or in the herbs of the field, through all the land of Egypt.
- 16 Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron in haste; and he said, I have sinned against the Lord your God, and  
 17 against you. Now therefore forgive, I pray thee, my sin only this once, and entreat the Lord your God, that he may  
 18 take away from me this death only. And he went out from  
 19 Pharaoh, and entreated the Lord. And the Lord turned a mighty strong west wind, which took away the locusts, and cast them into the Red sea; there remained not one locust  
 20 in all the coasts of Egypt. But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go.

the reference there is to Israel's "land;" and the expressions ought not to be pressed beyond what is called for by the argument,—“an unexampled visitation.” 15. This terribly powerful description is expounded in Joel (i., ii.). *Covered—darkened* (under ver. 5). *Whole earth: all the land.* *Green thing*, along with *fruit of the trees*, expounds the *every tree* in ver. 5. The enemy devoured the trees so far as they were *green*,—that is, *edibly* soft and tender. In earlier spring, the ravenous little beasts may consume even the younger branches, then soft and sappy (Ps. civ. 16). Travellers report that they strip the earth bare, as when a carpet is lifted off a floor. 16. *In haste*: he now is thoroughly alarmed. *I—you*: more ample confession than before (under ix. 26, 27). 17. *Only this once*: in fact he did not after this any more seek their intercession. *This death: death*, which the hail produced by direct violence, is here as a manifest result of the plague, were it only through destroying the people's means of life. 18. *Went out*: apparently in silence (cp. ix. 29), as if silently saying, that here words are now useless. 19. *West—wind*: lit. *sea-wind*. From the Mediterranean a westerly wind would through the Delta slant south-eastward. *Red Sea* (under ii. 3): the word here for *red* (*sûph*) in this famous name is understood to mean *weed*, so that “red sea” is really *weedy sea*:—perhaps on account of a seaweed which abounds in the Arabian Gulf; perhaps from an abundance of weeds in what once was an extension of the Red Sea, in the now marshy flats westward of Suez. The suddenness and completeness of the deliverance from this plague is in the line of what is observed in the natural history of locusts. The supernatural in our history is evinced by other circumstances: as a well in Vesuvius, originating at the time of an eruption, can be seen to have been opened by volcanic action. *Hardened* (under ver. 1).

#### Exercise 23.

1. State what were the agents in the plague of locusts, and what was the nature of their activities respectively.
2. Why should the Egyptians, and other men, regard themselves as having a better title than locusts have to the fruits of the earth? Why do they?

21 And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand  
toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of  
22 Egypt, even darkness *which* may be felt. And Moses  
stretched forth his hand toward heaven; and there was a  
23 thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days: they saw

3. Give a text in which the winds are commanded not to injure trees, and a case in proof that the Commander has power to secure their obedience.

NOTE on the locust as a soldier.—(Try to get a picture of a *private* locust and a man here.) The **artillery** of heaven in this campaign was a common staff in the hand of an old man. The fishes and the frogs, though a nuisance, cannot be reckoned as a soldiery. And the lice and dog-flies, though tormenting, did not occupy and ravage the land. The only army was that of the locust, which in our note-book is described as "three or four inches long, in form resembling a flying grasshopper." It is added that "honey can be found in this lion: the locust is not bad food for men—witness John the Baptist." It is to be observed that in the plagues, the Almighty employs instrumentalities the most insignificant, having thus chosen "the things which are not to confound the things which are." An Egyptian ruler of our time, says the note-book, "once employed a literal army of soldiers to combat the pest." A solitary French soldier—Jules Gerard—will make successful war upon the African lion; and the mighty American bison is fading away before the persistence of individual trappers and rovers. The strength and wisdom of the British Empire are powerless against the rabbits and small song-birds which are eating up her Australasian colonies. There is not a run-holder south of the Equator who does not know, that it would be more distinctly a miracle to clear his land of rabbits and small birds than it would be to drive the Turks out of Europe. The Hebrews did not forget about the locust. Their language has ten names for him; which is the number of names that theology finds in it for the Supreme Being. The ordinary name is that which means "multitude." Though that "multitude" should have been as wise a people as the ants, they did not conspire with Moses in a pretended miracle.

**The Ninth Plague** (x. 20-29)—*of darkness*. Pharaoh, having ceased to seek intercession of those who know the Lord, now looks for the last time (on earth in time) on the face of a mediator between God and man. For the third time there comes a plague without warning. It is to be noted that this Plague, the most awfully terrific of all the nine, is the only one of them that is not in its nature essentially a nuisance; and also, that this thing, which, in the distinctness of Israel's experience from Egypt, is as manifestly miraculous as though a new sun had been placed in the firmament, has a "natural basis" almost as familiarly known to men as the trade winds are.

That "basis" is in the *chamsin* or the *samoom*, two forms of one plague of darkness. The *chamsin* may last for three days; the *samoom*, apparently, not for so many hours. The season of it is March (which coincides with our other indications of date). It occurs in connexion with a southerly or easterly wind that begins to blow about the time of the spring solstice (this, in yet closer coincidence with those indications, throws it toward the close of March). The plague at its worst presents these three aspects—(1) the sun's face is hid, as with a yellowish veil; (2) there is a storm of wind laden with sand; and (3) men hide themselves (Is. xxxii. 2) in their houses, or tents, or holes dug in the ground.

21. *Which—felt*: that is, with the hand groping (so in Act. xvii. 27 and 1 Jn. i. 1—where men are feeling after God); not simply a "darkness visible," but a *palpable* thing. The sand loading the atmosphere gives to this representation almost a mechanical accuracy. But the essential meaning is "pitch-dark." 22. *Thick darkness*: lit. a dark of deep darkness. The

not one another, neither rose any from his place for three days: but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.

- 24 And Pharaoh called unto Moses, and said, Go ye, serve the Lord; only let your flocks and your herds be stayed: let  
 25 your little ones also go with you. And Moses said, Thou must give us also sacrifices and burnt-offerings, that we may  
 26 sacrifice unto the Lord our God. Our cattle also shall go with us; there shall not an hoof be left behind; for thereof must we take to serve the Lord our God; and we know not with what we must serve the Lord, until we come thither.
- 27 But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not  
 28 let them go. And Pharaoh said unto him, Get thee from

added word for **deep darkness** is distinctive of a dread rayless blackness of obscurity. In intensity it must have been immeasurably more terrific as darkness than the ordinary samoom; though its duration, three days, extended to the longest duration of the chamsin (which is not so terrific as the samoom while it lasts). 23. *His place*: the Heb. here corresponds in form to the French idiom, *chez soi*. It is not necessary to think of every Egyptian as remaining fixed absolutely stock-still, as if literally frozen with horror. They may have blindly groped about their houses, though not daring to leave the anchorage of touching things familiar to them. (In deep snow, men may thus have to keep in touch with their house of refuge.) *Dwellings*: here **abodes**, though the word may mean districts. Was there light in Israel's land of Goshen? or only in their **homes**, with pitch darkness enveloping the land? In either case, the "wonder" was "a wonder of wonders." 24. *Called*: by a messenger sent through that blackness. The *little ones* here of course means **families** (in *this* case, *denominatio fit*, not a *majori* but a *minori*). *All Israel* now had leave to go (cp. ix. 10, 11). Still, the *flocks* and *herds* are to remain. So that after all, Pharaoh would have *hold* upon Israel's chain; without flocks and herds, this people could not long remain away from Egypt. 25, 26. *Thou must give*: the *thou* here is emphatic. Not only Pharaoh must submit really though inwardly. There has to be a *visible humiliation* of his stubborn pride (cp. ix. 3). And there is a reason for this in the nature of the case. Not only Israel have to offer sacrifices to Jehovah. They do not as yet know how many or what these may have to be. And they must be amply provided, so as to be ready furnished with whatever offerings may be called for. The sacrifice here spoken of is—*olah*—an *altar-sacrifice*; of a burnt-offering, consumed by flame so as to **ascend** (into heaven) (see on *the altar*, under xxviii. 1-8). The word for *offering* it, here employed, is only a general expression, "to make," "to do" (cp. "make worship," "do duty"—as minister of religion). *We know—thither*. It does not appear that Israel, or Moses, really knew more of the divine purpose than was requisite for *their* part in carrying it out (De. xxix. 29—"duty clear, destiny dark"). Pharaoh had, as a creature, no right to look for more. 27. *Hardened*: here again **the stronger** word (*chasaq*, see under vers. 1, 20). 28, 29. The scabbard thrown away. The tyrant's rage was now outrageous. The calm acceptance of his challenge by



me, take heed to thyself, see my face no more: for in *that* 29 day thou seest my face thou shalt die. And Moses said, Thou hast spoken well, I will see thy face again no more.

Moses did not close this interview. From xi. 4-10 it appears that Moses, while duly resenting the outrage, did not discontinue his merciful warnings. But effectively God took Pharaoh at his word: the book was closed; there now remained only the reckoning and the judgment.

#### Exercise 24.

1. Why should darkness be terrific to a man? And why should it not?
2. (1) What is light? (2) Why is God said to be Light? (3) Who is the Sun of Righteousness, and how does that appear?
3. Give a case in the gospel history where men, with light around them, are dark within; and one in Paul's ministry where men, with darkness round them, are light within.

NOTE on the Goshen "light shining in a dark place."—It is probably better not to give way to the natural tendency to "spiritualize" the miracles. For that may result in allegorizing ourselves out of the feeling of their historical reality. And (2 Pe. i. 16-18) it is their historical reality, in rigorously prosaic fact, that makes them to be the *fulcrum* of a faith ascending into heaven. Perhaps it would be a safer and more profitable exercise to see in the supernatural facts what remains with us always in the homely familiarities of nature. The Goshen light, for instance, whether of all Goshen luminous in a pitch-dark Egypt, or of every Israelitish dwelling luminous in a pitch-dark land of Goshen, is naturally suggestive of Christendom in an ungodly world, of Christian homes in a worldly society, or of a believing individual in a family of infidels (2 Co. iv. 4-6). But the intellectual interest of such comparisons, and the great spiritual fact which is the warranting basis of them, may occasion our failing to contemplate steadily, as a reality of history, the inexpressibly amazing physical fact that in Goshen there was light with pitch darkness around it, as the sea is round a diving-bell where a living man breathes freely. And that extraordinary fact, again, may help us toward beginning to perceive how vast a thing is the ordinary light of day in the world, with the correlative gift of sight in man. It is not only that in simply being able *to see*, the poorest man has a treasure worth more than the wealth of empires. It is when we try to think what is the *nature* of the thing called light, which no man has ever seen, that we feel as if brought into a Presence, of which that wonder in the darkness of ancient Egypt was only a dim passing hint from the Eternal. That "handling" in the dark homes may remind us of a "handling" that is spoken of four times in the New Testament. It is always the soul feeling after God (*ψηλαφάω*). 1. The nations (Act. xvii. 27), like the Egyptians, blindly "groping" for Him in creation. 2. The Israelites (He. xii. 20) knowing that they are near to Him, but not daring to "touch" the mountain of His presence. 3 and 4. Most wonderful (Lu. xxiv. 39; 1 Jn. i. 1), men "handling" the person who is God manifested in the flesh. He, we learn, is "the light of the world" (Jn. viii. 12). And when we approach the matter on its natural side, and endeavour to think steadily *what*, in reality, is *light*, we are near the question, *Who* is Light?

CLOSE OF THE CAMPAIGN, Chaps. xi.-xiv.—In our "conspectus of contents" we have represented the close as a military triumph; and in the Introduction the last plague is represented as itself summing up and completing the war in one great decisive Battle of the Exodus. In reality the effect of it was decisive and definitive as Lord Napier's *veni, vidi, vici* at Magdala, when poor Theodore's "empire" was ex-

CHAP. XI. I. And the Lord said unto Moses, Yet will I bring one plague *more* upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt; afterwards he will let you go hence: when he shall let *you* go, he shall  
 2 surely thrust you out hence altogether. Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man borrow of his neighbour, and every woman of her neighbour, jewels of silver, and jewels  
 3 of gold. And the Lord gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover, the man Moses *was* very great

tinguished along with his own life, as if by the mere will of the engineer commander. The effortless might of the Omnipotent is seen in this, that, with all the vast movement among Israelites and Egyptians, *the real work* of the deliverance came, like the kingdom of God in individuals, "without observation." 1. *No one saw* the arm that struck the Egyptian first-born; nothing was operative in that most awful death but the mere will of the Lord of life. 2. The far greater deliverance, represented by the Passover, did not even make the "sign" which the departing life had made, leaving evidence of the departure in the tenantless clay tabernacle. There was no such immediate visible result of that great act of sovereign grace, which purged the conscience of His people from dead works, to serve the living God. They were free; but their liberation was an action in the mind of God; and the fruit of it, in the service of a redemption life, was now, in the first Passover observance, only beginning to begin.

**The last Plague—battle of the exodus (xi.).** The disaster of the Red Sea is for Egypt simply a judgment in execution. The history of this tenth plague is given in the form of a prediction in the present chapter: the account of the fulfilment in chap. xii. being consequently brief and vague. Looking forward to the close of the action which we begin with this announcement, we perceive that the history of the whole movement extends over a few days, including, as it does, preparation of the Passover, as well as the mustering toward Succoth, and the movement which came to a termination on the safe side of the Red Sea. And we make the following note for guidance through what may be made a labyrinth of details.

**NOTE on the external movement of the departure.**—Regarding the "objective point," the place of the Red Sea passage, there is a separate note in the Introduction; and also a statement regarding the change of direction, from the way which led toward the Philistine country, along the Isthmus of Suez, to the south and east, so as to place the Red Sea between Israel and Sinai. On *Etham*, "the border of the wilderness," nothing can be said beyond what is folded in that description, as explained in the *Commentary*. But as to *Succoth*, a point of great interest now is made by the identification of it with *Pithom*, of which Succoth was the secular name, Pithom itself being the priestly name.

1-3. *Said: had said*—in Heb. the same form of verb has the pluperfect and the perfect meaning. *When—altogether*: or, "when he shall let you go out hence altogether, he shall surely thrust you out." *Borrow*: see under iii. 22. *Gave—favour*: as promised, iii. 21. The *men* are to be borrowers: on the monuments the male Egyptians appear to be almost as much ornamented in their dress as the females. *Moses—very great* (see *Introd.* p. 55.

in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants, and  
 4 in the sight of the people. And Moses said, Thus saith the  
 Lord, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt :  
 5 and all the first-born in the land of Egypt shall die, from the  
 first-born of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto  
 the first-born of the maid-servant that *is* behind the mill ; and  
 6 all the first-born of beasts. And there shall be a great  
 cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none  
 7 like it, nor shall be like it any more. But against any of the  
 children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against  
 man or beast ; that ye may know how that the Lord doth  
 8 put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel. And all  
 these thy servants shall come down unto me, and bow down  
 themselves unto me, saying, Get thee out, and all the people  
 that follow thee : and after that I will go out. And he went  
 9 out from Pharaoh in a great anger. And the Lord said unto  
 Moses, Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you ; that my wonders

on the Mosaic modesty). This, so far from showing that Moses was not the writer of Exodus, rather goes to show that he was. He is not exalting himself, but explaining the state of things—how it came about that the Israelites had such influence with the Egyptians. Perhaps no other Israelite would have spoken of “the man Moses” with such a curious coldness or dryness. *Moses said* (1–8) : that is (close of ver. 8) to Pharaoh. This brings us back to the point of ix. 29. *Midnight* : what midnight? Apparently some days after this present interview. For between that and this there is the preparation for the Passover. *First-born* (iv. 22, 23). Egypt had doomed *all* the male infants of Israel to perish. Jehovah's doom of Egypt reached only to the first-born (xii. 12). That *was Egypt* by representation : therefore the doom had to reach every class, even slaves and beasts. *Maid-servant—mill*. The hand-mill had two horizontal wheels : one (the lower) fixed, the other turned round by a handle, which might be managed by one person using his two hands, or by two working together :—**a slave toiling at the quern** (cp. Mat. xxiv. 41). In Ex. xii. 29, the sample of lowest condition is the captive in the dungeon ; the purpose of the samples is, to show that *no class was exempt*. The *great cry* echoes ii. 23, which God heard (iii. 7). *Loud* lamentation is characteristic of Oriental mourning for death. Monumental Egyptians are singularly given to brooding upon the unseen world. But the *great cry* did not come from such day-dreaming, but from the most terrific real grief that ever pierced the heart of a whole people. *Move his tongue* : or, **point**, as if in insolence of sharp-directed yelping : the impudent mongrel pariah dog was for once to be respectful. *That ye may—Israel*. There was a *difference* of Pharaoh's making : now there is one of Jehovah's making,—the last first, and the first last. *And all these—go out*. Pharaoh's grandees shall come begging, “cap in hand.” *Come down* : from the royal court to the slave's hovel. *In a great anger* : in heat of wrath. It is possible to “be angry and sin not.” In Moses we see a righteous resentment of wrong—which happens to be, wrong against his own person

10 may be multiplied in the land of Egypt. And Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh: and the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go out of his land.

and office. There was the same resentment in the burning bush (Cp. iii. 3); for God is there. What now flashes out from Moses has (9, 10) been in him all along. 9, 10. *The Lord said*: Jehovah had said (cp. ver. 1). *That my wonders*: in order that my portents. Pharaoh's obstinacy was the occasion of their being *multiplied*.

#### Exercise 25.

1. Who wrote, "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath"? What bed-fellow are they in danger of having who break that rule (see its context)? What other hero of his tribe had spoken to the same effect on a day of battle?
2. That the principle of indignation is God-like (Plato): show that it is so—(1) from the word of God, (2) from the eyes of Christ.
3. What about "a Syrian ready to perish is thy father"?

**NOTE on the midnight cry of Egypt.**—See note on "extirpation," under xxiii. 33. Compare it with the cry, which from Egypt sounded so strangely to Europe, one night about the time of the birth of Christ,—"*Great Pan is dead*;" that is to say, the universe has not a living God to be its heart and soul. 1. The grief and terror of the exodus for Egypt were the occasion of redemption for mankind, through the knowledge of that Living God who is despaired of by "the wisdom of the Egyptians." 2. The grief and terror helped toward Egypt's own deliverance from the nummy condition of dehumanizing separation of class from class, by means of a powerful common experience of a central fundamental human feeling, "one touch of nature" which "makes the whole world kin." 3. The grief and terror, the penal effect of a great act of justice, striking into the heart of heathenism where it was strongest, were fitted to prepare mankind for a new departure, toward the long forsaken Living God, into "a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." The pain that was suffered at the time, and the abrupt termination of so many lives, are only a small part of what—to the same effect—is continually taking place in the actual history of mankind. The speciality on that occasion was, the supernatural introduction into human history of a new element, in such tragedy, of *hope* for mankind; through the operation of which, if "weeping endure for a night," yet "joy cometh in the morning"—of an eternal cloudless day. The blackness of darkness upon the career of Pharaoh, and those of whom he is the type, is brought vividly *to view* in the light of redemption. But it is not caused by the redemption; the redemption only brings it into view, and it brings that into view only because it is itself "a joyful light."

**The Passover instituted** (xii. 1-20). Of this institution a view is given in the Introduction, superseding the necessity of comprehensive exposition at the present stage. What now falls to be done is, to consider the historical origination of the institution in the light of the original historical surroundings.

The section 14-20 bears internal evidence of having been written or revised after Israel reached Sinai. But the whole record bears witness (ver. 1) that the Passover was instituted in Egypt, and that (cp. 1 Co. xi. 23) the terms of the institution were then and there delivered by Moses as from the Lord. The record also gives an account of the first observance of the feast in Egypt; which account is verified by details (*e.g.* ver. 11), in the manner of the observance that could have place only in Egypt on that one occasion. Chronologically

CHAP. XII. 1. And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the  
 2 land of Egypt, saying, This month *shall be* unto you the  
 beginning of months: it *shall be* the first month of the year  
 to you.

3 Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the  
 tenth *day* of this month they shall take to them every man a  
 lamb, according to the house of *their* fathers, a lamb for an

as well as legally, this is the fundamental constitution of Israel as a nation. The Sinaitic legislation, later in time, is more recent in nature, as being manifestly a superstructure on that Passover foundation. How the same institution has come to underlie the constitution of Christendom for all time, is noted in the Introduction.

**Institution of the Passover** (xii. 1-20)—*erection of the trophy*. Here, distinctly visible, is the type of the institution of the Lord's Supper: as if Moses and Elias had "appeared in glory," on the Mount of Transfiguration, to see that the silent prophecy was fulfilled in that *exodus* ("decease," Lu. ix. 31) of Jesus, which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. The occasion in both cases being the near approach of an exodus through Redemption (1 Co. x. 1-5), in both cases the feast was constituted by a sacrificial lamb (Jn. i. 29; 1 Co. v. 7), through whose blood, by a covenant, there was saved the lives of the covenant people. And in both cases, while those who trust in that blood are individually made partakers of the redemption liberty, they are united in a corporate life, as of one body of the Lord, one kingdom of God.

1, 2. *In the land of Egypt*. This is hardly in the manner of one who is in Egypt with the people at the time of writing. He is looking back—say—from Sinai, perhaps a generation after "that night,"—or when the Tabernacle is completed. *This month* (under xiii. 3-10). A "month" here is only a "moon," a common name. *This month* is now christened, receiving (xiii. 4, xxiii. 15, xxxiv. 18) the proper name of **Abib**—"opening the ear" of corn: (after the Babylonish Captivity it will be known as **Nisan**). It coincides with our late March and early April. And it not only fixes the date of the exodus within the year, but is a monumental evidence (Introd.) of its reality. There is no other way of accounting for the origin of the Ecclesiastical year of Israel, "opening" contemporaneously with the ears of corn. Israel had a civil year, beginning after the close of harvest. In Egypt they may have known another year, which began with the Nile flood, in June. But the Passover year must mean the Passover Event of the exodus, when Israel came to be "a nation, born at once." 3. *To—Israel*: no doubt through the elders. The *congregation* (*adah*, see under ver. 16) is the Israelitish people as a collective unity (cp. "the congregation," name assumed by the Scottish Reformation Protestants). This left four days (ver. 6) between the choosing of the victim and the slaying of it. For there being this delay, reasons have been sought with a needless ingenuity; a sufficient reason is, that the Israelite might have time to make sure work of going rightly about this matter. *A lamb* (cp. Re. xv. 3): the word (*sēh*) may include the young of goats as well as of sheep; but by use and wont only the latter was taken for this purpose. *According—fathers*. *House of fathers* here means **a single household**, though it could also mean that wider **family**, which in Scotch Gaelic is a *clan* ("children"). When there came to be a common altar for the nation, and a representative priestly tribe, the blood of the Passover lamb was sprinkled on that altar by the priest.

4 house: and if the household be too little for the lamb, let  
 him and his neighbour next unto his house take *it* according  
 to the number of the souls; every man, according to his  
 5 eating, shall make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall  
 be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take *it*  
 6 out from the sheep, or from the goats: and ye shall keep it  
 up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the  
 whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in  
 7 the evening. And they shall take of the blood, and strike *it*  
 on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the

Otherwise, the Passover was within the household (Mat. xxvi. 27, etc.)—selection of the lamb, keeping and slaying it, eating it festively: all was *en famille*. The “integer” of Israel’s nationality was thus *a godly household*: family religion was the foundation of the nation’s life. “Happy is the people that is in such a case.” 4. *Shall make your count*: ought to run, “Shall ye make your count” (so in Rev. Vers.). That is, reckoning how much would suffice for an individual, they could count how many individuals one lamb would suffice for. That would depend upon their making a meal of it, or simply tasting it (cp. 1 Co. x. 17). Josephus intimates that the conventional number for which one lamb would suffice was as high as twenty. *Without blemish* (1 Pe. i. 19). To offer to God what is not the best of its kind, is an outrage on even natural religion (Mal. i. 7, 8): witness Ananias and Sapphira. But the positive prescription here no doubt has a reference to the *special* sacred purpose of this offering (vers. 12, 13). *Of the first year*: marg. *of a year*: lit. *son of year*. Does that mean, of an age *within the year*? Or, a yearling, *a full year old*? We do not know. Scripture does not say, and other witnesses do not agree. *Keep it up*: **have it in keeping**. They could thus make sure of its being without blemish; and (ver. 26) its being in the house that week might lead the children to ask questions. *The whole—kill*: which means, **every family of all Israel**. *In the evenings*: lit. *between the evenings* (under xxix. 39, xxx. 8). Various explained:—(1) that the two evenings are, the sun’s beginning to go down, and sunset,—say from 3 P.M. to 6 P.M. (cp. Mat. xxvii. 45). This would give time, if a multitude of lambs had to be brought to the altar. (2) That the first evening was sunset, and the second, transition from twilight into night. Which view is correct, we do not know. The essential point seems to be, that the sacrifice was to be slain at a suitable time before the (mid-night) feasting. 7. Here still the *family* is the integer. *Door* was equivalent to **house**: as “gate” to city (Ge. xxii. 17). The threshold was not sprinkled, as it had to be trodden under foot of men. The literal “door” of an Oriental “house” is insignificant (of a *tent* “house,” the “door” may be an old blanket). The important thing is the framework—posts and lintel. When that was sprinkled, the house could be entered only through the blood (cp. He. x. 19–22). *Upper door-post*: **lintel** (Rev. Vers.)—the word is made *lintel* in vers. 22, 23. The Heb. word (*mashquôph*) appears only in this section. It is supposed to mean *a lattice*, such as appears on some Egyptian monuments, through which it was possible to look (out or in. *Moral*: Do not try to *look* that way except through the blood). The “shield” (Eph. vi. 16), which is constituted by the faithful-

8 houses, wherein they shall eat it. And they shall eat the  
 flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread ;  
 9 *and* with bitter *herbs* they shall eat it. Eat not of it raw,  
 nor sodden at all with water, but roast *with* fire ; his head  
 10 with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof. And ye shall  
 let nothing of it remain until the morning ; and that which  
 remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire.  
 11 And thus shall ye eat it : *with* your loins girded, your  
 shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand : and ye shall

ness of God, is *placed* there by the householder (Act. xvi. 31). 8-10. The lamb is to be devoted **wholly** to the one purpose of the feast, sacred unity of redemption life, or, life of redemption, indivisibly one and sacred, in a chosen people. Hence it is not to be in any way broken up into parts (Jn. xix. 36, cp. I Co. x. 14-18). *Purtenance*: **inwards** (intestines). These, taken out and washed, were replaced in the body before it was roasted. *With—with*: lit. **on, on**: thus preserving the body completely entire, without *any* dismemberment. **Raw**: it does not appear from facts that the purpose here was prevention of *omophagy*, *i.e.* heathenish festival eating of flesh that is raw or half-raw. The word here for *raw* generally means *under-done*. There might be danger of this in the confused excitement of that first occasion ; especially as the people were not likely to have ovens in which the lamb could easily be roasted entire, but probably had to make use of spits. *Boiling*: permitted in some sacrifices, is prohibited in this. For the withdrawing of the vital sap through boiling would here mar the representation of **completeness of consecration to that one purpose** of the chosen people's redemption life. The Heb. here for *boil* has the general meaning, **to mature**, as, through ripening of fruit: hence the specification here, *with water*. Here as elsewhere the fire is a symbol of consecration ; but here the fire is made also to show the completeness of the consecration peculiar to this case of the Passover lamb. The same effect is served by the limitation of the time to *that night*—better, *this night* (see under ver. 12):—the one immediately following *the evening* (ver. 6) of 14th Abib (ver. 10): the body was to be all consumed (“on the spot”) at the actual feast. *Unleavened bread* (under ver. 15). *Bitter herbs*: lit. **bitternesses** (cp. Scottish “sourrocks”), bitter things (edible). The essential idea is, the **bitterness**, reminding the redeemed of their past life in Egypt. The Heb. expression is lit. **on bitters**: the bitter herbs in this case being, not a mere accessory condiment, but, so to speak, the very **basis** of the feast (of a certain settlement on land it was said, that “the foundation was laid in broken hearts” (Mat. v. 2)—which in a sense is true of the Great Settlement (Re. vii. 14)). The species of herbs employed are not known (it is only the specific quality of **bitterness** that was prescribed). They presumably were such as could be easily procured there and then (and always)—lettuce, *e.g.*, and endive. 11. The details here arising out of the conditions at the first observance, were not held as an abiding part of the ordinance. *Haste*: of *that night* (under vers. 8 and 12), when they were on wing for the great departure. *Girded*: the (bournous) blanket or shawl, over-clothing, was thus to be not loose, preventing free, swift motion. *Shoes* (sandals):—they were not to be bare-footed, as in easy repose of home, or in walking on the

12 eat it in haste; it *is* the Lord's passover. For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast: and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I *am*  
 13 the Lord. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye *are*: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to  
 14 destroy *you*, when I smite the land of Egypt. And this day

smooth soft sward of Goshen. *Staff*: in the very act of moving away, as an alarmed bird with wings expanding for flight. This completes the *picture* of "in haste," inchoate swift departure in an awful crisis. *It is the LORD's Passover*: lit. **Passover to Jehovah**. The word for Passover (*Pēsēch*) has no etymological connection with that for "pass through" ("travel through") in ver. 12. It natively means **transition**, like that of a bird flying across a river ("on eagle's wings"); as if a thunder-cloud had passed over the house without bursting upon it (cp. Is. xxxi. 5, where the Heb. for "passing over" is the *pēsēch* of our text). The Passover here (ver. 11, as in 1 Co. v. 7) means especially, **the sacrificial victim**. But the word can easily come to mean the ordinance (ver. 43) as a whole, or under other aspects of detail (cp. Jn. ii. 13). 12. *The first-born: the whole Egyptian population*, by presentation (under xi. 8). The stroke went no farther than was necessary for this. It thus could not reach a man who was himself a father, though he should be the first-born of his own father's household. The destruction of *beast* life is supposed to have stood in close relation to execution of **judgment upon all the gods of Egypt**. This does not mean merely, demolition of idolatrous images. The Egyptian idolatry was replete with **deification of animal life**. And the destruction of the first-born of all beasts must have involved the sudden death of many sacred animals,—so that Egypt would feel as if suddenly **her gods had been slain** that awful night. So, *I am the LORD* (under vi. 6–8), attaching His royal signature to this proclamation of judgment: the real God, against the "vanities" (Act. xiv. 15). *This night*: of deep memorable terror for Egypt,—contrast to the *this night* in ver. 8 (where our Ver., "*that night*"—for the same Heb.—obscures the vividness of representation, blurring out the circumstance that *the words are spoken at the time* of that first Passover observance). 13. *To you: or, for you*. *A token* (cp. Ge. ix. 12, 13), the same Heb. as for "sign" (*ōth*): **assurance** on God's part, as well as vivid representation. *When I see the blood*: when it is *visible, placed* in view, by *man* (cp. Ro. x. 9, 10). So (ii. 23, 24) it was when He *heard*, when Israel *cried*, that *He* took overt action. *What* He sees is, not the feast, nor the worshippers, nor the slain lamb, but, precisely, the *blood*. (*This alone* is on the mercy-seat, seen by the Cherubim, where God is throned in grace.) *Passover* (under ver. 11).

NOTE.—Vers. 14–17 are apparently given by the historian in supplement to the original words of institution. Compare in 1 Cor. xi. vers. 31–34, coming after 23–26.

14. *This day*. The 14th Abib, on which the Passover lamb was slain, is still kept as a memorial by the Jews; though (Da. ix. 27) they no longer have the sacrifice even in form. A certain confusion (see under ver. 15) between



shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord throughout your generations; ye shall keep  
 15 it a feast by an ordinance for ever. Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread, from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall

the 14th and 15th is occasioned by there being two ways of dating the beginning of a day; and this confusion seems to have made it impossible to determine with warrantable absolute confidence what was the day of the Passover week, or, which day of the week it was on which the Great Passover was "sacrificed for us." *A feast* (here again it is *God* who so describes it; cp. v. 1 and Re. ii. 20). The Heb. word (and thing almost always) had in it the idea of *joyful* celebration (the great song on the first occasion is really Ex. xv.). *By an ordinance*: "Laws of nature" are *statutes* of Jehovah, in the sense of being prescribed by Him in Creation, and by Him enforced in Providence. But the "ordinances" now coming into view are not simply natural statutes of God, but "positive," like the statute law of Britain, in the sense of being publicly enacted by Him otherwise than through the essential constitution of things. Even the moral law (Ex. xx. etc.), though natural in the matter of it, is positive in respect of this new enactment of it (cp. Ex. xx. 2). *This day*: not only Abib is to be the spring of Israel's year; this 14th day is to be the spring of Abib month. 15. *Seven days*. They were counted from 15th Abib inclusive:—though the *first* day here, of putting away the leaven, is the 14th,—late in the last part of it, where it ran into the 15th (reckoned as beginning at sunset). The week was rounded into a sacred "octave" by special solemnities on the first (15th) and the eighth (22nd) days. The *seven*, perhaps from the "seven branches" of the Nile, may have been a sacred number with the Egyptians; but it is not known to have entered into their lives to form the periodic week of seven days. Elsewhere there are traces of the week-period among the peoples. Thus Hesiod incidentally says that the eighth day is holy. (The Rev. James Johnstone, who has investigated these traces in a separate publication, found a curious recurring note, making the first day of every week to be "holy," in a Chinese Calendar, referring to a period so remote that the original reason of the note has been unknown for ages immemorial.) The present narrative in no way warrants the suggestion that the weekly period was previously unknown, any more than it would warrant the suggestion that the *monthly* period was previously unknown (see under xvi. 5, 22, 23, and xx. 11). In the previous condition, without the "ordinances" of public worship now beginning, the period would not be so visibly marked as it now cannot fail to be. *Leaven*: the **original occasion** of their using food thus insipid, namely, the *haste* of that departure, was no doubt to be remembered in after ages (it has a spiritual significance as figurative of the normal abiding condition of true redemption life). But the **essential meaning** is represented by that **decomposition, corruption**, which is the result of leaven in fermentation (Mat. xvi. 6). "*Unleavened bread*" thus means (1 Co. v. 7) "sincerity and truth." What the use of such bread, in the symbolical feast, meant, was *not*, that religion is *insipid*: that was the view (Nu. xi. 5) of the carnal-minded in Israel, derived from the "mixed multitude" out of idolatrous Egypt. The meaning was, that the life of Jehovah's religion is *pure* ("sin-

- 16 be cut off from Israel. And in the first day *there shall be* an holy convocation, and in the seventh day there shall be an holy convocation to you; no manner of work shall be done in them, save *that* which every man must eat, that only may  
 17 be done of you. And ye shall observe *the feast of unleavened bread*: for in this selfsame day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever.
- 18 In the first *month*, on the fourteenth day of the month at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twen-  
 19 tieth day of the month at even. Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses: for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger, or born in  
 20 the land. Ye shall eat nothing leavened; in all your habitations shall ye eat unleavened bread.

cerity") and *loving* ("and truth"): it thus resembles God who is holy (1 Pe. i. 13-21), and whose name is Light and Love. *The excommunication* (see under xxx. 32, 33) here is notable in rigour. The severe temporal punishment of disloyalty to Jehovah as Israel's Theocratic King belongs to a (logically and chronologically) later stage of legislation for this people. At the present stage, what is so sternly branded is the *carnality*, in overt action, which (Nu. xi. 20 and 34) is *open rejection of Jehovah as God and Redeemer*. The same carnality (Ro. viii. 5-8) may be in intense reality under the disguise of a ghostliness which passes for spirituality (Mat. xxiii. 27). 16. *First*: here apparently (not as in ver. 15, but) the 15th Abib, opening the Octave round. *Convocation*: lit. "calling,"—making assemble by proclamation (cp. the muezzin or the church bell). The word for *congregation* in ver. 2 (note there) is different. *Work*. The word here, as in Fourth Commandment (xx. 10), has the appropriate specific meaning of *toil* of common life. The exception specified here was not permitted for the Sabbath by the strict letter of the Jewish law; though, as was pointed out by the Lawgiver (Mat. ix. 13 and Mat. xii. 7, read vers. 1-8), the exception is consistent with the real intention of the law. 17. *Feast of*: added by our Translators, needlessly (under ver. 11). *In your—for ever*. There is here no warrant for the Church festival of Easter. Here the reference is to Israel's permanent condition (of separation, Eph. ii. 14) before Christ came (cp. Ex. xxvii. 20, 21). The prescription is for the Old Testament "ordinance" of the Passover. *Your armies*: on the **triumphant manner** of the departure, see under iii. 22. *Have I brought*: did I bring. The historical past here (under vers. 1 and 14) seems to place the speaker *after* the exodus; as if God were speaking through Moses in the wilderness.

*N.B.* the *Note* introducing vers. 14-17.

18-20. **Fourteenth—even** (on *the first day*, under ver. 16). The *even* here, of the 14th passing into the 15th, shades into the first day of the Octave of the *unleavened bread* (ver. 17). *Leaven* (under ver. 15 and xiii. 7). **Rigour** of

21 Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out and take you a lamb according to your

exclusion is here **marked** variously :—(1) The thing must not be found in their houses ; (2) the prohibition of it extends to “the stranger” (Israelitish by adoption) as well as to the man “born in the land” (Israelitish by birth) ; (3) they were not to eat any leaven, in bread or otherwise ; (4) not even in other lands (*habitations—abodes*, in ver. 20, is more comprehensive than *houses* in ver. 19). *Stranger—land*. The land here is **Canaan** ; regarded as the ideal birthplace of true Israelites (cp. “we, who are Jews *by nature*,” Ga. ii. 15 ; and the expression, “that region of thought and imagination which is the ideal country of poets and philosophers”). For detailed ordinances regarding *the stranger*, see under vers. 43-49.

#### Exercise 26.

1. *The Passover*. Show from Scripture (1) that the Passover is fulfilled in Christ ; (2) that in Him the meaning is essentially in His shed blood ; (3) that the meaning in this blood is essentially, “sacrifice to satisfy divine justice.”
2. *Leaven*. (1) What was the essential meaning of the prohibition of leaven ? (2) What things in a man are represented by unleavened bread ? (3) Show in the case of Christ personally the difference between carnality and humanity, and between ghostliness and spirituality.
3. *Ordinances and Easter*. (1) Does God's care about ordinances show that we ought to have ordinances which He has not cared to give ? Explain. (2) Christ is a Physician who has prescribed certain ordinances :—how does that bear upon our inventing some ? (3) A king has prescribed the ceremonial of honouring him : do we honour him by resorting to some other ceremonial ? (4) A general commands the discontinuance of certain dress in his army : what becomes of those who continue it, saying that this is out of respect for the general, because he at one time prescribed this dress ?

NOTE on **subsequent modifications** of the fundamental ordinance of the Passover. In the supposition of a primary divine origination of the ordinance, there is nothing to exclude the possibility of subsequent modifications of it. The Passover came to be in a completely different form upon the death of Christ ; and before His coming it may, with the sanction of God, have undergone various modifications, correspondingly to varying conditions of capacity and want in Israel. The circumstance that in some respects the conception of a sacrifice to God is not completely represented in the Passover as it was in later ages, does not show that the Passover is not a true sacrifice : it shows rather, that it is of older date than the completed ceremonial system ;—a fact which may be of value as a clue toward ascertainment of the essential nature of sacrifice. On the meaning of sacrifice, see some notes in the following section under vers. 11-28.

**First observance of the Passover** (xii, 21-36). The details of the account of this first observance are necessarily to some extent coincident with details in the account of the original founding of the ordinance. To us it is deeply interesting to compare the humility of the Upper Chamber at a later day with the grandeurs now beginning to be assumed by the aspect of movement in Egypt. The representation here of Pharaoh and his people, appearing in a light so lurid in its brightness toward them, is singularly powerful. And the horror of that fateful night for Egypt is vividly illustrated by the contrast of its connection with Israel's peace of God.

1. **The Covenanters** (vers. 21-28). 21. *Draw out* : from the fold or flock : take to your houses respectively a lamb for every household (vers. 1, 2).

22 families, and kill the passover. And ye shall take a bunch  
of hyssop, and dip *it* in the blood that *is* in the bason, and  
strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that *is*  
in the bason ; and none of you shall go out at the door of his  
23 house until the morning. For the Lord will pass through to  
smite the Egyptians ; and when he seeth the blood upon the  
lintel and on the two side posts, the Lord will pass over the  
door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your  
24 houses to smite *you*. And ye shall observe this thing for an  
25 ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever. And it shall  
come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the Lord  
will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall  
26 keep this service. And it shall come to pass, when your

*The Passover*: here, means **the lamb** (cp. 1 Co. v. 7 ; Jn. i. 29). The instruction to *the elders* is (vers. 26, 27) for the people. *Hyssop*: outside of the Pentateuch it is mentioned only in 1 Ki. iv. 23, where it is a typically humble plant in natural history, and in Ps. li. 7, where it is associated with a sacred use of **cleansing**. The cleansing for which it was used was not only through blood-sprinkling (He. ix. 9), but also (in the case of leprosy, Lev. xiv. 4, 6) through sprinkling with water into which hyssop and some other elements had been cast. Though the plant must have been familiar to Israel in Canaan and at the exodus time, we do not know what was the species of it. From Jn. xix. 19, it may perhaps be inferred that it had a long stalk. The sacred use of it required that it should be fit to be formed into a bunch like a sponge. *Now—go out*: all keep behind *the shield* of safety divine—on peril of your lives “and in Manasseh’s *sight*”—*i.e.* in the *Pillar*. *The Destroyer* (cp. Re. vii. 3). Was this a personal destroying angel? It may have been; even though, as some have thought, Jehovah should have employed the impersonal agency of a pestilence (2 Sa. xxiv. 15–17, cp. 13, 25) in *passing through* (see under ver. 12). Having thrown away the scabbard, Jehovah may have now come from behind the veil of secondary causation. The miraculousness of the action is shown by circumstances as in the previous plagues, and here additionally, by the selection of *the first-born* of Egypt (as previously intimated) for the objects of the judgment. 23. *The Lord will pass over*. Here (1) we see the Passover as ultimately a thing *in the mind* of Jehovah: His sovereignty, at once of mercy and of judgment. (2) What determines His action is the view of *the blood* on Israel’s door. The *source* of the Redemption is sovereign love: the *course* of it is, through bleeding sacrifice. This is **the quintessence of Jehovahism**, which is here being expounded (cp. Jn. i. 18, where “declared Him” is lit. “expounded” or “interpreted” Him): as it is in Jesus “the Lamb of God.” 24. For perpetuation of *that* religion, there is to be perpetual observance of this ordinance through the ages, bringing *that meaning* of the religion perpetually into men’s view (cp. 1 Co. xi. 26). 25, 26. The picture-gospel of the ordinance is intended especially to awaken and satisfy curiosity, in particular, in the susceptible mind of youth, from generation to generation. *When ye be come—this service*. The repetition of the word *service* (ver. 25) is important, as impressive iteration of the principle, that religious observance is not only a

- children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service?  
 27 That ye shall say, It *is* the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head, and worshipped.  
 28 And the children of Israel went away, and did as the Lord had commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they.

privilege of men, but *a duty to God* (2 Thes. i. 8). The Passover service, perhaps (Amos v. 25) not kept up in the wilderness, was especially intended for perpetuity in the settled condition of Canaan. The word for *keep* here is the same as that for *observe* in ver. 24, and has the force of *guardian care* (Ps. cxxi.—all about “keeping”). *The natural curiosity of youth* (under xiii. 8) is especially in the Redeemer's view in His institution of ordinances (cp. Josh. iv. 6, etc.). 27. *That ye shall say*. Here (1) is the fundamental instruction, that is to be given through all generations, from year to year; (2) it is to children that it is to be given; (3) it is to be by their parents; (4) it is to be in the words of God; (5) in the only sacramental address ever delivered in the words of God to man. *Passover* here means, the ordinance. The heart of the Passover as here set forth is sacrifice. *The thing* which the Passover means is,—SUPERNATURAL REDEMPTION, FROM A COMMON DOOM OF DEATH ON ACCOUNT OF SIN, THROUGH BLEEDING SACRIFICE OF A LAMB AS PRESCRIBED BY GOD.

*Bowed—worshipped*; solemn acquiescence and acceptance (cp. iv. 31, xix. 8, and xxiv. 1-8). This includes an engagement to discharge the *service* of this religion, and to teach its history of redemption, as explained by God, to the children. 28. The people received the injunction through their *elders* (He. xiii. 7). In this fundamental typical action of the supernatural religion, they simply did what the Redeemer had prescribed (Jn. xiv. 15, 21-24).

NOTE on the **Severity of God** as appearing in Exodus.—See on the **humanely generous character** of the Mosaic Code, under xxii. 16-31; and as guarding against exaggerations of real severity, see notes on the *midnight cry* at close of xi., and *cut off* in xxiii. 23. Paul (Ro. xi. 22), recognising the fact of a divine “severity” manifested in the falling of the unbelieving Jews, speaks of it as having in it a salutary warning to beware of the same offence, lest we too be “cut off”—as unfruitful branches may be cut off from the vine. The view of that “severity” he regards as fitted to co-operate with the view of God's “goodness,” to the beneficent effect of keeping men from presumption of unbelief, which may be presumptuous though despairing (1 Sa. iv.). That shows us a purpose, which is served by the terrific severities of divine judgment upon the Egyptian oppressors, the “abominable” Canaanites, and the “ungodly” antediluvians. We see the same purpose in the terrific severity toward Israelites, of the penal sanctions attached to the law about dishonouring parents (xxi.), and the law about profaning the altar incense (xxxii.). But the purpose in such cases is not *merely*, or only, disciplinary, through amendment or deterrent of those remaining alive. Even the disciplinary purpose would not be served if there were not seen and felt to be a *moral* element in the case, calling for the *judicial* process of punishing sin as involving guilt,—which would have place though there had not been any thought of influencing the feeling and the conduct of other men. The salutary effect is essentially dependent upon bringing that *conscience* into operation (Ro. ii. 14, 15, cp. i. 32), which, whether “excusing” or “accusing,” is simply a judge pronouncing upon *merit* or *demerit*, *innocence* or *guilt*, according to the

- 29 And it came to pass, that, at midnight, the Lord smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sat on his throne, unto the first-born of the captive that *was* in the dungeon, and all the first-born of  
 30 cattle. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt: for *there was* not a house where *there was* not one dead.
- 31 And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, *and* get you forth from among my people, both ye,

intrinsic moral character of the action or agent, the disposition or the person,—irrespectively of any supposed consequences of execution of the sentences of that “judge within the breast” (Adam Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments*),—whose own “theory” is destroyed by this description of the conscience. Heathenism tends to make *sin* a mere unfortunate eccentricity (*Hamartia*, the Gr. word, “missing the—arrow’s—mark,” has the double meaning). Prometheus, chained to the rock and torn by vultures,—what does he feel? the *criminality* of his disobeying the gods? or, simply, the *terrible mistake* of defying them? Æschylus does not show; and probably does not see. The Bible places morality on a true solid foundation by clearly distinguishing sin from mistake; and this it does especially, through visible *punishment* of sin, as distinguished from simply misfortune to weakness or “error” (Lu. xiii. 1–5). Why the severity does not reach alike to all, seeing that all alike “have sinned, and come short of the glory of God,” Paul does not know. But he warns us (Ro. ii. 3–11) in view of the severity, which we see to be in God, not to continue in alienation from Him, but to flee into His offered refuge of mercy, as knowing that His goodness, in forbearance and long-suffering, is now leading us to repentance.

2. The foes (vers. 29–36). *Their* experience of the first Passover night was,—THE LAST PLAGUE. On the supernatural in it, see under ver. 23.

The stroke upon Egypt broke the chain of Israel. 29, 30. *At midnight: in deepest night*—when terror is most terrific, and most full fraught with the terrific element of *confused surprise*. *That sat*: who? Pharaoh? Or his first-born? In all probability the Pharaoh was himself a first-born; but we know he was not likely to be killed by this stroke. And who pursued Israel to the Red Sea? Only the first-born of a parent *then alive* was stricken. The plagues went no farther than was strictly necessary for the *principle* of executing judgment on the community through its representatives (under ver. 12). The deadly agony of terror, finding utterance in that awful cry, begins in the hard heart of Pharaoh, the king who was honoured as a god; and thence it extends throughout all Egypt, among all (*the servants*) the grandees, and among all (*the Egyptians*) the common people. *Pallida mors æquo pede pulsavit tabernas pauperum arcesque regum* (“Pale death with equal foot struck wide the door of palaces and hovels of the poor”). *Not one escaped the plague*. All at once, **Jehovah struck midnight**—of death—in all Egypt. His policy was “thorough.” He adhered to it unshrinking. *The lonely captive*, even, was not pitied (cp. xi. 5, the same general fact, differently stated). *In the dungeon*: lit. (as in marg.) **house of bondage**—probably implying penal servitude, or, at best, the condition of a foreign slave of burden. *Not a house*;—*i.e.* of those containing first-borns. 31, 32. *He called for Moses*. What an awakening his! Let us think of that messenger,

and the children of Israel; and go, serve the Lord, as ye  
 32 have said. Also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have  
 33 said, and be gone; and bless me also. And the Egyptians  
 were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out  
 of the land in haste; for they said, We *be* all dead *men*.  
 34 And the people took their dough before it was leavened,  
 their kneading-troughs being bound up in their clothes upon  
 35 their shoulders. And the children of Israel did according to  
 the word of Moses; and they borrowed of the Egyptians  
 36 jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment. And the  
 Lord gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians,  
 so that they lent unto them *such things as they required*; and  
 they spoiled the Egyptians.

“so pale, so woe-begone,” who “drew Priam’s curtain at the dead of night.” He no longer thinks of negotiation (as in x. 28, 29). We now see in him only surrender at discretion. There seems **abjectness** of prostration in the *bless me also* (cp. Ge. xxvii. 34, 38). 33–36. *N.B.*—As regards the people of Egypt, God has twice (iv. 21, x. 3) shown Himself aware of the existence on their part of a neighbourly kind feeling toward Israel; and He now repeats the indication. On *borrowing*, see under iii. 22:—there what we see is, *obtaining* by request; here it is, *giving* by request; but the real notion is, the *request*. Yet the picture of Israel, ver. 35, is not imposing. *Bound up*: the loose shawl or bournous could easily be arranged for the purpose; as a shepherd “fixes” his plaid to carry a lamb in. The *dough* is sometimes carried about by Arabs in like manner at this day. The cake or dough is placed inchoate in a small vessel, ready to be baked when there is leisure. (In the mediæval Wars of Independence, the Scots—with a little store of meal in saddle-bag—got into a similar state of commissariat for their raids across the English border.) An Israelite who in that sorry plight had been enriched by Egyptians ought to be considerate, kind afterwards. That *lending* is made a point of genuine godliness both in the Old Testament and by Christ (Sermon on the Mount). (See the Civil Code, xxi.–xxiii., on care for “stranger.”)

#### Exercise 27.

1. *Children at the Passover.* (1) Repeat the words of God in the only communion address which we have direct from Him. (2) Quote exactly the definition of the meaning of the Passover that is printed in small capitals in the Commentary. (3) Taking the Lord’s Supper as the “object lesson” of Christianity, show how there might be applied to it, for information of children, that definition.
2. In Israel young people, born “children of the law,” at the time of adolescence became “children of the covenant.” (1) Why should young members of the Church become communicants? (2) What, in your opinion, usually hinders *them* from obeying the command, “This do in remembrance of me”? (3) How might an adult obtain benefit for himself from having been baptized in infancy? (See *Directory for Public Worship*.)
3. (1) Is reformation the only end of punishment? Give a reason for your opinion. (2) What is the essential cause of the exultation in the Song of Moses and the Lamb, Re. xv. 3, etc.? (3) What is *the Christian feeling*,

37 And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot, *that were* men,

meet for utterance in praise to God, that may be supposed to find expression in the imprecatory psalms and in the extirpation of the Canaanites?

**NOTE on Sacrifice** in connexion with the Passover. (See note on *altar*, initial to xxvii. 1-8.) The Passover sacrifice is of a *sinless life*, in the room of sinners, who are to be saved from death by the death of the innocent substitute. 1. The first clear case of bleeding sacrifice is that of Noah's offering. In connexion with that offering there first is heard the expression, "of a sweet-smelling savour" (note on *sweet savour*, under xxix. 18). The idea here is of *satisfaction* to the mind and heart of God (Eph. v. 1). 2. Abraham's offering of Isaac brings *substitution* very vividly to view (Ge. iii. 13). 3. Another famous sacrifice of the patriarchal age is that offered by Job for his sons, upon the supposition of their having transgressed. We do not know where to place him chronologically, but theologically he is in the *palæozoic* of Bible religious thought. The idea of his sacrifice is *propitiation* (see notes on the *Kapporeth*—"mercy-seat"—etc., under xxv.). And propitiation (says Voltaire) is the fundamental of all the religions. Supposing, then, that the Passover gathers into itself, resumes, the essential ideas of patriarchal religion as represented by sacrifice, there will be found as the true heart of its meaning, *satisfaction* to God, by the way of *substitution*, on the ground of *propitiation*. Propitiation of God through expiation of the guilt of sin,—this, as the ultimate ground of man's peace with his Maker, we shall see instated, as the central principle of Israel's religion, in the Holy of Holies, where Jehovah is manifested in the glory of redeeming grace, over the mercy-seat, between the cherubim. This is what is set forth in the Epistle to the Hebrews in its exposition of the Tabernacle theology as now unveiled in Christ (He. i.-x.).

**First step of departure** (xii. 37-51). Within the historic period, very considerable changes have taken place even in the physical geography of the region, to the north-east of Egypt, in the direction of Suez and the Red Sea, over which the Israelites must have passed in some way. Though Pithom should really prove to have been "Succoth," it is not inconceivable that another "Succoth" (*Booths*) should have been the point of convergence for Israel;—mustering to Moses, from, let us suppose, the *district* or region of Rameses. The identifications of particular places in this part of the history are only conjectural. They may never be otherwise. And we ought here again to endeavour to exercise a historic sense upon the question,—What does it matter whether the places are identified or not? The naming of the places evinces the careful exactness with which the business was conducted and the record of it kept. But the places themselves have no interest really historical, to say nothing of religious. There is no trace of any Apostle or Evangelist having ever so much as turned aside to look at what are called "holy places." And it is remarkable how Scripture, by leaving a certain obscurity upon places and times, so as to baffle the curiosity which might run into superstition, has everywhere guarded the interest of religion in *concealment* of the grave of Moses.

Recalling to mind the general course of the narrative, we now observe that here still the Passover has the place of honour. The "ordinance" of it is made the main action in the first step of the departure. The "ordinance" may be supposed to have been delivered at Succoth. The geography thus begun cannot, in the light of present knowledge, be made to result in much more than a general sense of *realism*, in perception of the manifest familiarity of the historian or his informants, with localities and all other external conditions of the movement in these few days.

37, 38. *Rameses* may (under i. 11) be either the city Raamses, built or reconstructed by Israel for Pharaoh; or, the ("land of Rameses," Ge.



38 besides children. And a mixed multitude went up also with  
 39 them; and flocks and herds, *even* very much cattle. And  
 they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they  
 brought forth out of Egypt, for it was not leavened; because  
 they were thrust out of Egypt, and could not tarry, neither  
 had they prepared for themselves any victual.

xlvii. 11) **province** or region of Rameses, where they originally settled. It now appears from the monuments that Succoth was the civil name of Pithom (the priestly name). The mustering of the nation to one spot may be supposed to mean, that that was the headquarters toward which they first began to form. Such a movement as theirs, toward national migration, must have resembled the approach of spring rather than the concentration of a modern army. The first step must have been little more than the assembling at Succoth of representatives of the tribes, and of divisions of tribes, with a nucleus of the commonalty, rapidly augmenting, while the word has gone round to move in the peaceful "rising" of a people. There would be a thrill and wave of inchoate movement among Israelites wide over the region. Their wide diffusion did not prevent coherent organized movement in one direction, as of the streams of Lebanon all toward the Jordan. The *men on foot* probably means, **males** of an age to **bear arms**, or at least, to take place and to march in the array of fighting-men. The *children*, typical sample of helplessness, would thus stand for also women and men, aged or infirm. The total population so represented is probably about two millions. (It is a very striking circumstance, that the number of this population was found to be almost identically the same after forty years' tear and wear in the wilderness, in course of which there passed away the whole generation of those who were full adult men at the time of leaving Egypt.) Regarding the previous growth of Israel into a population so great, see under i. 7. The number, *six hundred thousand*, here admits of being variously tested by incidental indications, so as to show that it has not arisen from any of those accidents to which the record of numbers is liable through the manner of recording numbers in ancient books and inscriptions. *Succoth* (Heb. **booths**) cannot be certainly identified with any place now known. We have referred to the recent identification of it with Pithom; but that has not yet become established so that we can refer to it as certain. Otherwise, the total has been recognised as intrinsically credible, irrespectively of the authority of this historian. It may have been one of those towns or townships which have completely disappeared; perhaps only a border station where men camped before launching into the wilderness, or only a spot memorable as Israel's camping-ground on that never-to-be-forgotten occasion. But these may-be's all pass away if the identification with Pithom be established. *Flocks* (under ver. 5). *A mixed multitude*. It is not quite clear that this was exclusive of the Israel represented by the six hundred thousand men. It may conceivably have been some portion of that Israel floating vaguely without order. Most probably it consisted of now Israelitish Egyptians and others, who, discontented with their condition in Egypt, now cast in their lot with Israel. It is an important suggestion that, irrespectively of Israel, the population of that north-east region was largely Semitic in extraction, and perhaps in traditional feeling. Some of these may have been drawn toward Israel by spiritual influences (Nu. x. 39); but a generation later it appeared (Nu. xi. 4)

40 Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in  
 41 Egypt, *was* four hundred and thirty years. And it came to  
 pass, at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even  
 the self-same day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the  
 42 Lord went out from the land of Egypt. It *is* a night to be  
 much observed unto the Lord for bringing them out from the  
 land of Egypt: this *is* that night of the Lord to be observed  
 of all the children of Israel in their generations.  
 43 And the Lord said unto Moses and Aaron, This *is* the  
 ordinance of the passover; there shall no stranger eat  
 44 thereof: but every man's servant that is bought for money,

that their influence as a class had not been wholesome. The legislation here (vers. 43-48), for dealing with alien proselytism, is seen to rise naturally out of the historical occasion as a filter for a flood. The *very much cattle* shows that Hebrews, a strong race, tenacious and frugal, must have thriven in despite of the oppressions (cp. the English under the Norman "conquest"). The Sinaitic Peninsula is known to have had resources far beyond what it now has for the sustenance of a population like Israel, with its flocks and herds. But, even with the aid of what might be purchased from surrounding peoples with Egyptian wealth, the sustentation problem in the wilderness (see Introd. *On to Sinai*) gave occasion for a peculiar training of the people (De. viii. 1-4) under providence ordinary and extraordinary. 40-42 (see in Introd. on *Exodus Chronology*). *Who dwelt in Egypt*: ought to be, *which they sojourned in Egypt*. Our Vers. has no warrant in the Heb. original. It may have been occasioned by a desire to produce an appearance of a period which is *not* simply that of the residence in Egypt from the time of Jacob's settling in Goshen. Similarly the two ancient translations, Sept. and Samarit., depart from the Hebrew text so as to make it appear as if the period had been that from Abraham's arrival in Canaan to the exodus. Referring to the Introd. for a general view of the evidence on the question, we here simply accept, on the ground of the present text, 430 years as the period of the sojourn of Israel in Egypt. The strain of the passage does not require that *the self-same day* should mean more than *precisely or exactly* (430 years). On the other hand, *the night* (in ver. 42) has emphatic reference to those *identical hours*, in which Israel's life was saved while Egypt's was cut off (cp. the "night" of the last Old Testament Passover, Lu. xxii. 16; I Co. xi. 23). *Night—observed*: otherwise (lit.), *night of remembrance*. 43-49 (cp. Eph. ii. 11, 12, 19). *Ordinance of the Passover*: statute law of qualification for communion (I Co. xi. 26). Only the *circumcised* were to partake; and *all* the circumcised in due time. *Stranger*: the Heb. word in ver. 43 is not the same as that in vers. 48, 49. In 43 it is lit., *son of an alien*;—meaning that no one is to partake who is not an Israelite by adoption if not by birth. The *servant* in ver. 44 is a *bond-servant*. He thus is of *the family*, and so (Ge. xvii. 2) to be taken into the family communion of religion along with the children (cp. Re. v. 11, 8). The *hired servant*, being a free man, standing on his own feet, is not of the family of his employer, and is not to be admitted on account of him. (See the Civil Code in xxi.-xxiii.) The *foreigner* is one resident among the chosen people, but not naturalized into their citizenship. He and the hired servant, natively outside

when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof.  
 45, 46 A foreigner and an hired servant shall not eat thereof. In  
 one house shall it be eaten : thou shalt not carry forth ought  
 of the flesh abroad out of the house ; neither shall ye break  
 47 a bone thereof. All the congregation of Israel shall keep it.  
 48 And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep  
 the passover to the Lord, let all his males be circumcised,  
 and then let him come near and keep it ; and he shall be as  
 one that is born in the land : for no uncircumcised person  
 49 shall eat thereof. One law shall be to him that is home-born,  
 50 and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you. Thus did  
 all the children of Israel : as the Lord commanded Moses  
 51 and Aaron, so did they. And it came to pass the self-same  
 day, *that* the Lord did bring the children of Israel out of the  
 land of Egypt by their armies.

of the citizenship of God's kingdom, can be admitted to its privileges only through adoption (vers. 44, 49). The *unity* (and integrity) of the citizenship which comes to be thus varied in its constituents, is brought into view by the provision (vers. 5-10), resumed here, regarding the lamb (vers. 46, 47). It is not to go beyond the families of circumcised Israel. And in a true Israelitish family there is to be no such dismemberment of it as has place in the case of other sacrifices. So deeply significant is the prohibition to break a bone of it ; one Israel of God (Phi. iii. 3), one body of Christ. The adoption, vers. 44, 49, takes the lead in the array (Ro. ix. 4) of Israel's glories by "an Hebrew of the Hebrews." Here we see it being placed at the very foundation of the "holy nation," making the slave to be a brother (Philem.), and the foreigner to be at home. The process in the adoption is not here prescribed : the glorious principle of it is, that the adopted are in state as if they had been born sons of God (1 Jn. iii. 1 ; Ga. iv. 23-31). (The completed application of that principle is seen in Re. vii. 4, 9-12.) Vers. 50, 51, the natural close of the present section, at the same time are a natural transition to what follows, and have by some been placed as introduction to that. We still are at Succoth, in the land of Egypt. And before passing away from that land, Jehovah's people have to be marshalled into *armies* (or *hosts*). In military order ; though perhaps not with warlike equipment. The *orderliness* thus provided for sank into the national constitution ; so that (Ezek. xxxvii. 10) the nation, even when dead, was an army—as the Spartans were at Thermopylæ, lying there in obedience to the Lacedæmonian laws. The provision for orderliness, called for by the presence of that unorganized "mixed multitude," had taken full effect before there was a second step of movement :—*Thus did all—and it came the self-same day*, etc. ("Ready—March !")

#### Exercise 28.

1. *The Church* (in the wilderness). (1) *Sacrament* originally meant a soldier's military oath : show how that applies for illustration of the Passover and of the Lord's Supper. How does the provision in ver. 47 agree with and differ from the New Testament definition (1 Co. i. 2) of the Church as the community of professed believers and their children? (2) How is the

CHAP. XIII. 1. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,  
2 Sanctify unto me all the first-born, whatsoever openeth the

Church's unity manifested in the Lord's Supper, and especially realized through His death as set forth in 2 Co. v. 14?

2. *Her militant life.* (1) The Church being an army, criticize the expression, "I sat under" this or that preacher; and the view, that a Christian is to care expressly about his personal salvation. (2) What is the "rations" represented in the sacrament; and what could Cromwell mean by saying, that he had been paid good wages before the war began?
3. *Discipline.* That this is not confined to degrading punishment—(1) Show, from the fact of the Church's being a family and a school. (2) Mention two schoolmasters of the Church, one of whom is known by his calling for pupils on easy terms.

**Farewell to Egypt** (xiii.). *Etham* (ver. 20) was on the outer border of the settled dominion of Egypt. The second march of Israel, therefore, carried them fairly to the outside of their "house of bondage." It is not said how long they were on the march from Succoth to the Red Sea. Some appear to dream of a run across by a courier, or an Arabian horse, or a swift camel; but a nation moves very slow with all its flocks and herds, even though "in haste," and thoroughly well organized, and glowing in eagerness as an arrow quivering from the bowman's hand. The narrative here pauses, to show to us their consecration for that life which now is visibly redeemed. The sanctification of the first-born is on Israel's part a solemn acceptance of Jehovah as their God and Lord, by the new title of grace in Redemption, as well as by indefeasible right of nature in creation. In the description which follows we see Jehovah placing Himself (Ps. lxxx. 1) as shepherd at the head of this flock, which He is to lead into His pastures (and mark *Joseph*!).

Vers. 1-16. The new revelation (1, 2) regarding sanctification of the first-born, involves in its detailed regulation (3-16) some repetition of what has already been said on the same subject. Here yet further it is remarkable how the Passover, with its essential meaning, and a force of iteration following reiteration, is placed as the one true fountain of Israel's life; in relation to which other events, though they should be intrinsically great and marvellous, are but evanescent occasions, or reaches in the stream of that life.

1. *The Lord spake:* apparently at Succoth, where the revelation which is here recorded may have been taken down in writing when it was given (cp. xvii. 14, xxiv. 4, 7, xxxiv. 27, and see *Introd.* pp. 57-62). *Sanctify—mine.* All things by nature belong to Jehovah as God. They consequently ought on man's part, as the subject lord of earth, to be devoted to that King of heaven, by a free continuous act of will, like that Life (1 Co. x. 5) from the smitten Rock which followed Israel all the way. There thus ought to be consecration of the man himself (see under xxix. 20, cp. Ro. xii. 1) for service, as well as of the lower creatures he owns for sacrifice. Where, as on the part of Egypt, they are not thus consecrated, they are described, even in their religion, "anathema," as if hung up in heathen temples for the honour of dead gods. The sanctification is (Ps. cxxx. 4) a grand purpose of the redemption in the strict sense of deliverance from the common doom of death (1 Pe. ii. 5, 9, and in Ro. xii. 1 mark the "therefore"). The *first-born*, here as elsewhere, represents the whole family and estate. In this case the sanctification prescribed is in form **peculiar to Israel**; because it has reference to (vers. 14, 15) what happened only in Egypt to the first-born. It is a monumental evidence of the Tenth Plague. But the spirit of the thing is

womb among the children of Israel, *both* of man and of beast; it *is* mine.

3 And Moses said unto the people, Remember this day, in which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the Lord brought you out from this  
4 *place*: there shall no leavened bread be eaten. This day came ye out, in the month Abib.

5 And it shall be, when the Lord shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which he sware unto thy

in all true redemption life. *Openeth the womb*: a mother's first (male) child. This was "the first-born of sanctification." A father's first son was—the "son and heir"—"the first-born of inheritance." *Beast*: clean animals were sanctified by being sacrificed; *unclean*, of which only the ass is specified here (ver. 13), by being redeemed (ver. 15;—where, as the principle of the sacrifice, there again comes into view *substitution*, of life for life and death for death). 3-10. The *matter* of this institution, substantially given before, now receives a form, of new application, which marks the *distinctness* (*holiness* means "separation"—see the stress laid on the *separateness* under xxxiii. 16) of Israel's being, as Jehovah's redeemed, and consequently of Israel's destination of life, as unto the Redeemer. Even the day, and the Abib month, are, through being set apart for this one thing, made memorable in their significance of that distinctness. So is the *service* of the week of the unleavened bread. *This day*: that identical day—may be compared with the first Christian Sabbath, or that Sabbath which was man's first day of life in Eden. Thenceforward the anniversary of it was to open the great opening festival week of the Passover observance. *The month Abib* (under xii. 2). The Hebrew year had in it twelve lunar months; with intercalary days making up the 365, so as to give the returning months their own fixed places in the recurring seasons. Until the Babylonish captivity there were not proper names for the month; they were distinctly known only by their numbers, as, the *second* month of the year, the *third* month, etc. *Abib*, here first named, is peculiar to the Pentateuch; so as to be incidental evidence of its Mosaic antiquity. It perhaps was not intended for an abiding proper name. It may have been employed simply, according to its meaning, an ear of corn, a green ear, as descriptive of the season (cp. "Midsummer," as descriptive of a term, or "sundown" for evening time). The season which it represents or describes, of opening the ear of corn in Palestine, fixes the month as nearly coincident with our April. *Month*: the Heb. word *new moon*, reminds that the month begins with the new moon. The first day of it may thus not coincide with the beginning of a solar month. The exodus itself was, ver. 40, like the building of Solomon's temple (1 Ki. vi. 1), made an *era* in Israelitish history; for fixing the date of other events by specifying their distance in time from that (see *Introd.* note on *Exodus chronology*). The use of that event as an era like the birth of Christ, served to keep Israel ever mindful of the event and its vital importance, while further making the nation a continual witness to its historical reality. The *way and manner* of setting aside the first-born was prescribed later, in the legislature of Sinai (Lev. xxvii.). *Land—Jebusites*: the Perizzites are not mentioned here as in

fathers to give thee, a land flowing with milk and honey, that  
 6 thou shalt keep this service in this month. Seven days thou  
 shalt eat unleavened bread, and in the seventh day *shall be* a  
 7 feast to the Lord. Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven  
 days; and there shall no leavened bread be seen with thee;  
 neither shall there be leaven seen with thee in all thy  
 quarters.

8 And thou shalt show thy son in that day, saying, *This is done*  
 because of that *which* the Lord did unto me when I came  
 9 forth out of Egypt. And it shall be for a sign unto thee  
 upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes,  
 that the Lord's law may be in thy mouth: for with a strong  
 10 hand hath the Lord brought thee out of Egypt. Thou shalt  
 therefore keep this ordinance in his season from year to year.

11 And it shall be, when the Lord shall bring thee into the  
 land of the Canaanites, as he sware unto thee and to thy  
 12 fathers, and shall give it thee, that thou shalt set apart unto  
 the Lord all that openeth the matrix, and every firstling that  
 cometh of a beast which thou hast; the males *shall be* the  
 13 Lord's. And every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with  
 a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break  
 his neck: and all the first-born of man among thy children  
 shalt thou redeem.

14 And it shall be, when thy son asketh thee in time to come,  
 saying, *What is this?* that thou shalt say unto him, By

iii. 8 (note). *Seven days*: this has reference (ver. 5) to the abiding condition of Israel in Canaan. Of course the week was not observed on the present occasion. *Leaven*, and its significance, see under xii. 18, 19: and again observe (ver. 7) the great *energy* of the prohibition,—it is not to be *seen*, anywhere about the house. *Show thy son*: here again, as in xii. 26, 27, it is expected that *the children* of God's people shall take an intelligent interest in the great festival, and that they shall be carefully instructed (by their *parents*) as to the meaning of it. Thus, for young and old the *stated periodical observance* (ver. 10) shall be (like the Nile's annual flood, *Introd.* chap. I.) a time of refreshing, (cp. Is. xl. 30, 31), as the spring "season" brings back the life of the world. 11-16. *Firstling*: a violent death (see note under the plague) involves to most animals far less of suffering than would result to them from a life lingering into extinction from old age. The redemption price was so small, that few owners would fail to pay, and keep the animal alive; and it was a great thing to keep alive the fact of redemption as gift of God and want of man. The *ass* was the only beast of burden at this time in use among the Israelites. Otherwise (under iv. 20) it was much more highly esteemed than it is among us. In Egypt it appears to have been somehow regarded as "unclean." In the present regulation it is regarded simply as a sample of the class "unclean" (Nu. xviii. 5). A money redemption price of

strength of hand the Lord brought us out from Egypt, from  
 15 the house of bondage: and it came to pass, when Pharaoh  
 would hardly let us go, that the Lord slew all the first-born in  
 the land of Egypt, both the first-born of man, and the first-  
 born of beast: therefore I sacrifice to the Lord all that  
 openeth the matrix, being males; but all the first-born of my  
 16 children I redeem. And it shall be for a token upon thine  
 hand, and for frontlets between thine eyes: for by strength  
 of hand the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt.

17 And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go,  
 that God led them not *through* the way of the land of the  
 Philistines, although that *was* near; for God said, Lest  
 peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they  
 18 return to Egypt: but God led the people about, *through* the  
 way of the wilderness of the Red Sea. And the children of

a man was five shekels (Nu. xviii. 18), but this differs from the atonement-ransom half-shekel of the sanctuary (xxx. 9, notes). *Sign—hand—eyes* (vers. 9 and 16). The custom of having mottoes on rings and bracelets has widely prevailed. The Egyptians had words written on strips of cloth which they wore as amulets. A similar custom of the later Jews ("phylacteries," N. T.) has by some been traced to this passage and De. vi. 6-8. It is not necessary to suppose that this passage is more than a metaphor, derived from a familiar Egyptian custom, for description of the intended effect of God's ordinance:—(this is the true "amulet" of believers as shown in Eph. vi. 16; Ps. xci. 1, etc.)

From Etham to the place of passage of the Red Sea (17-19). *When Pharaoh*: a glance back at the starting-point. *Land of the Philistines*. To the south-west of Palestine (a name derived from theirs). They (see *Introd.*) were a strong military people, a thorn in the side of Israel long after the general conquest of Canaan. They were not Canaanitish in blood; and apparently were not included in the doom of extirpation from the land of promise. A people moving from Egypt along the shore of the Mediterranean would come upon this powerful race with their strong cities, between it and the territory of the Canaanites. The historian, as a reason for not persisting in that route, gives the military unpreparedness of the Israelites. Raw and undisciplined, they were not in condition for breaking through that iron strength. At the same time it was in the plan of Jehovah, "a man of war," in the first instance to be Himself the only combatant (Ex. xv.) in the overthrow of Egypt, and to show Himself as Israel's true help in the battle with Amalek. The long period of detention in the wilderness formed a new generation, inured to perils and to toils, and not like their fathers tempting God by distrusting Him. *The wilderness of the Red Sea* was thus, not only a refuge from Egypt, but a sanctuary of discipline for faith, and a training school for warlike prowess. Hence the deflexion, toward the east and south, along the Red Sea nearest Egypt, from the straight way into Canaan through Philistia. The form is lit. **wilderness, Red Sea**,—an elliptic utterance, which has the effect of making *the Sea* break on our view as the real destination of this changed line of movement. We have noted geographical speculations

- 19 Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt. And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him: for he had straitly sworn the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you; and ye shall carry up my bones away hence with you.
- 20 And they took their journey from Succoth, and encamped  
21 in Etham, in the edge of the wilderness. And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them

about this departure, and their fruitlessness. One of them is to the effect of showing how the Israelites did *not* pass through the Red Sea as known to mankind, but, struggled or waddled through entanglements of marshes, lagoons, salt-water lakes—as if Israel had been a runaway hippopotamus. The sort of cloud thus raised upon the simple facts of history is not that through which (1 Co. x. 1-5) those original Christians were all baptized unto Moses in the sea. *Harnessed*: the meaning of this expression has been much discussed. The Heb. word may come from a root meaning “five;” and it has been suggested that the Israelites marched in five battalions or columns—say, a centre and two wings with a vanguard and a rearguard. Another suggestion is, that they marched in one column of five deep. The general conception intended for representation by the expression here appears to be that of *succinctness*, as of a man girt in readiness for a fight or a battle (He. xii. 1, 2—“looking unto” the Pillar). This may imply that the Israelites had weapons of offence and of defence; as no doubt is otherwise likely enough, for they were not calves, though vile enough to worship one (cp. Act. xvii. 29). It was in Jehovah’s plan that His people should leave Egypt with an imposing aspect of orderly power—that He should lead them out “with an high hand.” The shepherd of Israel in Ps. lxxx. is said to have led *Joseph*. The *bones* of Joseph are a strangely interesting feature of the procession (cp. Ge. 1. 14). His bones were no doubt his body embalmed. (At Otterburn, “the dead Douglas won the field.” Here, however, it was the Living God that won it.) 20-22. NOTE on *Israel’s banner* of “Jehovah-nissi.” This sub-section resumes the march from the beginning, to describe the manner of it, after the above intimation of the direction of it. The *pillar* is found in Nu. ix. 15-23, apparently as if in the stated leadership of Israel; and in Ne. ix. 19, it is expressly described as having remained with them during the wilderness wandering. So in the last sentence of this history, xl. 38,—and in the last sentence of the parallel history, Mat. xxviii. 20 (cp. Ps. xxiii.). In that region a military chief, by way of banner, may have a column of smoke, rising from fire which is carried on a brazier for the purpose. In the pure atmosphere it can be seen from a great distance, so that by means of it he may lead a population spreading wide over the whole region. The same fire, maintained through the night, will still have in it the authoritative guidance; because the flame shows through the darkness, as smoke shows through the clear sky. Israel had assurance, by “signs,” such as the appearance of that pillar in the Red Sea passage, that in their case the cloud or flame was a visible supernatural presence (cp. xxxiii. 14, 15) of the Living God, as the true leader and commander of Israel (Is. lv. 3). An expression of Quintus Curtius, in his *Life of Alexander the Great*, has been noted on account of its resemblance to the description in our text:—*Observabatur ignis*



the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light, 22 to go by day and night. He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, *from* before the people.

*noctu fumus interdiu* ("they kept their eye upon the fire by night and upon the smoke by day"). The flame reminds us of the burning bush. And here, as there, the divine presence is spoken of as that of *the angel* (of God, under xiv. 19; see also under xxiii. 20, xxxii. 34, xxxiii. 20). *From before the people*: that is, **ordinarily**. There was an exception in that change of front and place which was so appalling to the Egyptians in the sea. They as well as Israel saw in it a true supernatural appearance. Some have doubted of this; but they were not present.

#### Exercise 29.

1. Give an illustration in the life of Jesus of an aspect which appalled the soldiers of an empire. Is there reason to believe that it was the same aspect that appalled the Egyptians in the Red Sea? Explain.
2. Describe what a youthful Israelite would see and hear on the first occasion of Passover observance.
3. Describe the mustering to Succoth and the movement to the Red Sea.
4. (1) What was the place and estimation of the ass in Israelitish economy? (2) What is the most memorable thing about an ass in connection with a prophet? (3) What is the most memorable thing about an ass in connection with a king?

(XIV.) PASSAGE OF THE RED SEA.—The large amount of discussion that there has been about the place of this calls for some notice of that discussion on our part (see in Introduction, pp. 44-47). And we observe, to begin with, that the amount of discussion shows that there is no one place which has established for itself a claim to be regarded as the veritable place of passage beyond all reasonable doubt. But a more important observation is, that the identification of the place is of no real importance for the comprehension of the history. The history of Bannockburn or of Marathon can be perfectly well understood though the sites of those famous battles should be obliterated by the plough, or effaced from human memory through the lapse of time. The gospel narrative of the death of Jesus would not be a whit more clear though an express revelation were to show us the exact spot of the Calvary crucifixion. And this narrative of Israel's passage of the Red Sea is in like manner complete in itself, for the real purpose of our knowing what took place in Israel's deliverance through the sea.

We therefore will not adopt any theory of identification of the locality. To do so would be to expose ourselves needlessly to visitation of a certain feeling of obscurity or doubtfulness, connected with geographical antiquarianism relatively to the localities, which really has nothing to do with the clearness and certainty of the fact. But, as a preliminary exercise of the *imagination*, forming a sort of

frame for the picture which we have in this Book, we will note some of the Bible names of places in connection with the famous passage; as dwelling upon the names may bring us toward a certain realisation of the condition of things at the crisis we have reached.

**NOTE on the Topography of the Passage.**—Not far from Suez, south and eastward on the Egyptian side of the Red Sea, there is a plain, which reaches inland some twelve miles from that sea. At the upper extremity of that plain there is a height, on which is an ancient fort named Ajrud. This Ajrud we shall take as the site of *Pi-hahiroth*. *Pi* means "town." So that Pi-hahiroth is Hahiroth town. And Hahiroth *may* have dwindled into Ajrud. From this Pi-hahiroth, at the head of the plain, facing toward the Red Sea at the foot of it, we look beyond the narrow sea, on the east side of it, for Baal-zephon, which the Israelites saw, if they looked across the sea from this plain between it and our Ajrud. The geographer finds it by first observing that Baal-zephon is a zephon of Baal. And Zephon is a Phœnician deity that was known to the Egyptians as the foreign god Sutëch. Now this Sutëch went into the composition of the name of a city which in old times was on that coast beyond the Red Sea. Finally, we need to have a *Migdol*, since that name, too, is in the history. And this by some geographers is found in Maktal, an ancient Egyptian fort ("*Migdol*" means *tower*), near the site of a well named Bir Suaveis ("the well of Suez"). This Migdol, if the Israelites were in the plain, would be close upon them near the sea; while Pi-hahiroth was behind them on the height, and Baal-zephon was before them beyond the Gulf. On their left hand the Gulf extended much farther toward the Mediterranean than it does at present; and the land was much under water, of marsh, lagoon, or lake; while they have further been turned from that direction by the formidableness of the Philistines beyond the head of the Gulf. But if they thus be intercepted on their left side, on the right hand of the plain they have reached there is broken if not mountainous ground, which practically barricades their way in that direction. And if, while they are thus shut in on the right and on the left, with the Red Sea before them, the Egyptians come up behind them where there is the height and foot of Hahiroth, plainly, with no outgate but the sea, they are, as the history says, *entangled*—caught as in a trap, which they have entered, and which the Egyptians have now closed behind them. That representation, whether geographically correct or not, will fully suit our purpose, to have a framework for the picture in the history. And what we are resolved to see in the history is, not anything that may be known or imagined of the geography, but only what is in the history itself.

The history does not say expressly that the non-combatants, so to speak, were there along with the six hundred thousand of Israel's "army." They may have been widely spread over the region, with the flocks and herds, as a migratory nation, leisurely following in the general direction of that "army" clearing their way. The two millions could hardly have camping-room on that plain. And though there had not been difficulty as to space, there would have been difficulty as to time. It was late in April (?) at the Red Sea. And the Israelites had got over to the other side in the third watch, that is to say, according to the then Israelitish reckoning, as early as 6 A.M. But 6 A.M. would leave behind it, of time since the darkness fell on the preceding evening, only about eight hours;—that is, since toward 10 P.M. of that preceding evening. Would the eight hours from 10 P.M. to 6 A.M. suffice for the passage of two millions of human beings, along with flocks and herds? The distance across the sea which would have to be traversed is, at one of the sites which has been proposed, seven miles; at another of the suggested sites, the distance across the sea is one mile. But it is a question whether such a nation could in eight hours have

crossed though the distance had not been one inch ; though they had only had to march past one point marked by a line. We therefore shall leave the nation out of view, to follow at their leisure when the Egyptians have been broken by the stroke of God ; and we will concentrate our attention on the six hundred thousand.

The only general fact, in the history of that night, which we observe before considering the narrative in detail, is, the employment of a strong east wind, causing the waters to stand as an heap. How far the power of a wind can go in rolling or pressing before it as an embankment the water of a narrow gulf, upon which the wind might operate as in the funnel of a bellows, we are unable to judge ; just as we are unable to judge how far the natural forces which were employed in working the Ten Plagues may have served as instruments in those mighty works of God. The extraordinary supernaturalness of the working is evinced, not by the uncommon power of the wind on this occasion, but, as in the case of those plague miracles, by a convergence of circumstances combining in demonstration ; and especially the circumstance of prediction, showing that the Omniscient is here in miracle of wisdom ; all which go to say, that "the finger," the hand, the arm, of God is here in miracle of power.

NOTE on **Exodus Angelophanies** (xiv. 19, cp. xxii. 20). Man's construction of these appearances is often manifestly only a manner of expressing their pre-conception of the character of this professed revelation. The employment by God of spiritual personalities not of this world, upon His business with mankind, is not a specialty of Exodus. The special frequency of reference to angelic agency in connexion with the exodus crisis of Old Testament history, while "the gods," and whatever they may represent, were prominent in counteraction and conspicuous in overthrow, brings Exodus into line with the evangelic and apostolic histories of another crisis, which in reality was the true grand crisis of "fulfilment." What is peculiar to Exodus is, what may be spoken of as the farewell appearance of angelophany in the character of *the mediation* between God and man. Perhaps, considering the uniqueness of the meaning of "mediator" as applied in Scripture to Moses and to Christ, the present general use of the term is not for imitation. In a real sense, the ministry of angels was, until the time of Moses, the distinctive medium of divine communications to the elect of mankind ; and from the time of the Mosaic mediation, that ceased to be so. First the personal ministry of Moses, and thereafter the Mosaic institutions and Scriptures, addressed to the whole people always, came into the place of that instruction which the patriarchs had received, individually, through occasional visits of angels.

The angel who is spoken of in Exodus is one person. He apparently is equivalent to God ; and yet so that in a real sense his presence is different from a presence of God ; it is beneficent where that might be destructive. In short, it is a manifested presence and power (cp. "coming" and "power" in 2 Pe. i. 16) of God in redeeming mercy ; as compared (2 Co. iii.) with the manifestation of God in His essential nature, or, with His glory simply of holiness as appearing in Law. Correspondingly, there is the doctrine of the person of Christ : that He is God, the Son who is the outshining of the Father's glory ; the Word, the person who was tempted (1 Co. x. 9) by Israel in the wilderness ; the Redeemer whose "reproach" was preferred by Moses to "the treasures of Egypt ;" the seed of Abraham who says, "Before Abraham was, I am." Those who believe what the Bible says about the Triune constitution of the Godhead, and about Immanuel Jesus Christ the Lord, will ordinarily see that the Exodus angel must have been Christ ; whose glory (2 Co. iii. 18) was reflected on the shining face of Moses. How far that may have been comprehended by Moses himself (1 Pe. i. 10-12), who wist not even that his face shone, or by the Old Testament Church, we will not inquire. We can see that the presence and the promises represented by the angel in Exodus always had the effect of salvation as a realized fact, or in the assured hope.

CHAP. XIV. 1, 2. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they turn and encamp before Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, over against Baal-  
 3 zephon : before it shall ye encamp by the sea. For Pharaoh  
 will say of the children of Israel, They *are* entangled in the  
 4 land, the wilderness hath shut them in. And I will harden  
 Pharaoh's heart, that he shall follow after them ; and I will  
 be honoured upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host ; that  
 the Egyptians may know that I *am* the Lord. And they  
 did so.

5 And it was told the king of Egypt that the people fled :  
 and the heart of Pharaoh and of his servants was turned  
 against the people, and they said, Why have we done this,  
 6 that we have let Israel go from serving us ? And he made  
 7 ready his chariot, and took his people with him : and he took  
 six hundred chosen chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt,  
 8 and captains over every one of them. And the Lord  
 hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pur-

1-4. *I will be honoured*: cp. xiii. 17 :—here “wheels within wheels.” Israel's unfitness to cope with the Philistines, works toward the ulterior purpose of God's openly triumphing over Egypt in saving His own people.  
 5-7. *That the people fled*. Their *turning* (ver. 2) from the original line of movement was still away from Egypt. *Heart—turned*: angry reflecting on what they now deemed the folly of their panic in consenting to the departure. *Made ready his chariot*. The king of Egypt, chief of a warrior caste, personally led to battle and in it (monuments). *What became of Pharaoh* personally? (1) It is not said that *he* was drowned, and the song (xv. 4) seems to imply that he was not. (2) In the recent great monumental discoveries, bringing Menephtah to light, *his tomb* has not been found, nor any clear proof of his having been buried. Ps. cxxxvi. 15 really proves nothing (the Heb. is, “shook off”). The *chariot* was a fenced platform on wheels, open behind for convenience in rapid mounting or dismounting. It was drawn by two horses, with a coach-pole between them. It bore two warriors, one to guide it and one to fight. The fence or rim on three sides might be a little higher than a man's knee. Within this the warriors stood and moved. *They were the horsemen* (ver. 23). It is not known that the then Egyptians made any other use of the horse. *Captains over one of them*: probably ought to stand, **they were all captained** (Rev. Vers., *Captains over them all*). The Heb. word for *captain* was in use in David's time. It is from a word meaning “threes” (cp. Lat. *centurio*, from *centum*, “hundred”). It means generally, officer in command of a “company.” The point here is, **all duly officered**. *Six hundred*: the flower of Egyptian chivalry: perhaps like the Household Troops of our Sovereign. The number of a select class was probably very large (Shishak, 2 Chron. xii. 3, had 1200 *in all*). Along with common troops, it may have represented an army of 100,000. That, to the undisciplined Israelites, hemmed into narrow space, might be resistless as a thunderbolt. 8, 9. *Hardened*. *The Egyptians* now (ver. 17) are

- sued after the children of Israel: and the children of Israel  
 9 went out with an high hand. But the Egyptians pursued  
 after them, (all the horses *and* chariots of Pharaoh, and his  
 horsemen, and his army,) and overtook them encamping by  
 the sea, beside Pi-hahiroth, before Baal-zephon.
- 10 And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted  
 up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them;  
 and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel cried  
 11 out unto the Lord. And they said unto Moses, Because  
*there were* no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die  
 in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to  
 12 carry us forth out of Egypt? *Is* not this the word that we  
 did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may  
 serve the Egyptians? For *it had been* better for us to serve  
 the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness.
- 13 And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still,  
 and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will show to you  
 to-day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day, ye shall  
 14 see them again no more for ever. The Lord shall fight for  
 you, and ye shall hold your peace.
- 15 And the Lord said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto  
 me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward:  
 16 but lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the  
 sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry

hardened in heart as well as their king. And they have previously hardened their own hearts (ver. 5). *High hand*: elation as of triumph. *Pursued*: whence, or by what forced marches, is not said.

10-12. *Afraid*. This does not imply natural pusillanimity. When Montfort saw Edward's tactic and force he said, "Let us give our souls to God: our bodies are the prince's." *Cried unto the Lord* (cp. Lu. viii. 22-25). *Unto Moses* (Mat. vii. 6). *Graves*: Egypt was proverbially "a land of graves." *Better*: "Scratch a Russian, and you have a Tartar." This is a *slave's* choice. 13-14. His "*courage*" here has been eulogized as sublime. The *Hebrews* (He. xi. 27) will by and by understand that he simply *saw* (ver. 14) what they did not see. *The Egyptians—whom ye see*: lit. and perhaps better, *as ye see*. *Hold your peace—do nothing*: not even raise a (war) cry. The Lacedæmonians sent as aid to their ally, not an army, but only a general. This general (xv. 3) is an army (Da. iv. 35). Was there a pause here? At least, *God* heard Moses pray (Ja. v. 16). *Wherefore criest?* the "pillar," ver. 19, was "forward." Perhaps his expostulations (v. 22, 23) had an undertone of doubt. Certainly, supplication must not come *in place of action*. *Stand still* (in ver. 13) to *see* the salvation: and at the same time *go forward, achieving* it (cp. Phi. ii. 12, 13—and the withered hand). The *rod* again in view—*e.g.* to show that it is not merely the wind, with perhaps the help of a full moon, causing high tide, that, forming an air-gun, went off precisely at the right moment, to shoot Pharaoh

17 *ground* through the midst of the sea. And I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them: and I will get me honour upon Pharaoh, and upon all  
18 his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen. And the Egyptians shall know that I *am* the Lord, when I have gotten me honour upon Pharaoh, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen.

19 And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them.  
20 And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness *to them*, but it gave light by night *to these*: so that the one came not near  
21 the other all the night. And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord caused the sea to go *back* by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry *land*,  
22 and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry *ground*: and the waters *were* a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.

23 And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, *even* all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and  
24 his horsemen. And it came to pass, that, in the morning

dead, and accomplish redemption for mankind. (The moon is not in the history: it *is* in the "theory"—lunatic.) The mention of the wind, as also of the water, shows that natural means are employed. The *rod* shows by whom (under 19, 20). *Host*: perhaps does not include the common (foot) soldiery: they, hindmost in pursuit, may (vers. 18, 23, 26) have escaped the destruction. The Heb. word here, same as for "army" in ver. 9, is a general expression for (military) "force" (a different word for "army" as in ver. 24).

19, 20. *Before the camp*—THE ANGEL!—(See initial note here on angelophany, and cp. under xxiii. 20—where observe, the angel is *the Lord*—and other notes referred to there.) *Which went*: ordinarily proceeded. *To them—to these*. These words, in italics, are not in the Heb. text. It is not literally translatable so as to make a clear sense. An ancient version would give the reading, "*There arose cloud and darkness, and the night passed.*" Our Vers. gives a meaning which *fits* the Heb. 21. The *rod*, with circumstances converging, shows "the finger of God" (under 15-18). The suggestion, that the water on each side was literally rigid (like ice), is not made by the prose here, nor called for by the poetry in Nah. iii. 8; xv. 18 represents the wall as raised on the farther side, the flattened surface being on the nearer (right hand). The suggestion of an *upheaval of the sea-bottom* is a clumsy imagination of *earthly* cloud (not Mosaic, 1 Co. x. 5). 23-25. Through the dark cloud, and into the deepening night, they rushed blindly forward—on what? (Job xv. 26). *Watch*. (See initial note on this section.) *The Lord*

watch, the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of  
 25 the Egyptians, and took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the Lord fighteth for them against the Egyptians.

26 And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen.

27 And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the Lord overthrew the  
 28 Egyptians in the midst of the sea. And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, *and* all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained  
 29 not so much as one of them. But the children of Israel walked upon dry *land* in the midst of the sea; and the waters *were* a wall unto them on their right hand and on  
 30 their left. Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead

*looked* (cp. the Gorgon shield, which turned those who saw it into stone—xv. 3). *Took off*: perhaps better, *clogged*. In the sea-bottom, the chariot wheels, made for firm sward, may have *sunk*, so as to have perhaps been wrenched off, after having (horses wild with terror) made regulated movement impossible, causing the chariots to stick fast, till overwhelmed and hurled in dire confusion. The dismay!—of men perceiving “the finger of God.” 26–28. *Stretch forth—and the sea*. *And*. Where is the “consecution” here? A sailor (Peter) saw, Mk. iv. 39. *To his strength* (a change of wind is suggested by xv. 10): “a stronger than he” thus had kept him bound. *When the morning appeared*: they *saw* the miracle, but too late: the returning course of nature was *timed* supernaturally for their destruction. *That came into the sea after them* (under 18, 19). This, leaving room in front for the cavalry, and with the Israelites beyond, in that sea-way, may have included only a small part of the Egyptian common soldiery. In this whole history suffering is confined to what will suffice for manifestation of judgment. *Not so much as one*: that is, of those **who dared to disobey that frowning Pillar**, by going into the sea. *Pharaoh personally is not said to have perished*. A king of Egypt was usually in the front of battle. There is one recorded case of a Pharaoh who in battle said “go” instead of “come,” Re. xxii. 17. This perhaps was an unrecorded case of that unworthiness.

29–31. *A wall* (under 21, 22). *Saw—sea-shore* (cp. “his Scots lords at his feet,” in the ballad of *Sir Patrick Spens*). There was an Israelitish tradition, that the corpses were flung by the sea upon the east (Sinai) shore, where the spoils of the dead were to Israel a welcome supply of arms. The history speaks only of a more precious spoil. They *saw* the—*work which*

31 upon the sea-shore. And Israel saw that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians; and the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his servant Moses.

*Jehovah did* (as Nicodemus will see long after, Jn. iii. 2). *Believed: that* "seeing is believing" (Jn. ii. 11, 23), even for a Thomas the doubter. *Feared.* A salutary effect of **Miracle** (see *Introd.*, note on *Miracle*: so that one of its New Testament names is "terrific thing," *τίρας*—*tēras*—in our Version, "wonder"). "The beginning of Philosophy is wonder." The Philosophy (I Co. ii. 6) into which men were initiated by that baptism (I Co. x. 1-5) began with "the fear of THE LORD:" the first and the last (Re. i. 8).

#### Exercise 30.

1. *Finality.* In chap. xiv., point out indication of a definitive close here of God's dealings with Egypt, and of a decisive new beginning of Israel's career.
2. *That Egypt might know.* Looking at the action in chap. xiv. as a lecture, say—(1) What were the main heads of discourse? (2) What was the doctrine? (3) What was the warning stroke of the bell, and what the dismissal stroke?
3. "It was not the anvil that was broken, but the hammer." (1) How may it be known beforehand which is anvil and which is hammer? (2) How might Pharaoh have known a dozen of times? (3) How might the Jews have known that they were destroying themselves when they killed the Prince of Life? Could they have seen it on their hands? How?

NOTE on "theories" of the Passage of the Red Sea (see *Introd.*, note on that *Passage*). It was at one time said that every Frenchman had a "theory" of Waterloo under his hat. The theories were intended, not to explain the fact, but to explain it away; and so they were bad. "Theory" means *vision*. It is what enables us to *see* the fact in its true nature, to comprehend it. And as to proposed "theories" of that Passage, we have to consider, do they explain *the fact*, or, do they explain it away? The fact which has to be explained is, that in that night there was "a nation born at once"—witness, every Jew and Jewess we now pass upon the street, a living monumental evidence (see *Introd.*) of the exodus. The only "theory" that *is* thus a theory is the "eagles' wings" theory. That fact is fully accounted for by the narrative on Ex. xiv., and by this narrative alone. And the "theory" in this narrative is (as given by God Himself in xix. 4), that the Passage was, with instrumentality of wind and water, by the manifested power of Jehovah, Israel's God. Every other attempted "theory" is lame, blind, like Epicurus lecturing about origination of the world in a "fortuitous concourse of atoms," or Topsy philosophizing, "Spec's I growed." It is a key that does not open the door, but breaks in the lock (Jn. x. 1-6). This concludes the First Part of the History:—that is, The Deliverance.





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