

# STORY OF MOSES

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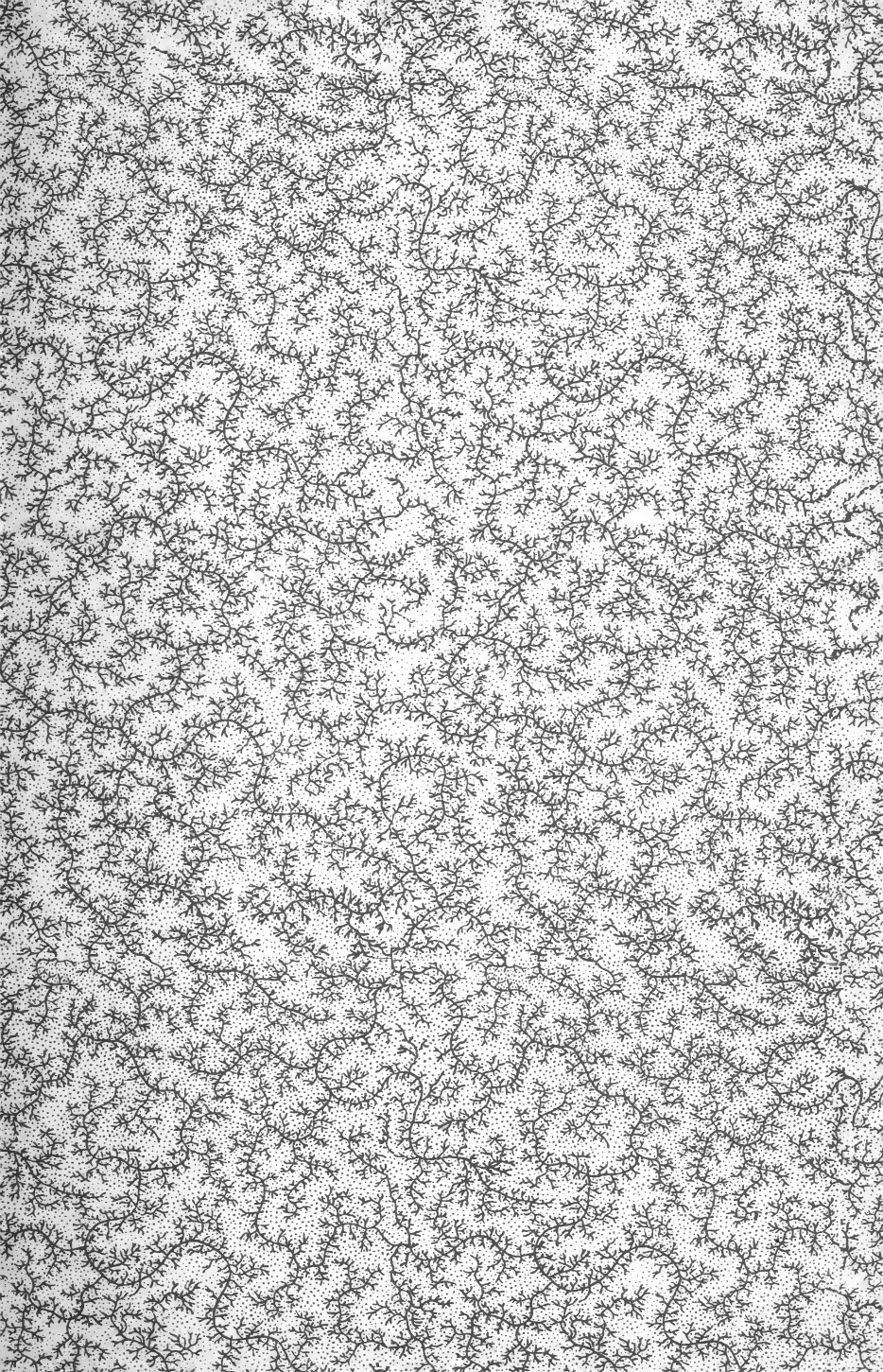
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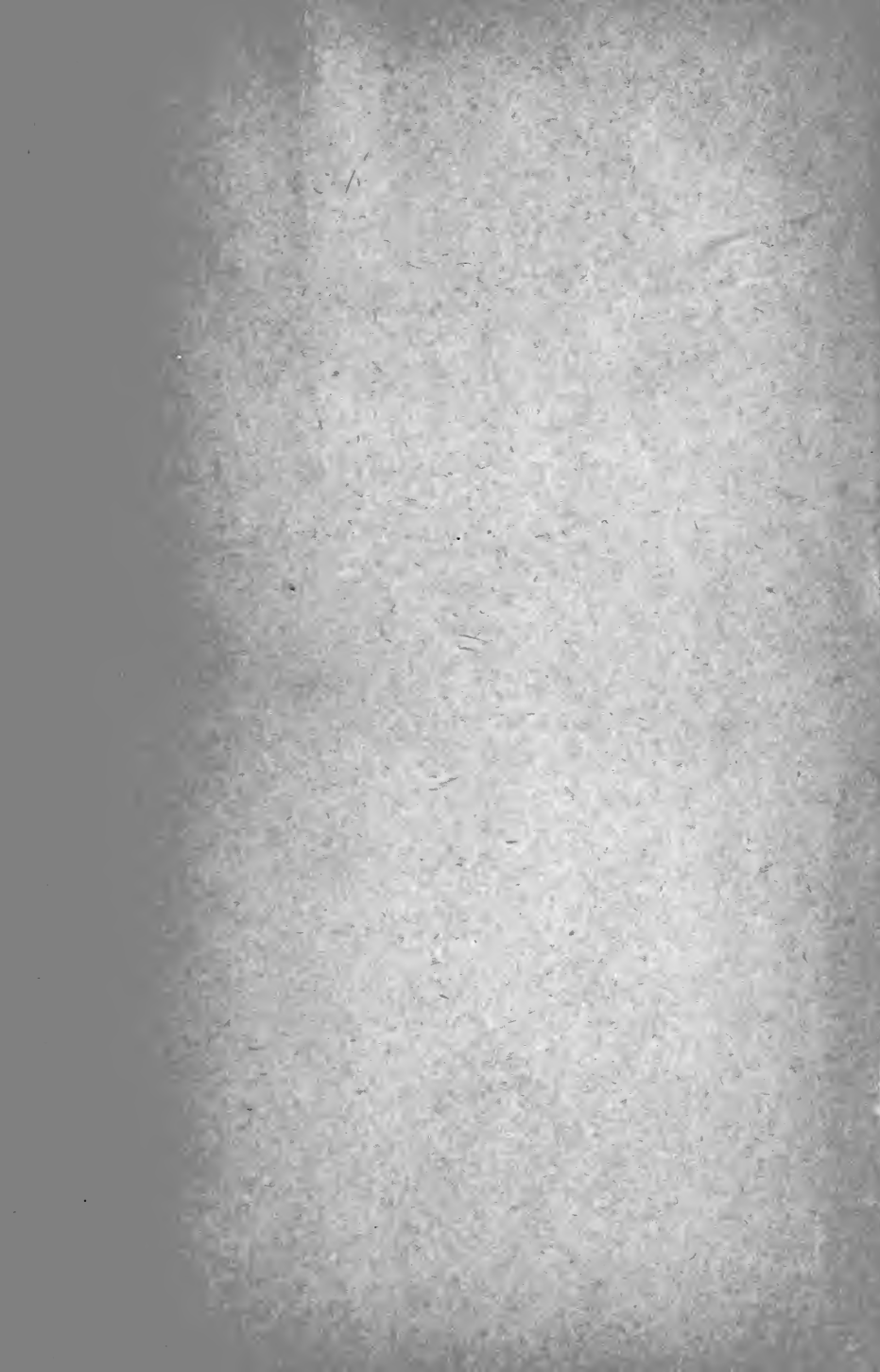
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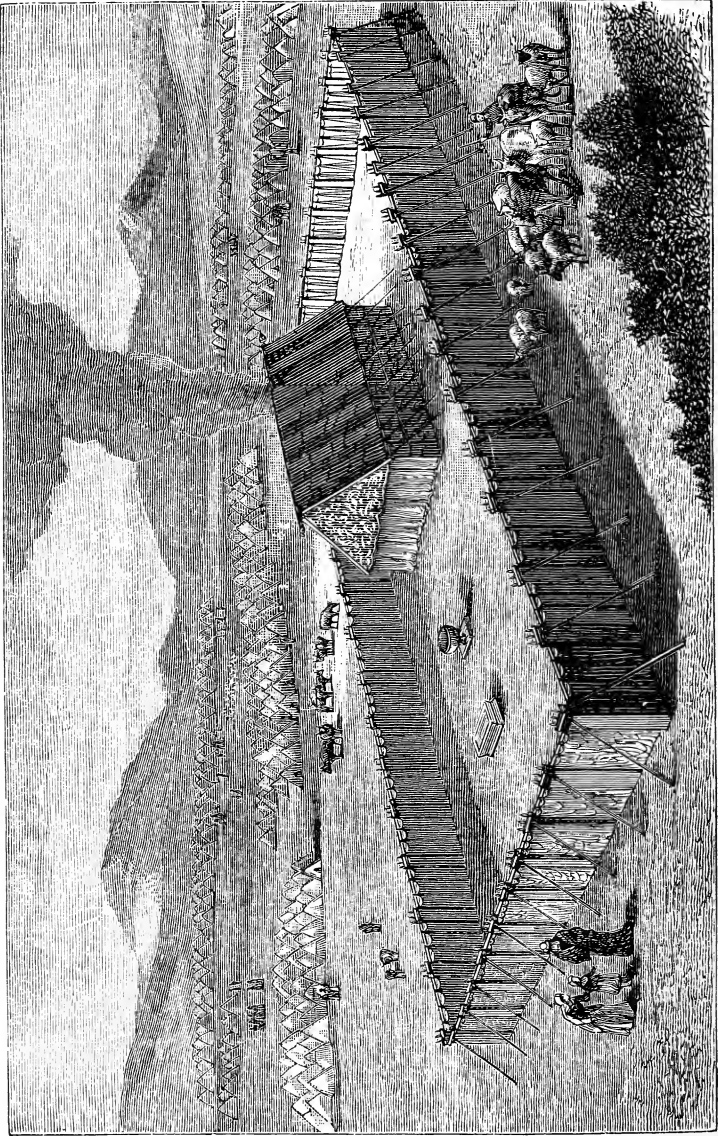












The Tabernacle in the Wilderness.



STORY OF MOSES;  
OR,  
DESERT. WANDERINGS  
FROM EGYPT TO CANAAN.

BY  
*Mary Angelina (Ray) Sathrop*  
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AUTHOR OF

"That Sweet Story of Old," "Fall of Jerusalem," "Life of Daniel,"  
etc., etc.

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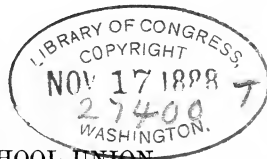
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The Pharaoh of the Oppression.  
(Rameses II.)

## CHAPTER I.

### THE BEAUTIFUL CHILD.

BETWEEN three thousand and four thousand years ago, when Pharaoh (Rameses the II.), known as Rameses the Great, came to the throne of Egypt, a large nation of slaves, children of Jacob, and Joseph, filled the land. They had increased until they had become "exceeding mighty." Pharaoh was alarmed at their number and talked with his people after this manner :

The children of Israel are more and mightier than we. In case of war they will join our enemies and fight against us, and gain their liberty. We cannot afford to lose our slaves ; we must reduce their numbers and keep them down.

His first plan was to overwork them and crush their spirit. He set cruel task-masters over them, who made them serve

with such rigor that their lives were bitter with cruel bondage.

But, after a few years Pharaoh found that his plan was a failure. The people still grew in numbers and in power. There were nearly two millions of them already, a wonderful increase from the seventy-five souls who came to Egypt in the time of Joseph. What could be done? He was puzzled. After much thought he said to his lords : "Come on, let us deal wisely with them." I have a plan that must succeed. My kingdom shall be preserved and my slaves kept ; and this is the way I'll do it. All the male children of these Hebrews shall be killed at their birth, and the land will be rid of them.

His orders were given, but the cruel work was not done ; and again Pharaoh was baffled.

At length he issued a new law and charged his people to hunt out all the new born male children and mercilessly cast them into the river Nile. He would have no more dodging in this work ; it must be done ; and soon a great and bitter cry

went up from the hearts of the fathers and mothers of the land as they saw their little ones thrown into the sluggish waters of the river. They cried to the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, yet the work of destruction went on, and there seemed to be no helper.

But God's plans were maturing, and in his own time and way they would be executed. This was nearly sixteen hundred years before Christ.

A little later than this an Hebrew, by the name of Amram, was living in Egypt. Amram was a grandson or great-grandson of Levi, the son of Jacob, and he was in bondage with the rest of his people. His wife's name was Jochebed, and she was of the same tribe. When this last cruel law was made, they had two children Miriam, about ten years old, and Aaron a little boy of three. Though the law could not take Aaron, Miriam saw and felt the gloom that was settling down upon her father and mother. It was a mystery to her that they were so sad, till she learned one day, with great surprise, that she had

a little new brother a beautiful babe hidden away in a secret place of the house. Then her whole being was excited, her fears and her love intensified, and she was eager to see the baby, and to help keep the secret.

Probably Aaron was not told that such a child was there. In his great joy he would have proclaimed it to all whom he met.

What this babe's name was we are not told, but he probably had one before he was named Moses. When he was three months old, and his parents' fears were great, they could not hide him much longer, for the dear baby was beginning to know his father and mother and sister, and to express joy when they came to him. It was more and more difficult to keep him quiet, and perhaps Amram had heard some hints that they were suspected, and again the question was asked, What shall we do with the baby? There seemed to be no place in the land where they could hide him, except down among the bulrushes by the river. He would be so far off there,



that the people could not hear him cry, for of course he would cry, and that most piteously. And so they decided to gather some of the bulrushes, make a little boat, water-tight, and in the darkness of the night to hide him away by the river.

Miriam had to be let into the secret, for she had a part to act ; she must help.

No doubt she was greatly alarmed when they told her of their plan, and she wished to keep the baby brother still longer where she could care for his wants, and lavish upon him her kisses. But it could not be. The place to hide the babe must be found at once, and the bulrushes gathered, without exciting suspicion. This could be more easily done as these bulrushes, or papyrus, as they were called, were used for various purposes. The pith was sometimes boiled and eaten, and with the fibrous parts, boats and baskets and paper were made.

In imagination we can see Amram, as he lingers by the river the next day, near evening, gathering now and then, one of the long reeds. At the same time he is

noticing the little secluded nooks among the bushes where the baby could be put. One clump of bushes standing out in the water seemed to be the best place, and he determined upon that at once. To be sure, the mother would have to wade in the water when she went to the child, but what was that to the safety of the dear boy!

No smile lighted up Amram's face that night, as he went home, and laid his bundle of bulrushes down on the floor. The mother said little, for her heart was very heavy. That evening they cut the papyrus plants up, wove them together and covered them within and without with pitch. What they made looked something like a small cradle, when done, and they set it away to harden. God saw the tears they shed over it, and he heard their prayers for help, and was even then preparing better things for them than they knew.

There was no sleep for their eyes that night, which was far spent before all things were ready: and before daybreak

they put the sleeping baby carefully wrapped and warm in the ark, and called Miriam; Amram took up the precious burden, and the three went on in silence towards the river. Though the day had not begun to dawn, they found the spot among the bushes, and Amram waded in and put the ark in the place. The child was still asleep, but they could not leave it alone; so giving Miriam many directions in regard to watching, while she seemed not to be doing so, Amram and his wife went back to their lonely home, leaving Miriam, a good way off, to watch, and trusting God to save.

Was she afraid? She started at every sound, and with open eyes pierced into the distance; looking this way, and that. But it was a fear for the dear baby lest some fiend in human form, or some slimy crocodile might steal up and destroy the little innocent sleeper. So the hours wore away till the morning came, and the welcome sun began to tinge the tops of the tall pyramids on the other side of the river. Then a new cause of alarm dis-

tressed Miriam. Several ladies were approaching, walking by the side of the river, and coming nearer and nearer to the place she was watching. They were Thermuthis, the daughter of King Pharaoh, and her attendants. Perhaps they were looking for a suitable place for bathing, but they discovered something which puzzled them. And when Miriam looked again, one of the maids had waded in, and was bringing the little ark ashore, where Thermuthis stood to receive it.

Miriam could keep her place no longer, but came forward, as if to see what they had found. They had uncovered the ark, and were all talking and eagerly looking at the beautiful child, who awoke, frightened at the strange faces bending over him, and he began to cry.

“This is one of the Hebrew children,” said Thermuthis. “He has a fair countenance. I will take him for my own son, and his name shall be MOSES, for I have drawn him out of the water.”

When Miriam saw that Thermuthis wanted a nurse for him, she offered to go

in search of one, and she was soon running in great haste for the baby's own mother.

What a thrill went through Jochebed's heart as she saw her daughter coming ! How fast the questions were asked. "Has the baby been discovered? Is he thrown into the river? What is it Miriam?"

Then how great was her joy as she learned that the babe was safe, and that she was sent for to come and get him.

We can imagine that it did not take long for her to reach the place where her child was, but she must go as a stranger, and so she bargained for her wages. That being settled, she took her newly named boy and carried him openly to her own house.

What a change ! How strangely had God answered her prayers, and given back into her arms her own dear babe ! Their deep sorrow had been turned into exultant joy ; and thanksgiving and praise went up from every heart. There was to be no more hiding, no more fear. Aaron could now see and know the beautiful royal

babe ; the adopted son of the king's daughter.

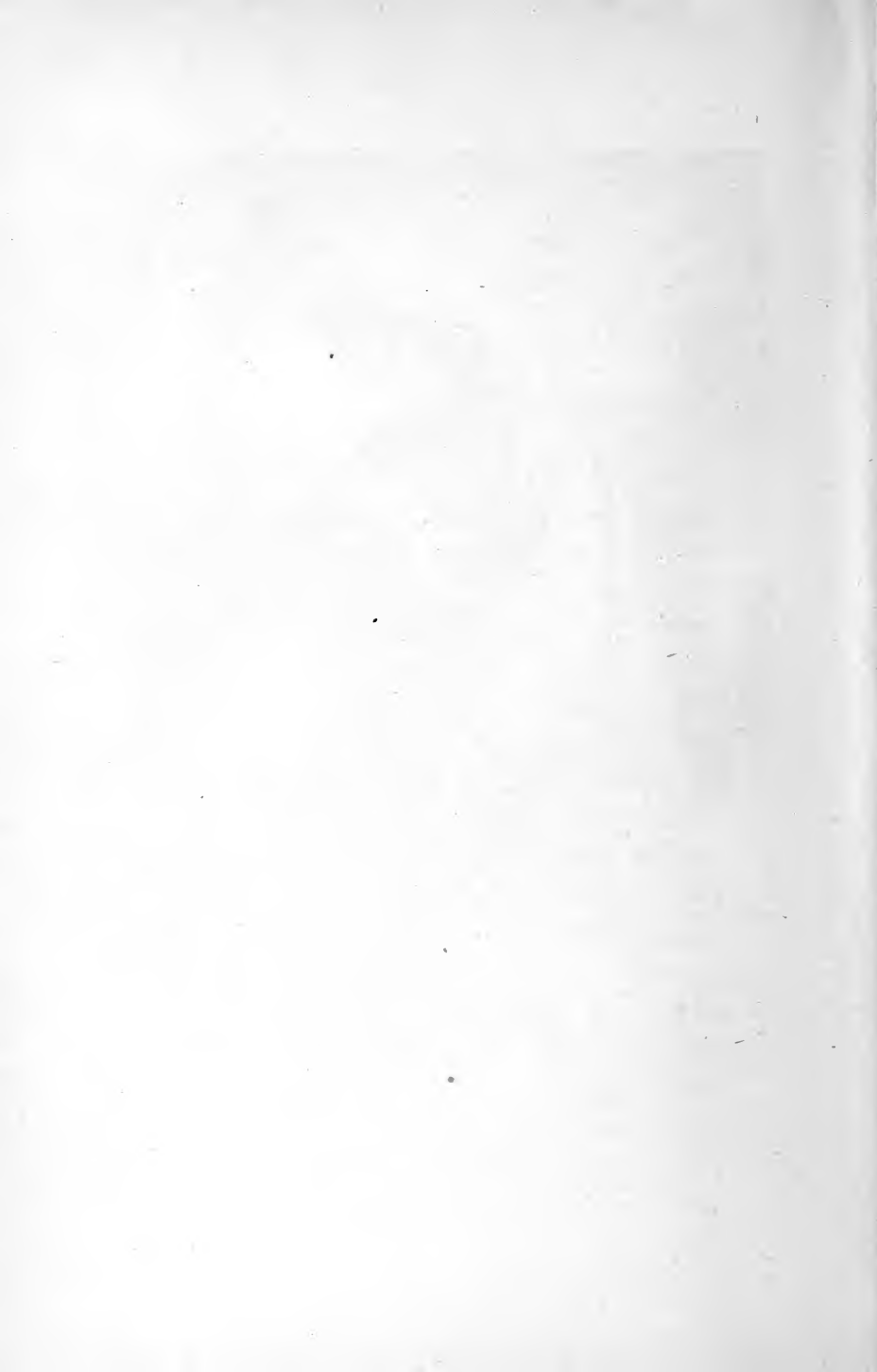
It is to be supposed that Thermuthis often came to the humble home to see her son, and to bring him clothing suited to his rank, and that she sometimes showed him to her father, or brother.

One of the early writers of the first or second century, says, that Amram and Jochebed had long before this named the child Joachim. However that may have been, his name was now Moses and was ever after so to be.

How long Moses was with his parents we do not know, but the time came when he must be given up, and, at the princess' bidding, his mother took him to the palace. Josephus says, that Thermuthis showed him to her father and said, "I have brought up a child who is of a divine form, and as I received him from the bounty of the river in a wonderful manner, I thought proper to adopt him as my son and the heir of thy kingdom." So Pharaoh took him and hugged him to his breast, and in a pleasant way put his diadem upon his head.



Egyptian Woman.





But Moses threw it upon the ground and trod upon it with his feet, which was looked upon by the priests as a very bad omen."

Egypt was at this time the seat of learning for the world. There Solon and Plato were educated, and there Moses was taught in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and became mighty in words and in deeds.

Amram and Jochebed must have felt a secret pride in Moses who was distinguishing himself, and was being fitted to fulfil all their hopes of him. A deliverer from bondage had been promised the Hebrew people, and in strong faith they watched for him to appear. When Joseph, at the age of one hundred and ten years, died, he left a charge to his nation to take his bones with them when they left Egypt. For, he said, God will surely visit you and bring you out of this land, unto the land which he swear to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. Moses knew that the Hebrew people expected to be delivered from bondage and to be gathered in a country which they should

rule, as God had promised ; but who was to lead them away he probably did not know. He was living in royal style like a high bred Egyptian, and was perhaps flattered with the attentions and honors he received, and satisfied to remain as he was. Forty years went by before we hear of his wishing to do anything for the proscribed race. He knew he was one of them, and it may have cost him a great struggle to cut himself loose from his royal surroundings and identify himself with them in their degraded condition.

But as time went on he was more and more impressed with the great and precious promises of God towards the Hebrews, till at length he determined to suffer affliction with his own people, rather than inherit, and wear the crown of Egypt.

A new life opened before him, and he went out and mingled with the people to learn their condition, and to do them good as he had opportunity.

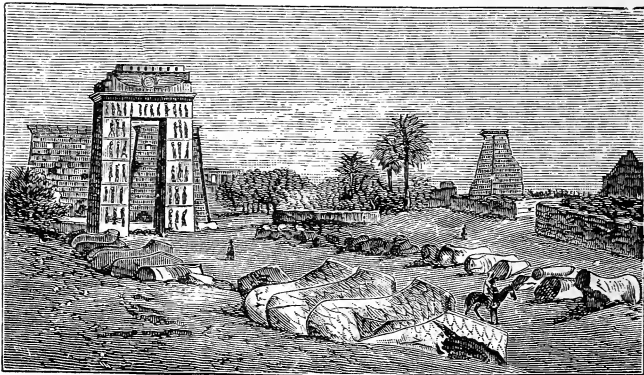
## CHAPTER II.

### MOSES AN EXILE.

As far back as two thousand years before Christ, Egypt is known to have been full of idolatry. The Egyptians supposed their god, whoever he happened to be, was embodied in some living creature, such as goats, sheep, bulls, cows, dogs, apes, shrew-mice, and hawks. They worshipped the frog, the river Nile, and even the Pharaohs came in for a share.

The bull Apis, a symbol of Osiris or Mnevis, was a very important beast. He had a splendid temple of his own, with attendant priests. His food was of the choicest kind, his grooms and curry-combers kept his coat clean and bright, and his cup-bearers brought him water. On festive days he was led through the streets that the people might see their god and

come and bow down to him. When he died he was embalmed and placed in a polished granite sarcophagus or coffin, together with jewelry, statuettes, and vases. It is said that the funeral of one of these bulls cost as much as £20,000 or \$100,000.



Avenue of Sphinxes at Karnak.

The Rev. Henry M. Field, D.D., who was in Egypt a few years since, says, "We visited one of the most stupendous mausoleums that we have seen in Egypt. The approach to it was by an avenue of sphinxes which led to a vast subterranean gallery, twenty feet wide and high, and

leading more than a third of a mile under the earth. This long, vaulted passage is hewn in the solid rock out of which open on either side, a series of chambers or recesses, like side chapels, each containing a sarcophagus 15 x 8 feet. These great sarcophagi, fit for the burial places of a long line of kings, were not for the Pharaohs or Ptolemies, but for the sacred bulls! Thirty of these sarcophagi have been found, and on the walls are tablets which record the birth, and death, and burial of each one of these beasts." In the New York Historical rooms are three mummied bulls, and a mummied cat taken from the catacombs of Egypt. In the De Cesnoli collection of N. Y. are several small images of these bulls which were once worshipped, no doubt, as gods.

What astonishing superstition, combined with learning and wonderful architectural skill! How degrading and demoralizing the influence upon the people! So gross had they become that they were not satisfied with the public worship of these beasts but had small images of them made

which they kept in their houses, and they and their children bowed down to them and worshipped.

The Hebrews were not behind in this, and even Aaron, Moses' brother, learned the art of making these diminutive gods ; and he worshipped the works of his own hands.

They had forsaken their father's God, yet he did not forsake them. He was long suffering and compassionate, and was even then fulfilling his purpose for their liberation and purification.

Moses witnessed the heavy tasks laid upon his people, and the cutting strokes laid upon their backs when they failed to do all that was required of them ; and he was angry. He determined to defend them, and thought the Hebrews would understand that he was their friend.

If he should appeal to Pharaoh, it would do no good ; he must act on his own responsibility.

Often, after this, Moses walked to the brick-yards and other places where the Hebrews were working, hoping for an

opportunity to do something for them. At length he saw in a retired place two men, a Hebrew and an Egyptian. The blows were falling hard from the Egyptian's hand upon the shrinking, crouching form of the



Hebrew. Moses' blood was stirred, and he looked this way and that, and seeing no one, he rushed up in his strength and killed the Egyptian. No doubt Moses thought it was right, although he did not mean, perhaps, to go so far. But it was done, and the Egyptian was dragged off and buried in the sand. Moses went back to the palace, hoping that his rash act would not be known, especially by Pharaoh.

The next day Moses went out again, and seeing two Hebrews fighting he said to one in the wrong, Why smitest thou thy fellow? The insolent man replied, Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you intend to kill me as you did the Egyptian yesterday?

Moses was alarmed, and said, Surely this thing is known. Where he went that day we do not know, but Pharaoh soon heard of the act, and took steps to find Moses and kill him.

Moses was aware of all this and fled. Perhaps he saw his father and the rest of the family before he left, but there was no time to be lost, and he struck off east, through the land of Goshen, and on towards Suez; while the Egyptians were guarding the roads to arrest him, he was far off, going down on the east of the Red Sea towards the wilderness. All alone he pressed on over rocks and hot or sandy plains, where no human being lived, going where? Did he know? Once he came upon a beautiful valley, afterwards called Elim, where were brooks and trees and singing birds. It was a place for rest. There caravans halted to feed their flocks, and perhaps Moses met with some who gave him food. It is to be hoped he received some kindness from some one on the way, for he was lonely and sad. What was there for him on the earth now, but to



hide himself with a strange people, and there to waste his time and talents, with no good results to his own enslaved people.

Day after day Moses pressed on through deserts and mountains, whose bare peaks penetrated the sky in awful majesty. There was Mount Serbal, and Horeb, and Sinai. He was awed in this solitude. The grandeur was overpowering, and he felt he was alone with God. It was a time for reflection; to review the past. He was educated and prepared for great things in the world, for himself and others; but the providences of God had shut him up; he was an outcast and considered a murderer.

Moses at this time was in the lower part of the peninsula, the gulf of Suez west, and the gulf of Akabah east, the two arms of the Red Sea, while the body of that sea was south. He turned his steps north-east, not far from the latter gulf, and walked on hoping to find some human habitation. At length he came to a well and seated himself by it to rest. As long troughs were fixed near the well, he knew that

sheep were brought there for water ; so he waited. He was now in Midian, a country settled by the descendants of Abraham and his second wife Keturah. These people knew by tradition of Isaac and Jacob, and they had also heard that Joseph was sold into Egypt, and that his nation was there still and in bondage.

The day was wearing away, and the time seemed long to Moses. But presently he saw in the distance a large flock of sheep coming, and with them seven girls, dressed like shepherdesses. In a few moments the well and troughs were surrounded by the bleating, thirsty animals.

The girls saw Moses sitting there quietly ; and girl like, they cast glances towards him, wondering who he was, and why there. Moses also saw them, and, though he did not know it, saw among them his future wife.

The girls, who were all sisters, drew the water and poured it into the troughs, but before the sheep could drink, several rude shepherds came up with their flocks, took possession of the well, and ordered the

girls away. Moses could sit still no longer. He arose and came forward, and, as one having authority, ordered the men to wait till the first flocks were through. He then drew water himself and poured it into the troughs till the sheep were satisfied.

The girls had politeness enough perhaps to thank Moses, but nothing more. They went home and left him by the well.

Their father, Jethro or Reuel, who was a man of note, being a prince or priest, asked in surprise how it happened that they had reached home so soon that day. They told him that an Egyptian had delivered them from the shepherds, and had also drawn waters, and had watered their flocks.

And where is he? asked Reuel. Why is it that you have left him? Go and call him, and give him supper with us.

Moses was still at the well when the girl returned. She modestly did her errand, and Moses accepted her invitation and walked with her to her father's house.

Reuel must have been pleased with

Moses, and at once made him feel at home. They talked on subjects interesting to both; their common ancestry, the condition of the Hebrews in Egypt, and their promised liberation from bondage. Moses possibly told Reuel of his desire to help his people, and of his great failure, and of his being obliged to flee to save his life.

Reuel invited him to stay with him. He could give him employment in looking after the flocks and herds, and he was safe from any danger from Pharaoh while there.

Moses accepted the kindness and became one of the family. His wanderings were ended, for a time.

Reuel was rich, like Abraham, in cattle and flocks, and like him he lived in a primitive way. It was very unlike what Moses had had in the palace, but he was contented. He loved the grand old mountains around which he drove his herds and flocks. There his mind was filled with adoring thoughts of God, who not only created all things, but condescended to care even for him, an alien; and to place

him in a home where his father's God was worshipped. Reuel had one son, at least, yet Moses filled a large place in his heart. Particularly grateful were the daughters to this "Egyptian," as they called him, for relieving them from some of their out-door labor, and for the protection he gave them against the shepherds.

The amiable and loving Zipporah was, in Moses' eyes, the one out of the seven to make him happy, and he asked her of her father for a wife. Reuel might well be gratified to have such a son-in-law as Moses, and he gave him Zipporah.

Moses was now, indeed, one of the family, and settled down, as he may have thought, for life. He had a more real interest, a sort of proprietorship in the family, and in the herds he cared for.

At length a son was born, and Moses named him Gershom. "For he said, I have been a stranger in a strange land." There was no Pharaoh to seek the child's life, and with six aunts and a grandfather to pet the boy, he might have been spoiled; but in process of time another son came to share

their attentions. Moses named him Eliezer—God is a helper.

As these boys grew older and asked for stories, did Moses tell them of Pharaoh's cruelty, of the babe in the bulrushes by the river, and of God's care of the child? No doubt they heard it all.

Two sons to train up and educate for usefulness! Moses was qualified to do it, for he was not only learned in all book knowledge, but he worshipped the true God, which was of more importance than all things else.

No idol worship would those boys see either in their grandfather Reuel's house, or in their father's. They grew up with right principles, and we hear of them again after many years.

It is not to be supposed that Moses would be satisfied with spending his time and all his thought upon his sheep and cattle. His aspirations were like the towering mountains around him, upward. He was searching out the great questions of duty to man and to his Maker, and his spirit was subdued and humble. He was sur-

rounded with the sublime. He saw his own littleness and became exceedingly meek.

God could now use him, and it was probably in this solitude that he commenced writing the books which bear his name. What more natural than for him to write, in the fullness of his heart,

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”

Here was the commencement of the Bible, that Book of books. Other thoughts were dictated by the Holy Spirit—thoughts new to Moses himself till revealed, and so the pages of the Holy Book increased.

During these years Pharaoh died and a new king took the throne. He was more oppressive, if possible, than the others, and the cry of the Hebrews came up before God, who was now about to deliver them. God remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Moses was also now fitted to commence the great work of his life.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE BURNING BUSH.

WHEN Moses had been in Midian forty years, being then eighty years old, he was still living in the desert with his father-in-law Reuel, and driving his flocks from mountain to mountain for pasturage, or from valley to valley among the mountains.

At this time, finding it necessary to move his flocks he went south to the back side of the desert, and came to Mount Horeb. Here was a range of mountains extending forty miles or more. Their tops pierced the sky, their sides were covered with huge rocks, and the valleys were generally without grass or trees. But after rains, or where living springs were running, there were patches of verdure, where large flocks of sheep could find food for many days.



As Moses approached this solitary place we can almost see him coming through the northern opening of the mountains, followed by his hundreds of dusty, noisy, sheep, which crowd on to this plain and over it to the mountains beyond.

Moses, with his shepherd's staff in his hand, leads them on up the rugged sides, where they eagerly crop the grass among the rocks. Their voices are now all hushed, and amid the awful solitude Moses seats himself and watches them. He had no book to read, no newspaper to divert him; what was he thinking of as he sat there? Perhaps of the promises of God to the Hebrews. They had been in Egypt about four hundred years, and it almost seemed that God had forgotten them; forgotten that he had made a promise to deliver them. As Moses looked up he saw a bush not far off blazing and burning. He was startled. There was no one around to set it on fire. For a long time he sat and watched the bush, and yet it was not consumed; it did not grow any less. That was strange indeed. He

arose and with his rod, or staff, in his hand, walked towards it wondering.



A voice from the fire said, "Moses, Moses"; and Moses answered, "Here *am* I." And God said, "Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest *is* holy ground. . . . I *am* the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob."

Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.

And God said, "I have seen the affliction of my people which *are* in Egypt, and have heard their cry by 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. . . . Come now, therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring

forth my people." Moses was taken by surprise, and was staggered by the proposition, and stammered out, "Who *am* I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?"

God promised him help, and Moses, remembering his former attempt and failure, still held back and made excuses.

God replied, "Certainly, I will be with thee; and this *shall be* a token [or sign] unto thee, that I have sent thee: when thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain."

Then Moses objected again, and said, "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? what shall I say unto them?"

God replied, "I AM THAT I AM." Tell them "I AM hath sent me unto you."

Then God gave Moses many instructions as to what he must do, promising all along to be with him. But Moses said,

They will not believe me, but will say, "The LORD hath not appeared unto thee."

"What *is* that in thine hand?" asked God.

"A rod," Moses meekly replied.

"Cast it on the ground." Moses threw it down and it became a serpent, and Moses, being afraid of it, ran, and it chased him.

God commanded him to take it by the tail, and as Moses did so, it became a rod again. God told him to do that before Pharaoh to prove that his words were true.

As Moses still hesitated, God told him to put his hand into his bosom ; he did so, and as he drew it out it was covered with the white scales of leprosy. Did he think that God was angry with him and he was to be a leper ? The command came, put it back again. And when he drew it out the second time it was restored. God said, If they will not believe the first sign then thou shalt use the second, and if they will not believe either, thou shalt take water from the river and pour it upon the

land and it shall be as blood. Moses still stood before the Lord unwilling to go, and said, "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." He did not know himself, for the Bible says Moses was mighty in word.

God replied, "Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? Have not I the LORD? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say."

Strange conduct for Moses, but he still stood there and dared to say, he had rather God would send by some one else.

Then the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses, but his patience was great, and he replied: your brother Aaron is now on his way to meet you. He can speak well, and thou shalt put words into his mouth, and I will be with thee.

The fire disappeared. Moses was entirely subdued and willing to obey God, though he knew the work involved great

self denial. He must now lead his flocks back, and tell his family what had happened, and what he must do. He was a different man from what he was when he entered that solitary region, for he had talked with God and still lived. When he came to his home he cared for his sheep, and went in and stood before Reuel, his father-in-law.

Moses was eighty, and Reuel perhaps older; two aged men standing face to face. Did Reuel notice a change in Moses and ask the reason?

Moses told him all and asked to take his family and go to Egypt and see if his friends were yet alive. Reuel said to Moses, "Go in peace."

The Lord also answered Moses that all the men who sought his life were dead, and he could go in safety. Days of preparation followed, the journey was long, and many things must be carried for their comfort, and with an ass for their conveyance, they went forth till they reached the mount of God, the place where the burning bush had been. There he had received his commission, and now he was on his

way to execute it. While they waited here Aaron arrived, and being glad to meet his brother Moses again, he kissed him. How much they had to say to each other! First Aaron must be told all the words of God, of what they were to do when they should enter Egypt. Questions were to be asked about the new king, and how he would receive their message. Had we been present we might have heard Aaron say something like this :

The Pharaoh whom you knew, died about six years ago. He was a hard and cruel master, and cared neither for our comfort nor our lives. He was much harder upon us after you left, and seemed always to be expecting you back to create a rebellion. He was successful in his wars, and there is scarcely a temple or column in the land but is covered with accounts of his exploits. And every brick we made was stamped with his name, as it was when you were there.

He put us to building treasure cities, and we cut temples in the solid rock, we built wide canals, and worked continually

under the lash of cruel overseers. Pharaoh's life was one long sin against our people and our God. His death gave us some hope, but our new King Pharaoh has no knowledge of our forefathers, and if he ever heard of Joseph's saving the lives of the Egyptians in the great famine he cares nothing for it. He wishes us to know that we are to be kept in bondage for ever. Our undertaking is a perilous one, but we will go to Egypt and call the elders of our people together. They may regard what we say, but Pharaoh will not let us go.

The words of Aaron were discouraging to Moses, and he determined to send his wife and sons back again to Reuel. There in the wilderness they parted. Moses and Aaron with only their staves turned towards Egypt, while Zipporah, with her sons and their beast of burden turned back towards the hospitable home of her father Reuel.

No doubt he was much surprised to see them enter his home after so short an absence, but he was a good man and cared



for them kindly. The grandsons would have much to tell of what they had seen and of their uncle Aaron, which would interest Reuel greatly; but while they were so happy around the old home, Moses and Aaron were walking on through the desert, weary with the journey and anxious about the great work they had to do. They arrive at length at the gulf of Suez, when they turn west towards Egypt.

Three more days bring them to their home to Miriam their loving sister, who was now ninety years old. She had greatly changed in looks since Moses had seen her, but her heart was as loving as when she watched the little ark in the bulrushes. If Aaron gave Moses one kiss at their meeting, she must have given him many both for herself and for her dear old mother, who would see his face no more. She had died in bondage.

Miriam entered warmly into their plans and did what she could to further them. But the people had lost spirit and feared to act lest their miseries should be increased. Against this slothful feeling Moses and

Aaron had to work. We will let Miriam tell the story, for she was there. And as she had then about forty years more to live, she was to pass through most of the trials that befel the nation before they arrived in Canaan.



## CHAPTER IV.

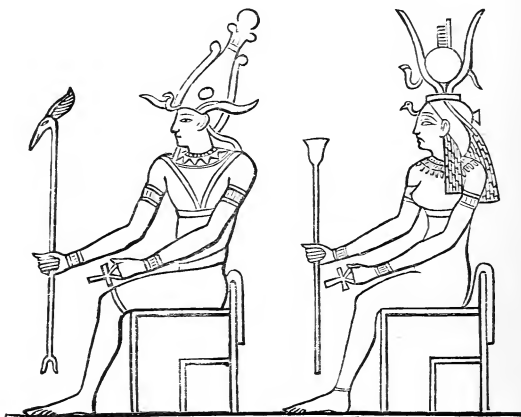
### MIRIAM'S STORY.

FOR many days past, Moses and Aaron have been visiting the cities and talking to the elders ; and trying to convince them that the set time for the nation's deliverance has come. But it is hard for them to believe. They have drifted into idolatry and have become degraded. Four hundred years of such a life is enough to degrade any people.

In passing through Thebes, Moses witnessed a feast held in honor of the calf Apis and of the other Egyptian gods. Multitudes of people were gathered around the temple, where the innocent animal was, and were shouting and dancing in the wildest manner. Some of them were Hebrews. Moses was greatly grieved at the sight ; but Aaron has

too often seen this to be much disturbed.

A great and solemn meeting has been held, and Caleb, Joshua, Hur, Amminadab, and other prominent men were present. Aaron addressed them and told them all that God had commanded them to do; and to convince them that his



Osiris, and Isis; two chief gods of the Egyptians.

words were true, he showed them the signs they were to use. When he cast down the rod, it became a serpent and glided around the room with its head erect. They were startled; but when Aaron caught it by the tail, and it became

a rod again, they were convinced that God had sent them.

Moses and Aaron have been to see Pharaoh, and lay the commands of God before him. How it recalled to Moses his early life as he entered the gorgeous place. Thermuthis was not there to welcome him, and he saw no familiar face. This Pharaoh was a new king, and after the usual ceremony, Moses said to Pharaoh ;

God, the God of the Hebrews, has sent me to say, "Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness."

Pharaoh was haughty and insolent, and scarcely had the words dropped from Moses' lips before he asked in a loud voice and in a tone of contempt,

"Who *is* the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go?"

Moses 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 upon us with pestilence, or with the sword."

This made Pharaoh still more angry,

and he accused Moses and Aaron of taking the people from their work by their talk, and their meetings; and he ordered them to leave his presence and go to their tasks.

We hear to-night that the taskmasters have already been to the different brick-yards, and have told the Hebrews that they had not enough to do, and so were uneasy, and trying to shirk work, on pretence of going away to worship.

They also told them that no more straw would be given them in future to mix in the brick, but that they must get it themselves wherever they can and yet make as many bricks as they did before.

We feared this; the people are out to-night gathering stubble for to-morrow. They know they cannot do the work that is required of them, and are discouraged.

The days are going by, and the sorrows of the people increase: they are beaten cruelly. Even the Hebrew officers have been whipped. It is more than they can bear, and they are going in a body to the king. Moses and Aaron are trying to encourage the people by assuring them

that God will surely deliver them from the Egyptians, and give them a land of their own, where they will not be in bondage to any man.

Moses and Aaron met the officers as they came from the palace to-day. They got no satisfaction from the king and are in great trouble.

Moses has been pleading with God, and asked why the LORD dealt in this manner with his people; for instead of being liberated they were oppressed the more.

God answered him and renewed all his promises, and commanded him to go and tell the people that they should soon be free.

But they are so crushed in spirit that they will not regard his words. They feel that he has raised false hopes and brought them into troubles from which he cannot deliver them. Moses and Aaron are sad and have gone to see Pharaoh again.

Pharaoh looked with contempt when they entered and asked what proof they could give that the LORD had sent them. Aaron replied, I will turn this rod which I

hold in my hand into a serpent; and he cast it down upon the floor.

The king was startled as it glided swiftly about, but after Aaron had caught it by the tail and it was again a stick or rod, Pharaoh concluded it was all done by magic, and he sent for Jannes and Jambres his two most noted magicians.

For some wise reason God allowed them to do the same with their rods, but Aaron's serpent-rod darted forward and swallowed their serpents, and their rods were no more seen.

Pharaoh's heart is hardened and he still refuses to let our people go. Terrible judgments are to be sent upon the men of this land, and as they worship the river Nile judgments are to commence upon it.

Moses is to meet Pharaoh as he comes down to the water in the morning and say, "Let my people go."

Moses is walking very near to God in these days and is calm and prayerful.

This is a beautiful morning in spring



and the air is loaded with the sweet perfume of flowers and the songs of birds. The valley is covered with flax and barley nearly ready for the reapers.

Moses and Aaron are down by the river. Will Pharaoh again refuse? If he does, who can stand before the terrible judgments to come?

They met the king, and Aaron told him plainly that unless he let the people go, the water of the whole land would be turned into blood. But the king, in the presence of his servants, scorned their words. Aaron then smote the river and stretched his rod over it. Pharaoh was disturbed, as he watched till the waters grew red and thick, and dying fish were thrown upon the shore. Then he sent for his sorcerers, and clean water being produced, God allowed them to turn it to blood.

The king was more hardened than before, and turned and went to his own house.

We wonder that God allows the sorcerers to do such things, but he knows

what is best. To-day I hear from our Egyptian neighbors that their water jars are full of blood. Many persons are digging near the river, hoping to obtain water for their families, and flocks ; but with poor success ; for the river is very offensive on account of the putrid, bloody fish that line the shores.

Moses is hoping to be summoned to the palace to be told to pray for the removal of the plague, and to take the people and go. We try to keep ourselves in readiness to start on short notice.

The Egyptians are in great distress, and are crying to Pharaoh for help ; but he pays no attention to them.

This is the seventh day of blood, a whole week, but it is beginning to abate. The Egyptians are cleaning out their water vessels and filling them with clean water. They rejoice greatly to get it. This judgment is also lost upon the king, who grows more and more oppressive. The Hebrews are despairing. But God assures Moses that he sees all our sorrows and will soon help.

Again Moses is called to go to the king and he meekly obeys, though he meets with anger from the king, and jeers from his sorcerers and servants. He dreads these interviews.

Moses has not returned, yet I know that Pharaoh has refused, for the people are in alarm and are hurrying home on account of the thousands of frogs that have suddenly appeared. They have worshipped the frog, but now they are disgusted; for the filthy creatures hop into the houses, they leap into their beds, they croak from the ovens, and squat in the kneading troughs, and fasten themselves upon the people. Business is stopped, and all are suffering for food and sleep.

The magicians have produced frogs and the king is hardened again.

A messenger has called for Moses. He says the officers at court are complaining to the king and that Pharaoh is ready to let us go. This is joyful news.

It is now late in the day and Moses has returned. He gives a doleful account of the plague as seen at the palace. Pharaoh

is greatly troubled and says one moment, that if the frogs are removed Israel can go ; then he asserts that the plague will pass away of itself, and that no prayer need be offered for its removal, certainly not till to-morrow.

The morrow has arrived, prayer has been offered, and not a living frog is seen, but the ground is covered with their dead carcasses. Men are raking them up into heaps, and the land is becoming offensive.

Pharaoh is relieved. He will have a few days of rest and then other judgments will follow, for he still refuses.

God has commanded and Aaron has struck the earth, and the dust of Egypt has become flying insects,—gnats, or fleas or ticks ; insect torments, called in our translation, “lice.” They are small, fierce, blood-sucking insects, creeping into the eyes, the nose, and covering the whole body like a cloud of dust. Their sting is very painful.

Pharaoh has commanded his sorcerers to do the same. They fail, and say, “This *is* the finger of God” ; we cannot

do it. Pharaoh is desperate and hardened. Aaron is getting tired of this strife with Pharaoh and to-morrow Moses goes alone to make another demand, and to threaten a swarm of flies, or beetles, which shall fill all the houses of the Egyptians. Not one will be found in ours, which is to be another proof that God is dealing with the king. It requires early rising to meet Pharaoh at the river where he goes to dip himself in its holy waters, but Moses has gone. He has great patience in doing this unpleasant work, and when God speaks he meekly obeys. The Egyptians, and many of our own people are bitter against Moses; still he endures it, and is looking for the recompense of reward.

The king has again refused, and swarms of flying beetles or dog flies (called flies in our translation) are darkening the land. The Hebrew word *arob* refers to the gad-fly, dog-fly, and Egyptian beetle, whose bite is very painful and causes great inflammation. They crawl from the ground, and as the Egyptians have considered the beetle sacred and carved their

forms in stone, they are perplexed and would willingly be rid of their divinity. They can neither eat nor sleep in peace. Our dwellings are free from them.

A message has arrived for Moses and Aaron to go to the king. Pharaoh tells them that if they will remove the plague they may go to some part of Egypt to sacrifice to God. Moses replied, that we wish to sacrifice the ox and the calf, and as your people hold them as sacred, it would be an abomination to them. They would stone us. No, said Moses, "We will go three days journey into the wilderness, and sacrifice to the LORD our God as he shall command us."

Pharaoh replied, "I will let you go . . . only ye shall not go very far away: entreat for me." Moses promised to pray for the removal of the beetles or flies on the next day, and then begged the king to be true to his promise. He is tired of so much deception.

Moses' prayer is answered and the flying creatures have left as suddenly as they came. But while the people are rejoicing,

Pharaoh is thinking that the beetles would have gone any way, and that he will not let the Hebrews go.

Our people are greatly depressed. No straw has been found them since Moses' first interview with the king, and they are scattered all over the land gathering stubble, or whatever will answer their purpose. They are daily beaten because they fail in their work.

Moses has been still another time to Pharaoh. He found the king seated in his great hall amid sculptured columns and hanging tapestry so familiar to Moses in his youth, but haughty and defiant. Moses said,

“Thus saith the LORD God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may serve me. For if thou refuse to let *them* go, . . . Behold, 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 murrain . . . and there shall nothing die of all *that is* the children's of Israel. . . .

To-morrow the Lord shall do this thing.”

Could the king's counsellors and the people have their own way, we should be driven from the land before other judgments are sent. The coming scourge will touch their sacred animals.

Moses and Aaron look care-worn. So many months of strife and anxiety tell upon them. The morning sun is shining again, and we already hear that cattle are dying by hundreds in the land. Their groans and bellowings are filling their owners with alarm. Even Pharaoh's beautiful horses, which carried him so proudly through the streets yesterday, are dead with the rest. He was watching for this scourge, and has sent messengers to Goshen to see if what Moses told him is true. He finds no sickness among our beasts, and this fact seems to provoke and harden him. Men are everywhere burying the swollen carcasses of beasts. A pestilence is feared.

Many days have now gone by, and as Pharaoh shows no sign of yielding, Moses and Aaron have gone to the furnace for



ashes, which they are to scatter to the winds in the sight of Pharaoh. They are not sent to speak to him, yet he watches their movements.

The sixth judgment has come. Our people are all well, but the Egyptians are suffering with boils. Pharaoh is sorely afflicted with them, while the sorcerers are unable to rise or stand. All the Egyptians are suffering in the same way, and they are losing patience with Pharaoh, that he does not drive us out of the land.

The disease is passing over, and as the king is able to be about now, he concludes that he will hold on to his slaves, and not allow them to go away to worship.

When will this strife end? Moses and Aaron are to go again early in the morning to Pharaoh and demand that he let the people go.

If he refuses, Moses is to say:

“Thus saith the LORD God of the Hebrews, . . . exaltest thou thyself against my people, that thou will not let them go? Behold, to morrow about this time I will cause it to rain a very grievous hail, such

as hath not been in Egypt since the foundation thereof, even until now. . . . Gather thy cattle, and all that thou hast in the field; *for upon* every man and beast, which shall be found in the field . . . the hail shall come down and . . . they shall die.”

These threatenings are known, and men are sheltering their cattle, for there are a few left in the land. People are beginning to believe that the threatening will come, even if there are pleasant skies and balmy air.

The day of vengeance came. Moses stood with out-stretched arm, at God's bidding. Immediately the heavens grew black; the wind swept over the land in a tornado; the thunder broke in awful peals over head and shook the earth; while the lightning ran in a blaze along the ground. Hail stones fell thick and fast, and of such size that every tree and green thing was broken down and destroyed, and men or beasts who were exposed to it died.

Pharaoh was exceedingly terrified, and

as soon it was safe he sent for Moses and Aaron, and in his anguish said, "I have sinned this time: The LORD *is* righteous, and I and my people *are* wicked. Entreat the LORD . . . that there be no *more* mighty thunderings, and hail; and I will let you go, and ye shall stay no longer." Thus passed the seventh judgment.

Moses promised to pray for him, but told him that he knew he would not keep his word, and so it was. As soon as the terror was past, and the dead gathered from the fields, Pharaoh changed his mind, and the Hebrews seemed as far from liberation as ever.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE EXODUS.

EGYPT! O Egypt! thou land of beauty and plenty, how art thou fallen and destroyed! and yet thou wilt not yield. God must come in still greater power. Moses stands in the palace and says:

“Thus saith the LORD God of the Hebrews, . . . Let my people go, that they may serve me.” If you longer refuse, locusts shall cover your land and destroy whatever the hail has left.

When Moses left Pharaoh, the lords said, How long shall this man be a snare to us? Let the Hebrews go; do you not see that Egypt is destroyed?

Pharaoh began to be afraid of his own people. Moses and Aaron were called back. They found confusion and anxiety in the palace. The lords were urging the

king to let the people go, and he was meditating and hesitating. At one time he would say, go and serve your God, then he would ask, But who are to go?

Moses told him, that all must go, from the eldest to the youngest, with the herds and the flocks.

Pharaoh at this moment seemed to get the idea that they did not intend to return if they once got away. And he cried, You only asked that the men might go; now you that are men may go, but your flocks and little ones shall not go. And in great anger he drove Moses and Aaron from the palace.

After this, God commanded Moses to stretch out his hand over the land, that the locusts might appear.

He obeyed, and a strong east wind began to blow. It continued the rest of the day and all night. In the morning a dark cloud hid the sun and cast a gloom over the earth. People were out of their houses looking anxiously up at the sky, wondering what was the matter. But when the locusts began to fall and to cover

every bush and tree, and the earth, the people were appalled and shut themselves in their houses. The locusts went with the regularity of an army; nothing could turn them. Some people dug deep trenches to keep them back, but the locusts fell in till the trench was full, and the others marched over their dead bodies and went forward. Others piled brush in their way, setting it on fire at their approach, but even this seemed to do no good. No walls stopped them; they climbed over and into the houses, filling the ovens, the beds, and the kneading troughs, with their disgusting bodies.

The wheat and rye which began to rise again after the hail, they ate clean, and it can be truly said that not a bush or tree, or any green thing is left in the country.

This is the eighth plague that is come upon the land. The common people are suffering greatly, all labor is stopped and famine is expected.

A messenger in great haste has arrived, and Moses and Aaron have gone to Pharaoh.

They found the king humbled. He confessed that he had sinned against God, and against them, and begged their forgiveness only for this once, and their prayers, that God would remove "this death."

It seems now that Pharaoh is about to yield and let us go. But he has often mocked our expectations.

Moses has asked God to remove this judgment. The wind has changed and is blowing strong from the west. The locusts are all on the wing, they darken the sky again as they go over our heads on their way to the Red Sea, where they will all be destroyed.

Moses is very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants, and in the sight of the people.

Pharaoh has again settled back in his stubbornness, and says, the Hebrews shall not leave his land.

This is the fourth time he has professed penitence, made promises, and broken them. Moses and Aaron have decided not to go to Pharaoh again unless he sends

for them. Another judgment, the ninth, is to come. How dreadful! At God's command Moses has again stretched forth his hand that there may be darkness.

There is a strange appearance in the sky and the Egyptians are in the streets watching it. Some think the locusts are returning, others that the last day is come; while the priests and the sorcerers say, that their god, the sun, is offended and demands a sacrifice. It is not yet noon, but it is so dark that nothing can be seen.

The beasts and the fowls have gone to rest, and men are groping their way home to their families.

The lamps which the Egyptians lighted burnt only for a short time and then went out, and they are sitting in a darkness which they can feel with their hand, thick and damp. They are horrified.

How strange that we and all the Hebrews have light in our dwellings! It gives us an opportunity to prepare for our departure, which must be very near. Pharaoh must yield soon.

This morning is the third day of the



darkness, and some faint glimpses of light begin to appear in the east. The Egyptians have not been able to move from their places all this time, and now as the light increases they are beginning to appear in the streets. The birds are chirping and the cattle lowing, after their long rest.

The king has sent for Moses and Aaron and orders them to take the Hebrews and their families and go and worship their God, but to leave their cattle behind.

Moses replied boldly and with spirit, "Our cattle also shall go with us ; there shall not a hoof be left behind ; for thereof must we take to serve the LORD our God." Pharaoh was very angry, and said, "Get thee from me, take heed to thyself, see my face no more ; for in *that* day thou seest my face thou shalt die." And Moses said, "Thou hast spoken well, I will see thy face again no more." The Lord said that he would send one more plague :

"About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt, and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of

Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant, that *is* behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts. And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none 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 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."

The king was very angry at Moses; but he would not let the children of Israel go. And Moses went out from Pharaoh.

The Hebrews have been convinced by these repeated judgments that they are to be set free. Families with their goods and cattle are congregating in this part of the country. Goshen is full and yet they come. All would be confusion were it not for Moses, who is appointing officers over

the tribes, and dividing them up into companies of hundreds and of thousands. All know their commanders and are ready to obey. There is solemnity on every face. The people are awed, and waiting.

The Egyptians are in great fear and consternation, and know not what to expect next.

Pharaoh knows that all our people have left his brick yards and all other work, yet he does nothing. He feels that he is powerless, yet he will not say the word and let us go.

God has commanded that we ask jewels of gold and jewels of silver from the Egyptians whom we served so long for so little; and we are doing it. How free they are to give us! They say we are the cause of all their trouble, and that we are welcome to all we ask if we will but leave the land. The crisis is at hand. Moses has seen our officers and given them orders to be ready on the 14th of this month. A year old lamb, free from blemish, is to be taken on the tenth by each family, or by two small families

united, and kept four days. In the evening these lambs are to be killed all at the same time, and their blood sprinkled, with a bunch of hyssop, upon the sides and lintels of the doors; for at midnight the angel of death is to pass over the land and enter every house that has no blood mark, and take the life of the oldest child.

The lamb is to be roasted by fire, not one of its bones being broken, and eaten by the people, who are to be dressed, their staves in their hands, ready to depart when the word shall come. For we are to be thrust out.

The Egyptians have heard that the angel of death is coming and are greatly troubled. The priests are calling upon their dumb animal gods to avert this judgment, but the poor creatures have no power to protect themselves. Pharaoh pays no regard to the entreaties of the people, but persists in his stubbornness. The blow must fall.

The 14th has arrived, and no words can paint the agitation of all classes. A pall of horror hangs over Egypt; and the

Hebrews are awe struck by their situation. Our lamb, whose blood is to be our atonement, is quietly cropping the grass by our door. He symbolizes a greater sacrifice which is to come through this chosen nation, even the promised Messiah.



Pharaoh of the Exodus. Menephtha II.

Rameses is to be our place of rendezvous, and it is nearly filled, yet the people come and take their appointed places in their tribes ; all are orderly and solemn.

Pharaoh we hear is greatly disturbed,

and scarcely knows what he is doing. His eldest son, the heir to the throne, is watched with solitude.

The day is departing. All, both Egyptians and Hebrews, have retired to their homes, our lamb has been killed by Aaron, and its warm blood has been sprinkled upon the door posts and lintels. The lamb is roasted and eaten, and the whole Hebrew nation of two millions of souls or more stand waiting.

The hour of midnight has arrived, and at this moment the angel of death is passing silently from house to house, but a great cry of agony follows in his track.

There is not an Egyptian house where there is not one dead. Pharaoh and his people have been up all night in great terror.

A messenger has arrived in great haste from the king, who commands that we be gone. "Rise up . . . Be gone! be gone!" echoes on every hand, and the Hebrews are in haste to obey. The women, the children, and the aged are placed, as far as possible, upon camels,

and the rest on foot take their places under their commanders, and are moving away by their tribes. Moses and Aaron go before, and near them are Hur, and Aaron's four sons. There is not a sick person in our ranks, and we move away rapidly.

Shouts of gratitude are rising on every hand, for we all realize that we are free, and on our way to the land promised to Abraham.

There is a peculiar bright light just ahead of Moses, which he follows closely and says it is the Angel of the LORD. Were it not for this light we should walk in darkness. There are several hours yet before daybreak, and we hope to put a long distance between ourselves and Pharaoh before the sun is up. The Egyptians will have enough to do for a day or two in burying their dead (Numbers 33 : 4), and by the time that is done we shall be well on our journey.

A multitude of Egyptians are following in our ranks, and asking to be allowed to cast in their lot with us. Their idolatry

will be a snare to our people. The sun is up but we still press on. As I look back upon the open country I see it is covered with our dear people. They seem to be forgetful of their fatigue and hunger, and are singing and shouting. Who ever saw such a sight as this before? The pillar of fire has changed to a pillar of cloud, and is as plainly seen as it was last night. Moses keeps near it.

The day is far advanced and the cloud stands still, and Moses has ordered a halt. It is a joyful sound. We are about twenty miles now from our blood stained homes in Egypt. May our oppressors remember the power of our God as they look upon them !

As far back over the tribes as we can see, there is great activity. Camels are being unloaded, trees chopped down and booths, or arbors are being built to cover the people. We are to stay here till to-morrow morning.

Friends unexpectedly meet friends, and all are glad to divide with each other the unleavened dough they brought, or what-



ever else they have. Fires are kindled that we may have enough bread to last us the next seven days. Our great herds of cattle find pasturage here. Joy and gladness, with the sound of the timbrel, and the harp, are heard in all directions. The idea is growing upon the people that they are free.

• Four hundred and thirty years we have been in Egypt (Ex. 12 : 40). But with a stretched out hand God has brought us forth. This night is never to be forgotten, and when we reach Canaan it will be commemorated as the feast of tabernacles, or of booths, that our children may learn what the LORD did for us.

Moses has some fear that Pharaoh, in his madness, may pursue us. The sleep of the night has been refreshing, and the thousands are awake, and busy getting ready to go forward. The morning meal has been eaten, the water sacks filled. The booths, a city of themselves, are left standing, which will mark to Pharaoh our first night's resting place. The pillar of fire is moving and we all go forward.

The country is generally level, and not well supplied with vegetation. Water is found less frequent, and by to-morrow we shall be in the desert.

As we have arrived upon its border and the people are weary, we halt here for the night.

We have travelled but ten miles to-day, for we all feel the excitement and toil we have been through, and our cattle and sheep need rest. Our stay here will be short.

The day has again come, and the pillar of fire is moving. The tribes are following. I see the ensigns of Judah, of Levi, and Reuben, and Issachar, and Joseph, with many others floating in this sweet morning breeze. It is hard walking over these black stones, but there is no other way and we press on.

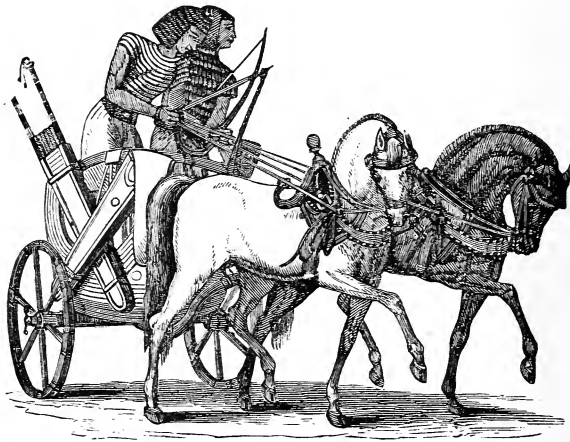
Moses has had a communication from God, but does not tell us what it is. He seems excited and is urging the people forward as rapidly as he can. Many are asking if Pharaoh is coming, and often look from rising ground back over the

country. Some are saying, How are we to cross the Red Sea when we come to it? We answer, Trust God and follow the pillar. It is all we can do.

The mountains seem converging towards the sea, and we are between them. The pillar of cloud rests, though the night is still far off. Every one is uneasy, and looking as if expecting something. But what does this great and sudden confusion mean? The people are running and shouting, Pharaoh is coming! Pharaoh is upon us! What can we do? We are hemmed in by the mountains and the sea. They are reproaching Moses and saying, Because there were no graves in Egypt hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? You should have left us alone in Egypt as we asked you to do. It is a fearful time and we are all distressed.

Moses stands calm and firm against this outburst of the people, and is trying to show them that God will deliver them. We see the cloud moving over and taking a position between us and the Egyptians. It is dark on their side, but we can see.

Pharaoh knows we are hemmed in and so has encamped for the night. He designs to come down on us in the morning with his captains and his six hundred chariots, with their long scythes, to cut us to pieces. To add to our gloom, night is



An Egyptian Chariot.

coming upon us, and a strong east wind has sprung up, accompanied with thunder and lightning which is terrifying

There was a nearer way to the land of Canaan, south of the Mediterranean and on through the land of the Philistines

But they would have made war upon us, and our men have not the spirit to resist. Then our people would have returned again to Egypt. So God cares for us and adapts his treatment to our infirmities.

Moses has Joseph's bones with us. They must not be lost. Moses is anxious and has been calling on God, who says, "Wherefore criest thou unto me? Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward: . . . stretch out thine hand over the sea and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry *ground* through the midst of the sea."

Moses with his rod lifted, and with a voice that is heard above the thunder and the tumult cries, Go forward. He leads the way down into the sea, rapidly followed by the excited frantic people and their lowing herds. The shouts of the men, the screams of the women and the children, the lowing of the cattle and bleating of the sheep, added to the storm, is exciting be-



yond description. The sea is divided and stands as a wall on either side, and we press down and enter boldly this trough, and go forward rapidly. The pillar of fire moves on, and Moses follows and leads this host. Surely, God's people are led like a flock, by the hand of Moses and Aaron. Hours have passed since we entered this sea, yet the morning has not yet dawned, and we press on till we stand upon the opposite shore.

\* Pharaoh's host has discovered our flight and has rushed down with his chariots, captains and horsemen into the divided sea. Will God allow us to be overtaken and destroyed? Moses has assured us that we shall see Pharaoh's hosts no more. God seems to be fighting for us; the storm increases.

The skies send out a sound: the arrows of God are abroad. "The voice of thy thunder *was* in the heaven; the lightnings lightened the world; the earth trembled and shook." (Psalm 77 : 18.)

The LORD has looked upon Pharaoh and has troubled his host. His army is

entangled, their chariot wheels are off, and they are trying to turn back, they are overturned and their horses are trampling them to death.

Daylight has come, and all our people are gazing back upon this scene of horror. Moses stands on a high rock, and at God's command has stretched his rod over the sea, and the mountains of water on either hand are pouring back into the trough, and meeting, are surging back and forth, and the great host is now at its mercy. Wave meets wave, throwing helmeted men and broken wheels high into the air, only to fall back upon the sharp scythes and struggling mass below. Not one can be saved. Truly the LORD fighteth for his people.

There is great rejoicing among our people, and now they believe in God, and in his servant Moses. Wonderful deliverance! There is nothing more to fear from Egypt. We encamp here for rest, which we all greatly need. The pillar of cloud is still with us. As we look back over the sea the range of mountains which

hemmed us in last night, is in plain view. Another range east of us runs towards the south. We shall travel between it and the sea when we move. Several bodies of the Egyptians have washed ashore, and have been buried by our young men. Their gold ornaments and their implements of war will be of use to us. The face of Pharaoh we shall see no more.



## CHAPTER VI.

### THE SONG OF TRIUMPH.

We have prepared for a grand celebration to commemorate God's deliverance. Moses has written a poem which inspires us with enthusiasm.

The nation is to assemble to-day on the sea-shore. The men singers in one body and the women singers will answer with a refrain at each pause. I am to lead those women with timbrels and dances, in the worship.

The hour has arrived, and every bosom beats high with exultant joy. The men sing with one voice :

I will sing unto the LORD,  
For he hath triumphed gloriously:  
The horse and his rider hath he thrown  
Into the depths of the sea.  
The LORD is my strength and my song,  
He is become my salvation :  
He is my God, and I will praise him ;  
My father's God, and I will exalt him.

The refrain of the women, keeping  
time with the timbrels :

Sing ye unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously ;  
The horse and his rider hath he cast into the sea.

MEN.—Jehovah is a man of war :  
Jehovah is his name ;  
Pharaoh's chariots and his host  
Hath he cast into the sea :  
The choicest of his captains,  
Are sunk in the reedy sea,  
The floods have covered them :  
They sank into the depths  
Like a stone.  
Thy righteous hand, O Jehovah,  
Hath shown itself glorious in majesty :  
Thy right hand, O Jehovah,  
Hath dashed in pieces the enemy.  
By thine exalted power  
Thou dashest those that rise against thee :  
Thou sentest forth thy wrath,  
It consumed them like stubble.  
At the blast of thy nostrils  
The waters were gathered together,  
The swelling flood stood up like heaps ;  
The waves were congealed  
In the depths of the sea.

WOMEN.—Sing ye unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed  
gloriously ;  
The horse and his rider hath he cast into the Red  
Sea.

MEN.—The enemy said, I will pursue,  
Will seize, will divide the spoil ;  
- My soul shall glut itself with them ;

My sword will I draw out,  
And utterly destroy them.  
Then breathed the wind ;  
The sea covered them :  
They sank as lead  
In the mighty waters.

WOMEN.—Sing ye unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed  
gloriously ;  
The horse and his rider hath he cast into the Red  
Sea.

MEN.—Who is like to thee, O LORD,  
Who among the gods?  
Who is like thee, glorious in holiness,  
Fearful in praises, doing wonders ?  
Thou stretchedst out thy hand,  
The earth swallowed them up.  
With gentle hand thou ledest forth  
The people which thou hast redeemed :  
Thou guidest them with strength  
Unto thy holy habitation.  
The nations hear thereof and tremble :  
Grief seizes on the dwellers in Philistia ;  
The princes of Edom are amazed ;  
The heroes of Moab are seized with dread ;  
The dwellers of Canaan are melting away.

WOMEN.—Sing ye unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed  
gloriously ;  
The horse and his rider hath he cast into the Red  
Sea.

MEN.—Let fear and dread fall upon them,  
The terrors of death from thy mighty arm.  
Let them be motionless as a stone,  
Till thy people, O Lord, pass over,

Till thy people pass, whom thou hast redeemed.  
 Bring them in, O LORD ;  
 Plant thy people  
 Upon the mountain of thine inheritance,  
 The place of thy habitation,  
 Which thou hast made ready for thyself,  
 The sanctuary which thy hands have made.  
 Jehovah reigns forever and ever.  
 Forth marched the horses of Pharaoh and his chariots ;  
 He went with his horsemen down into the sea ;  
 Then brought Jehovah upon them  
 The returning waves of the sea.  
 The tribes of Israel passed dry  
 Through the midst of the sea.\*

Then all the women with timbrels and  
 dances answered again.

Sing ye unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously ;  
 The horse and his rider hath he cast into the Red Sea.

The day with its hearty worship has passed, and now the sun is sinking slowly in the west beyond our deserted Egyptian homes. It casts its slanting rays upon the sea, dazzling our eyes, and then disappearing, to return in the morning. Our provisions are prepared, the water sacks filled, and all things are ready for an early move. Our tribes have gone to their rest,

\* "The spirit of Hebrew Poëtry."—J. G. HERDER.

and, soothed by the pulsing waters of the sea, are sleeping soundly. The sea, the mountains and the deserts are our surroundings, yet the pillar of fire sheds light around our encampments and we are safe.

While we have been staying here these few days, the people have been looking at the jewels of gold and silver, which were given them by the Egyptians. The amount of treasure is astonishing.

The beautiful ear-rings which they have put upon themselves, and into the ears of their sons and daughters (Ex. 32 : 2), contrast strangely with the coarse dresses which they wore while in bondage, and still have on ; but they call them trophies from their oppressors and seem happy. The Egyptians are truly spoiled while we are enriched. The LORD did not allow us to go out empty.

The morning watch has come, and the people are astir. The cattle which have been feeding in the valley are brought up, and the herdsmen and the shepherds are ready whenever the pillar of cloud shall

move, Moses' commanding form I see here and there, as he gives orders to the heads of the tribes. He knows the wilderness we are to travel through, and is urging the people to carry all the water possible. Great patience is required in directing the mixed multitude who follow us. They are ready to consume food without providing for themselves. Moses has great confidence in his officers, especially in the young man Joshua, who is as brave as he is active. Caleb also leads his tribe with military skill, and his nephew Othniel is very helpful in many ways. Yet the responsibility rests upon Moses, whose early training has qualified him to fill his position well. There is not a man in all our host that can compare with him in education, piety, or commanding presence. He is a historian, a poet, and a soldier.

Our course to-day is southeast, along the sea, and though we are in a desert we are free and happy.

Snatches of the song we sang yesterday float over the air occasionally from the voices of the men, and I with the women

always respond with our chorus. We have seen shepherds to-day among the hills with their flocks. They seem to be astonished at our numbers.

This is our third day. We are traveling among hills of limestone, blackened with flint. In the shallows are drift sands. In the west near the sea is a barren, black, desolate mountain. As rain seldom falls here, the mountains are dry and the sun's rays are hot. Water is talked of by all. We have but little left in our sacks, and Moses has sent men ahead to see if any can be found. Many are complaining of thirst, and children are crying. The cattle, covered with dust, are running here and there seeking for water. Unless water is soon found the turbulent ones will create an outbreak. They have begun again to blame Moses. They approach him and say, What shall we drink? Give us water! He is as thirsty as they, yet uncomplaining.

A joyful cry comes from those who were sent ahead. Green bushes are in sight which indicate water. All the people

have quickened their steps and are crying, Water! water!

How refreshing it looks as it runs over the rocks and sparkles in the sunshine! But what a cry of disappointment as the people try to drink it. They cry "Marah!" the water is bitter, brackish; it cannot be used, and the men blame Moses, and say, We and our children are dying! Give us water! Would that we had never left Egypt!

At God's command Moses has cut down a small tree and cast it into the fountain. The people look incredulous and seem to be saying, what good will that do? Others are tasting cautiously, and then the cry goes up, It is good. All drink freely and are satisfied.

Moses has been talking to them of their unreasonable conduct, and they seem ashamed, and are willing to enter into a covenant with God. They promise to keep all God's commandments and obey all his statutes. God promises, if they do, to keep them in health, saving them from the deadly diseases which he brought upon



the Egyptians. It is easy to promise when all goes well. But when trouble comes, then they murmur and sin. Here we stay for the night. The people are preparing their food, and we shall go forward in the morning with renewed life and hopes.

The pillar of fire appears as the day goes out, and it is night. God gives his beloved sleep while he watches over them.

The day has again come, the tents are down, the camels loaded, and we begin to move forward. Moses tells us that there are twelve wells of water and seventy palm-trees but eight miles ahead, so we take but little of this water with us. This mountain air is exhilarating, and we go forward with a light step.

A broad valley comes in and extends to the sea. Grass and some shrubbery are here, and our cattle and sheep seize upon it eagerly. The faint warbling of a bird is heard in the distance, and reminds us of our early home. There are many pleasant recollections in our hearts of Egypt, notwithstanding all we endured.

There we were born, and there we have left the graves of our parents and friends. Gladly would we have brought their remains with us, had it been possible, as Moses has brought Joseph's bones.

The verdure increases, and trees of various kinds are seen. A spring bursts from the rock and, running in our direction, forms a pool of clear, cold water. It is surrounded with bushes, and men rush forward to drink. Bursts of song, and joyous laughter are heard on every side. I rejoice with the multitude, as I have all along sympathized with them in their sorrow.

The pillar of cloud has rested. We have arrived at Elim, the twelve wells and the seventy palm-trees, and here we encamp for a few days. Here Moses rested forty years ago, when he fled from Pharaoh.

How delightful to pitch our tents upon the green grass! The children, dear ones, are delighted, and hundreds of them are playing up and down in the valley.

It is easy to praise the LORD under these

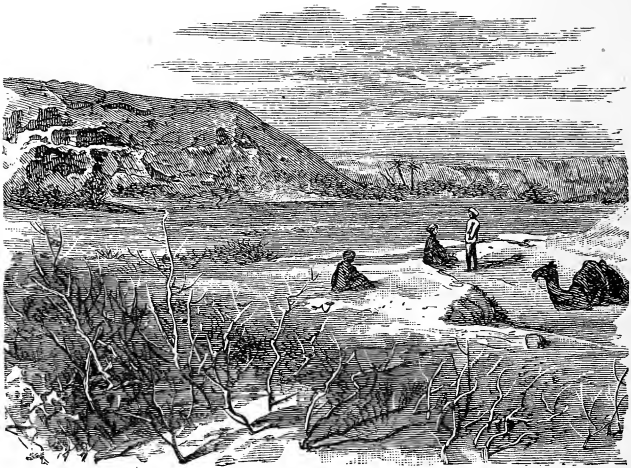
circumstances, and all hearts seem to rise in thanksgiving this evening.

We have been out of Egypt three weeks. When shall we reach the land of promise at this rate? No doubt we shall require much discipline, for the people are in a crude and refractory state. They have many difficulties now among themselves, and Moses sometimes sits a whole day hearing their complaints and judging them. He is very meek and forbearing; I trust he will have patience with all our failings.

To-day we are baking our bread and preparing for our journey, for to-morrow we must go forward. We find that the corn which we brought from Egypt is gone, and many are asking what we are to do. God will provide, but I cannot see how.

The day arrives for us to move. The camp is astir, the water-sacks filled, the tents struck, and we are going. We all cast loving looks towards the beautiful trees, and the fresh water, but we cannot always stay in pleasant places. We have

Canaan to reach. A long day's journey is before us ; not less than sixteen miles. The scenery is familiar to Moses and Aaron, who so lately passed through here. The tall, bare peak at the south, Moses says is Mount Sinai. The day has been



Valley of Elim, where were twelve wells of water.

warm, for summer is near, but cool breezes come from the Red Sea, which we are again approaching, for it bends up to our line of march. We are weary with this day's travel, and are glad to see its glistening waters again. Darkness is

gathering round us, and we halt here for the night. The stars are coming out over our heads, and the great face of the moon is peering over the mountain tops. Our weary cattle have lain down to rest ; the tribes are asleep, and nothing is heard in all this desert save the low sobbing waves that strike upon the rocky shore.

How wonderfully God divided those waters and delivered us ! We will trust him always.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE MANNA.

A MOUNTAIN projects to the sea leaving but a narrow pass for us, and this morning we are filing along around the point and striking out upon the sandy desert, called the Valley of Sin; we are passing over the most barren ground we have seen. East of us mountains upon mountains stretch off as far as the eye can reach.

There seems to be no way of supplying ourselves with food here; the corn sacks are empty, and there is great murmuring among the different divisions. Their leaders have no way of getting food, and are worried and discouraged. Nadab and Abihu, and even Eleazar and Ithamar are asking why their uncle is leading the tribes where starvation is sure. They know that the pillar of fire leads Moses;

yet it is hard to reason with those who have no food.

We have been from Egypt one month, and it is a wonder our corn lasted so long. We pause for a little rest here, and the leaders of the tribes have gathered about Moses, complaining and asking what they are to do for their people who have nothing to eat. Moses points to the cloud and assures them that God will provide. He enumerates all the wonderful dealings of God for their deliverance in the past, and bids us trust him now, even in this darkness, and he will come to our relief. It is not against us, he says, that you murmur, "but against the LORD."

Instead of quiet being restored there is a general murmuring. The whole congregation are saying, "Would to God we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh-pots, *and* when we did eat bread to the full! for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger." They are sinning against God, but Moses is praying for them.

God has answered by saying he will rain down bread from heaven, which we are to gather every morning, except on the Sabbath ; and in the evening meat is to be given to all the congregation.

While Moses was before the LORD, the people pitched their tents, and they are now indulging a threatening and rebellious spirit. There is great commotion throughout the camp.

Moses has sent Aaron out to say to the people, "Come near before the LORD : for he hath heard your murmurings."



They are coming from every direction and taking their stand before Moses and Aaron. A discontented multitude seem on the point of rebellion.

Aaron rises to speak and they become quiet. He tells them about the same that Moses did, but a short time before ; he talks of all the care and love that God has given them, and says, You are now directly rebelling against God, who may come out in wrath upon you imme-



diately. While he was yet speaking, the cloud became illuminated by the presence of the LORD, and a voice said to Moses, "I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel: speak unto them, saying, At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD your God."

The people were awed by what they had seen and heard; and went back to their tents humbled.

Before night the sky was darkened by great flocks of quails, and the whole nation rushed out to see the strange sight. Those birds migrate about this season, and these by long flight seemed weary, and they dropped all over the camp. All the tribes rushed into the work of killing the birds and throwing them into heaps, while the women and children prepared them for cooking; and again the flesh-pots were full, and the people feasted with great joy and rejoicing. With this satisfying supper, and the refreshing sleep that followed, they are quite ready to trust

God and believe in Moses. Many of them are now out in the early dawn looking for the promised bread. In what shape it is to come they have no knowledge, and while some are looking up to the heavens, others have discovered that the ground is covered with a small, white substance, looking much like coriander seed. In their surprise they say, What is it? Manna! manna! They are wondering what it is. Moses walks out among the people and says, "This *is* the bread which the LORD hath given you to eat. . . . Gather of it, every man according to his eating," enough for the day,—an omer, about five pints, but no more, for it will fall again on the morrow. So every morning we say, Give us this day our daily bread, and God opens his hand and we are fed. We grind the manna and make it into bread, like wafers. Some of the people disobeyed God yesterday and gathered more than they needed, but this morning it was wormy and very offensive. Strange that any one should dare to provoke God to anger when he is so kind to us.

We are to remain in camp over the Sabbath, and before that day we gather enough for two days. We are to begin anew to sanctify the seventh day, which was so much disregarded while we were in Egypt. The LORD has said to Moses, "To-morrow *is* the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the LORD ; bake *that* which ye will bake *to-day*, and seethe that ye will seethe ; and . . . let no man go out of his place on the seventh day." No manna will fall on that day. This bread is very sweet and satisfying, and we all rejoice that we are to go hungry no more.

The people are in good spirits, and while they are busy preparing food for the morrow we hear them say, All that the LORD commands we will do. It is easy to trust God when we want nothing.

They have little idea of what God requires on his holy Sabbath and need instruction. Many of them are familiar with the worship of the ox, or the calf, and would be ready to join in the worship of such gods. But all this must be put away. We have but one God, even Jehovah.

The day of rest has come, and as I look out over the large encampment, I see some of our people out with dishes looking for manna. I am astonished that they dare to provoke God, who has fed us so bountifully and cares for us so lovingly.

God has spoken to Moses and asks, "How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws?" and he says, "Let no man go out of his place on the seventh day." For the remainder of the day the people are obedient. So ends our first Sabbath in this wilderness of Sin.

A new day dawns and the camp is astir. We see the little white manna thickly strewn over the ground and the rocks; and on every side are people gathering it into their measures. We are to go forward to-day, and we are glad to leave this barren valley. We entered it in a rebellious state of mind; we all go away rejoicing. God has commanded Moses to take a golden pot, fill it with manna, and keep it to show to the generations to come, that they may see the bread which their fathers fed on in the wilderness.

We have a beautiful golden pot, a gift from the Egyptians, which holds about five pints. Moses has taken it out to fill with manna. It will be covered tightly and the manna will never spoil.

It is surprising that there is not a sick person among the thousands who left Egypt, and what is more strange, our clothes do not wear out.

We have followed the Red Sea down for a great distance, but to-day we take an easterly course, and may never see its waters again. It is wonderful how well our aged people bear this journey. As I cast my eyes back I see many of them a hundred years old, or over, seated upon camels, with children before and behind them. They are amused by the prattle of the little ones and often smile. The babes are carried in their fathers' and mothers' arms, while those who are old enough walk by their side.

The way is rough, but we go forward under the brightness of this pillar of fire. Many of the people are distrustful and say we shall see no more manna, if we

strike off into these mountains. But as long as we follow where God leads we may trust him. In some valleys we find pasturage and water, and much to our joy the bread from heaven follows us.

A new annoyance is arising. Moses is told that a large band of the Amalekites, who roam over these mountains with their flocks looking for pasture, have attacked our rear and have killed some of our people, and robbed others of their jewelry and cattle. They say we have no right to feed our cattle here. They are following us, and will make us all the trouble they can. Moses is strongly tempted to give them battle, but we still press forward. To add to our trouble, water is scarce and complaints are increasing.

Mount Sinai has been in sight many days while we have been passing black rocky cliffs. Now we have come to a more open country which we call Rephidim, and Moses has ordered a halt, for the people are rebellious. It is hard to manage two million people in these circumstances. Never have we had such a

disturbance as this. The camp is in an uproar. The mixed multitude who follow us, and share our blessings, have become bold, and are exciting others to acts of violence. A crowd has gathered around Moses, and with threatening gestures are asking, with a loud voice, "Wherefore *is* this *that* thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?" . . . "Give us water that we may drink!"

Moses assures them that they are murmuring against God and tempting him to destroy them; but they are too much excited to care for what he says.

Moses has been praying, telling God that the people are ready to stone him, and asking what to do.

God commands Moses to call the elders together and go to Horeb where he is to smite a rock with his rod. Water, God says, shall flow out that the people may drink. The people are unbelieving and sneer; but they have seen greater miracles than that will be.

Horeb, whose top we see, is about ten

miles off in a southerly direction ; a long walk, yet Moses and the elders are gone. Caleb and Joshua are always faithful. Moses puts confidence in them at all times, and they are with him.

The water, the people say, cannot reach us before morning, and they have quieted down and gone to rest.

It is now after midnight. The stars are out, and the moon is shedding a soft light among the mountains where Moses is. Strange must be his feelings as he stands again on Horeb, where he saw the burning bush, and talked with God.

But hark ! I hear the rushing sound of water, and persons in the distance are shouting, Water ! water ! A joyful cry goes up from the camp, and thousands are rushing out to see the miracle. The cattle and the sheep are also running, lowing and bleating towards the stream. How merciful is God to this rebellious people !

Moses has come back and is welcomed, even by those who yesterday threatened his life. I trust we shall now have peace.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### WAR.

TO-DAY our whole nation is in alarm, for the Amalekites, we are told, are lying in wait for us. They have hung around our camp for several days, and are determined to cut us off from the promised land. They see the pillar of fire at night and know that God leads us, but they have no fear of him. Moses says we must give them battle. This is exciting our people greatly, for they have never seen war.

We have six hundred thousand strong men, who are willing to fight ; but all will not be called out, as our God can conquer by few as well as by many.

Joshua is better fitted to command the troops than any one, and he will lead them to battle. He is only forty-four years old, and full of energy and hope.

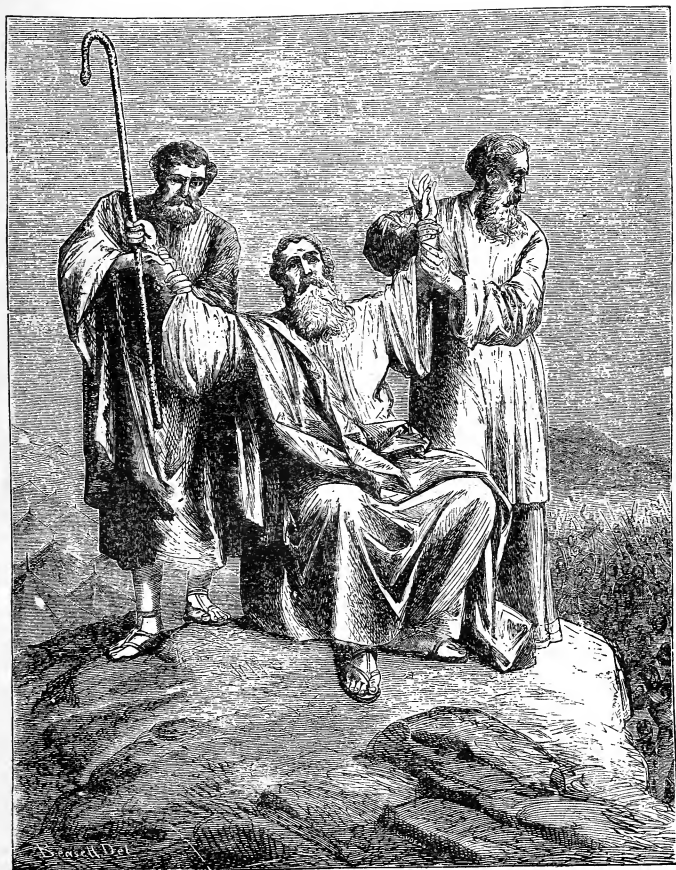
He enters into none of the rebellions of the people, but trusts in God and obeys Moses.

He seems very solemn in view of the responsibilities that lie in the morrow; but Moses assures him that he shall be where he can watch the battle, and will pray for his success.

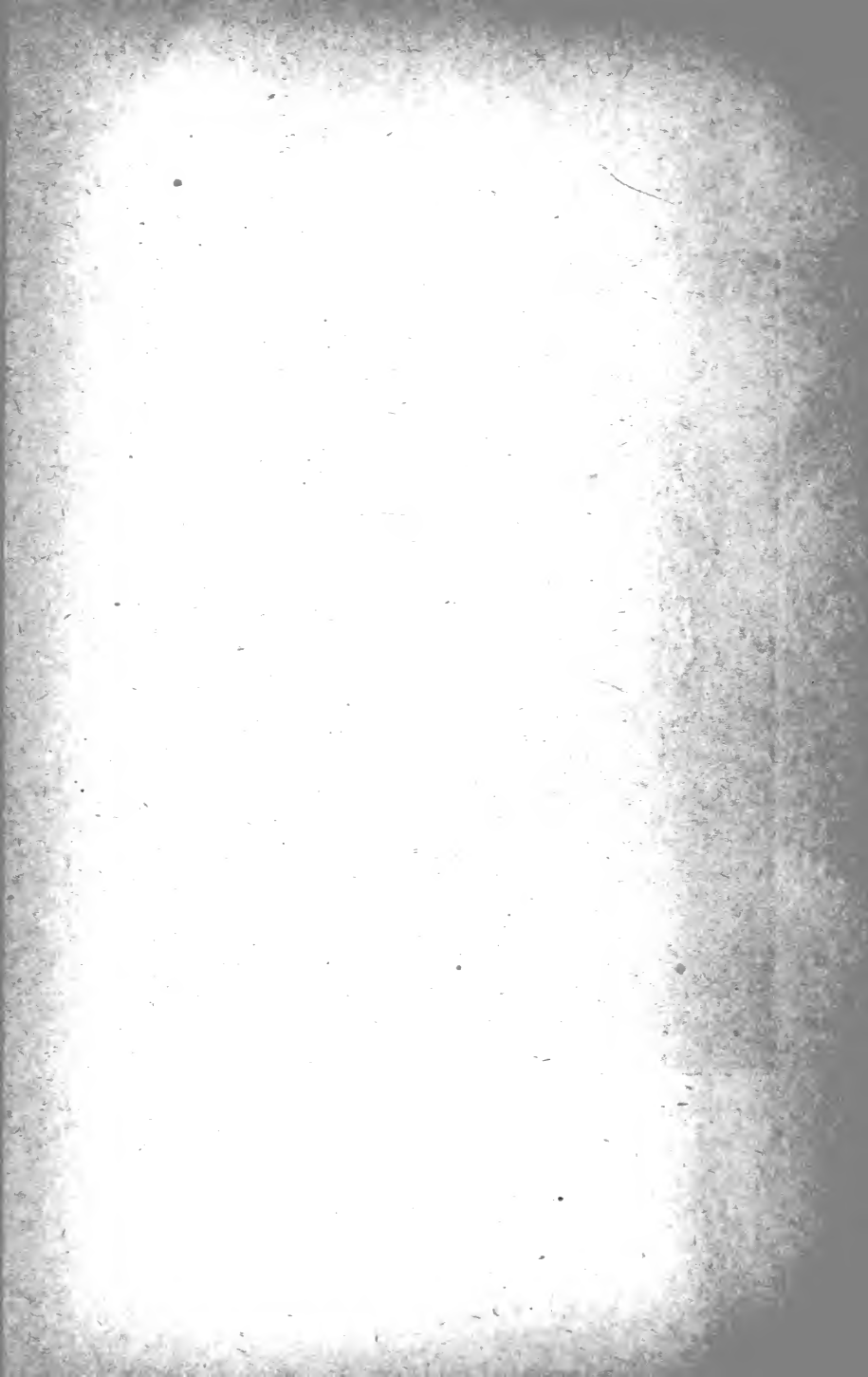
All have retired early to-night that they may be ready by break of day, and nothing is now heard in this solitude save the pleasant murmur of the water as it winds among the hills and falls over the projecting rocks.

Daylight has again come and the camp is astir. Mothers are preparing the hasty meal for their sons, who go out to battle to-day. Already the young men, with their sword, spears, bows and knives, are taking their places in the ranks: the camp is full of life, and the excited people are all out watching the troops. Joshua takes his place at the head, and they move off over the hills out of sight.

As the day goes by we hear that the battle rages fearfully. Moses still sits on



Moses, Aaron and Hur.



the spur of one of the mountains, his hands raised in prayer ; he has been there for hours, and his hands become weary and fall. Then the Amalekites prevail. Aaron and Hur, Caleb's son, are now with him holding his hands up. They will assist him as long as the battle lasts.

The sun has gone down. Our people have now the victory, and are chasing the Amalekites over the hills, killing them, and securing great spoil, both in weapons and in stores. Moses is returning with the army, and shouts of victory and songs of praise are rising on all sides, and echoing from mountain to mountain. The soldiers are received into camp with great joy, and Moses is hailed as the great deliverer. Joshua having done so well, will be installed as the leading general when we reach Canaan, and he will drive out the inhabitants of the land.

The attack of the Amalekites upon us was unprovoked, and God is about to sweep them from the earth. He has commanded Moses to write his threatenings, and instructions in a book, and read it to

Joshua, that he may know his duty when he shall arrive at the promised land.

Moses has built an altar as a memorial of God's help in the battle, and calls it *JEHOVAH-nissi*—the *LORD* is my banner; around it we are to worship.

Moses' heart is gladdened by the news that Jethro, his father-in-law, has arrived in camp, bringing with him Zipporah, and his two sons. Moses hurried forth to meet them. He bowed to the ground before Jethro, and arose and kissed him. They then asked each other of their welfare. He received Zipporah with great joy, and kissing his two sons, he led them all into his tent.

Zipporah is a noble woman, and Gershom and Eliezer are fine lads. They show great affection for their father, who rejoices in them. They have brought new life into our tents, and joy to all our hearts.

Jethro, or Reuel, as some call him, is an aged, dignified prince, or priest, of sound judgment and true piety. He holds long conversations with Moses in regard to our

life in Egypt, and how the LORD brought us away. Moses has rehearsed to him all that has befallen him since he left his home a year ago. When he spoke of Pharaoh's pursuit and final overthrow in the Red Sea, with all his army, Jethro was greatly moved, and exclaimed,

“Blessed *be* the LORD, who hath delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of Pharaoh! . . . Now I know that the LORD *is* greater than all gods; for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly *he was* above them.”

He wishes to hold a feast to our God while he is here, and have Moses, and Aaron, and all the elders present. He does it to magnify the God who has delivered us.

To-day the altar has been built, and the feast held. Jethro being present, offered a burnt offering and sacrifices, and fire consumed them. He then offered others upon which the people feasted. It has been a great day with us.

Moses enjoys the company of Jethro. But there are many cases of dispute

among the people which he must settle. The rebellions and the war have caused divisions among the tribes, and it is necessary they should be attended to. Jethro seems very much interested as Moses takes his elevated seat in the midst of the men who crowd around eager to tell him their grievances. It requires great judgment to decide in these quarrels, and Moses is often worn down with them.

Jethro has been watching him all day and is much disturbed. He says Moses is wearing, not only himself, but the people out, by doing all this work himself. He seems to be thinking up some plan by which they can be relieved. As Moses came in to-night he looked very weary. Scarcely had he taken his seat before Jethro said to Moses :

The thing that thou doest *is* not good. Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou and this people that is with thee ; for this thing *is* too heavy for thee ; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone. Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel. . . . Thou shalt teach them



ordinances and laws, and shalt show them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do. Moreover, thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness ; and place *such* over them, *to be* rulers of thousands, *and* rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens ; and let them judge the people at all seasons : and it shall be *that* every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge : so it shall be easier for thyself, and they shall bear *the burden* with thee,"

Moses paid strict attention to Jethro's words, and says the plan is a good one, and he will carry it out.

Jethro has been here many days and is making arrangements to leave. We have all enjoyed his visit, and are thankful for his counsel and prayers.

Zipporah and Gershom and Eliezer will remain in the camp, and hereafter cast in their lot with us. We hope that not many more weeks will go by before we shall place our feet in the promised land, and

be through our wanderings. Jethro is gone and the people in camp are preparing to go forward. We have been here at Rephidim many days, the manna has not failed, and the water still comes with its blessing. Our aged people and the children are rested, and the cattle have improved in flesh. We go from here in the morning, and now for the last time we lay ourselves down at Rephidim to sleep. God has blessed us here and we trust him for the future.

Daylight is breaking upon us again, and our people are astir, tents are being taken down and camels loaded, while many of the people are out gathering manna for our day's food. We hear the sound of the mills, and the pounding of the manna, and there is a hurrying to and fro of the people. The cattle are moving in droves up the narrow valley towards Mount Horeb, where we are to worship our God. We follow up the stream in a southerly direction, and though the way is rough and wild, the people are talking cheerfully, and outbursts of song are occasion-

ally heard. Moses feels quite at home among these mountains and valleys where he fed Jethro's flocks forty years. He points out many familiar objects, and rehearses interesting incidents connected with them.

We have now left the narrow way between the mountains, and have struck into the valley that lies at the foot of Mount Horeb. This valley is about two miles wide, and is the same Moses crossed with his sheep after he saw the burning bush. How awful is this place! Horeb rises abruptly from the plain, piercing the sky, and black, barren mountains frown upon us on every side. How dreadful to be here alone! but Moses does not think so. The people have crowded upon the plain, covering most of it, and here the pillar of fire which guides us rests. We are to encamp before the Mount of God.

It is about two months since we left Egypt. Our progress has been slow, but it is still early summer, and we are hopeful for the future.

We were not here long before Moses

was called up into the mount to hear what God had to say. The people are all solemnized and are watching for his return, and wondering what word he will bring from Jehovah.

Moses has come back and calls for the elders. When they are all assembled, he rises and says :

Thus saith the LORD, "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and *how* I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people ; for all the earth *is* mine : And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation."

There was perfect silence while Moses was speaking, and all the people said, "All that the LORD hath spoken we will do."

Moses has returned this answer to God, and now commands that the people be sanctified to-day and to-morrow, and wash their clothes, for on the third day he will

come in a thick cloud, and speak with a voice that all may hear.

Moses is to set bounds around the mountain that no person may go near to touch the border of it, for if they touch it, they shall be stoned, or shot through, whether it be man or beast. When the trumpet sounds long and loud, all are to come from their tents and stand before the mount.

The people are disposed to obey, and there is not a tent upon the plain where they are not washing and drying their clothes. These garments are the same we had on when we left Egypt, yet they are whole and good. To-night they will be ready, and to-morrow we put them on and appear before God.

The moon is slowly rising above the lofty mountain peaks which surround us, and the manna is gently descending around the camp; but all eyes are closed, and nothing breaks the stillness save the murmur of the water as it gushes from the smitten rock and runs across the plain.

The third day has come, and it is ushered .

in with thunderings that break over these mountains and reverberate through the dark recesses with terrific sound. The people are startled and we spring to our tent doors trembling, but before we realize what has happened, other peals louder and more dreadful follow in quick succession, accompanied by blinding flashes of lightning. The cloud rests upon the rocking mountain. The earth trembles under our feet, and pale and trembling the people follow Moses towards the mountain, and come and stand before God.

At every lull of the thunderings a trumpet is heard exceeding loud, flames shoot up, clouds of smoke ascend as the smoke of a furnace, the mountain shakes. Jehovah has come down to speak to us! Moses bows his head, and says, "I exceedingly fear and quake." If he is afraid, how can we stand?

God commands Moses to come to the top of the mountain. Who would dare? Yet with meekness Moses moves forward and enters the darkness. He soon appears again and says to the people, Break

not through the bounds to gaze, lest ye die.

While we are thus standing in wonder and awe, a voice from the thick darkness says, "I *am* the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

"Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of *any thing* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth *generation* of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.



"Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will

not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shall thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day *is* the Sabbath of the LORD thy God: *in it* thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that *is* within thy gates: For *in* six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them *is*, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

“Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

“Thou shalt not kill.

“Thou shalt not commit adultery.

“Thou shalt not steal.

“Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

“Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that *is* thy neighbor’s.”



And all the people removed and stood afar off. And they said to Moses, "Speak thou with us, and we will hear ; but let not God speak with us, lest we die."

Moses encouraged them not to fear, yet they continued to draw back till they stood very far off. But Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was, and there, hidden from our eyes, he received the words of the LORD.

The most wonderful of all days is drawing to a close. Moses has returned, and the people have gone to their tents. A deep solemnity rests upon the people. Moses is writing down all that the LORD has told him, that the words may be declared to all Israel.

The thunderings and the lightnings have ceased. Darkness has settled down upon us. The pillar of fire gives its usual light, and we commit ourselves to our wonderful God for sleep.

Moses arose early this morning and is making an altar of earth, and setting up twelve pillars of stone, which represent the twelve tribes of Israel. We are to

make a covenant to-day with our God, which is to be sealed with blood. Sacrifices are to be offered on the altar. The people are gathering from all sides and approaching with solemnity. The innocent oxen are brought up and stand meekly before the altar, all unconscious that their blood is to be used in the covenant between sinful men and a holy God. There is no remission of sin without the shedding of blood.. Moses then read the book of the covenant which he wrote last night, and the people replied :

“All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient.”

The oxen are killed and their blood caught in basins. “Half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar.” And now Moses takes a bunch of hyssop, and dipping it in the blood, “Sprinkled *it* on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words.”

We are now set apart as God's chosen people. May we keep our covenant, and live more obediently !

Aaron and his sons have had prominent positions to-day, and now Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, with seventy of the elders, are called of God to go up with Moses into the mountain. Aaron's sons are young men, but they follow their father and Moses into the thick darkness, and are now out of sight. The people are not as awe struck by these appearances as they were at first, and many of them go about their duties much as they used to before they came to this mountain.

The elders have come down from the mountain and astonish us by the things they have seen. When about half way up they came into the presence of God, where they saw him. There was under his feet, as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness, beyond all description glorious; and they ate, and drank in this presence, unharmed. Moses and his minister Joshua were called to go up higher, that they might receive the commandments and the law written on stone.

The elders are busily engaged looking

after the people, who are getting uneasy about Moses and Joshua. Several days have passed and yet they do not return. Some are asking, "This Moses . . . what has become of him?" Is he consumed by the fire which envelopes the mountain? Will he ever return? and who will lead this host if he never come?

Our older people are impressed with the awful scenes they have witnessed and will never forget them ; but the younger class, who can rely upon them ?

The Sabbath has come and gone, and other days go by, and yet we hear nothing from Moses and Joshua.

When the elders are questioned, they say we are ordered to remain here till Moses and Joshua come ; and here we are without a leader, and a long journey before us. Would that we were in Canaan to-day!

Two weeks have gone by, and the people say they cannot endure this suspense ; something must be done. The mixed multitude are also troublesome, and are asking that we go forward. Some

have even suggested that an image of the ox Apis, which they worshipped in Egypt, should be made to lead the people. They cry, "Make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we know not what is become of him."

Aaron is greatly perplexed. He is to be a priest to the people, and his sons are to succeed him to the holy office, and shall he step aside and encourage idolatry? We all heard God say, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image," and now they are urging Aaron to do it. Oh, that Moses and Joshua would come!

The altar of earth, with the spots of blood upon it, still stands where the people took their solemn vows to obey God. They see it every day, but they esteem it lightly.

To-day, many of our prominent men are reasoning with Aaron on the absurdity of lying here, waiting for Moses and Joshua. They say they went into the mountain a month ago, and of course they are

dead. They will never return. Now make us gods to go before us, and we will be up and moving on to the land promised. Aaron is much troubled. He wants to obey; but the people are pressing him almost beyond endurance.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE GOLDEN CALF.

MOSES has now been gone nearly forty days. The last that we saw of him he went up Mount Sinai. We all fear that we shall see him no more. He may be dead; and if so, how long are we to stay here waiting?

The people are more and more clamorous for a god to lead them out of this place. Aaron does not like to yield, but the pressure upon him is very great. Finally, as the people pressed him, he said, If you will have a god, bring me the earrings that are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and your daughters. He thought that they would not like to part with those gifts of the Egyptians; but they gladly brought them. Aaron, with some skilful workmen, are now engaged upon the calf,

and the people are eagerly waiting till it is done. They talk of little else, and seem to put more confidence in it than in God, who has so wonderfully cared for us.

The golden calf was to-day brought from the work-shop where Aaron had finished it up with a graving tool, and set up where the multitude could see it. They crowded around and with loud voices said, "These *be* thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt."

Aaron is building an altar before it, and has issued a proclamation that a feast will be held to-morrow in honor of this god. There is great rejoicing in the camp; but the Levites strongly protest against this work and hold themselves aloof.

Daylight has gone and darkness has come. There is brightness upon the top of the mountain. God sees us, and may come out in judgment upon us for this sin.

Aaron has some thought that Moses may come, but he is committed to this act and pushed forward by the people. The day



of the feast is here and the sacrifices are brought and offered, and all the old Egyptian modes of worship are entered into with alacrity. The feasting and drinking and shouting are all going on and the excitement is increasing. The mixed multitude have joined in, and are dancing, throwing their arms and putting themselves in distorted attitudes, while many in their frenzy have stripped themselves, and are dancing before their god, with yells that pierce the sky. Aaron cannot restrain them, and the tumult rises higher and higher.

At this moment Moses and Joshua were seen coming rapidly down the mountain in full view of this shameful scene. Moses had in his hands the two tables of stone upon which God had written the commandments; but he was so excited with what he saw that he dashed them to the ground and they were broken in pieces. The people fell back in confusion and shame,



and Moses came up and hurled the idol into the fire upon the altar, where it smoked and blackened. Then in a stern voice he said to Aaron, What did this people do to you, that you have brought so great a sin upon them?

Aaron in confusion stammered out, Let not the anger of my lord wax hot: thou knowest the people, that they *are set* on mischief. They did not know what had become of you, and asked for a god to lead them. They broke off their gold earrings and I cast them into the fire and there came out this calf.



Moses ground the calf to powder and cast it into the brook and compelled the people to drink it. Moses feels that it is time to make a division of the people, and going back to the gate of the camp, he said with a loud voice, "Whoso is on the LORD'S side, *let him come* unto me." Forty or fifty thousand of the Levites went over and stood by Moses. Then Moses stretched

out his hand and said, "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, *and* go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor."

It was quick vengeance the LORD brought upon his people, for though they fled to their tents, they were pursued and slain, and the swords were not sheathed till three thousand of Israel lay dead upon the ground. Aaron prays for mercy and is spared. What a wail of sorrow rises from our camp!

God will not bear with our sins as he did before the giving of the law. Moses is greatly moved, and has returned to the mount to plead with God for us. He says, "This people have sinned a great sin, . . . Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me I pray thee out of thy book which thou hast written." How much Moses loves this people, though they have made him so much trouble! God assures him that those who sin shall be blotted out.

There is great mourning in the camp to-day. Here we dig three thousand graves and bury the bodies of those who have travelled with us to this place : and here they will lie while we go on towards Canaan.

Moses has returned, but brings no comfort. God threatens to leave us.

Moses has pitched his tent without the camp, and all our people are in their tent doors watching. Our sin is great ; we mourn and have taken off all our ornaments and humble ourselves.

The cloudy pillar stands before Moses' tent, and all the people bow and worship. God has heard our prayer, and has commanded Moses to hew out two more tables of stone, and come alone to the top of the mountain that he may again write the commandments and the law. The glory of the LORD rests upon the mountain, and Moses has gone up.

Our dead are buried ; and, wearied by anxiety and sorrow, we retire to our tents for rest. God supplies us still with manna, and gives us care though we are

guilty. While we wait here for Moses, we busy ourselves and are quiet. Some are spinning goats' hair, or fine linen, which is woven into cloth. Others dye the yarn blue, or purple, or scarlet, while the rams' skins are dyed red. [Perhaps like the red morocco of our times.]

The men are also producing many beautiful articles with gold, and precious stones. Their skill was learned in Egypt. Aaron is very humble, and is waiting patiently for Moses' return. Forty days he has been in the mount again.

The joyful news was brought to the camp this morning that Moses was seen, far up among the projecting rocks, coming down the mountain. The people hurried out of their tents and eagerly watched as he came nearer and nearer. The tables of stone were in his hands, and he approached us in his usual manner ; but we all drew back, for his face shone with such a peculiar brightness that we could not look upon him, and we were afraid. Moses called us, but did not know of the brightness that rested upon him till, he was told ;

then Aaron came forward and put a veil over his brother, so that we might come near him. He showed us the tables of stone written upon by the finger of God ; all the commandments and the laws are there. Moses says that when far up among the rocks on the mountain side, suddenly a cloud covered him, and the LORD descended, and stood with him and proclaimed, with a voice, "The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious." And as God passed by, Moses made haste and bowed to the earth, and worshipped, and prayed for us. (Ex. 34 : 6-9.)

God is still merciful, and will go with us, and drive out from our land the idolatrous nations. We are not to worship their gods, nor marry into their families, nor make covenants with them. God's patience is exhausted with them: their cup of iniquity is full, and they are to be destroyed, with their altars and their images.

Forty days Moses was in the presence of God, and neither ate or drank. Wonderful !

God commands that we build a taber-

nacle to him. He has been worshipped in groves, but no house has ever been made for him. Now he will dwell with us. We will worship him. He asks an offering of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart. Gold, and silver, and brass, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair, and rams' skins dyed red, and sealskins, and acacia wood, oil for the lights, spices for anointing oil and for sweet incense ; onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod and breastplate of the priest. And this tabernacle is to be made according to the pattern which God showed Moses in the mount.

Much more did Moses say to the people, which is written in the book.

Moses' face continues to shine, and he wears the veil when in the camp ; but when he goes into the tabernacle to talk with God he removes it.

The tabernacle we now have is a common tent ; but the one we are to make will be forty-five feet long, fifteen broad, and fifteen high. The sides and western ends are to be made of boards covered

with gold, and fixed in sockets of silver. Rings of gold are to be attached to the tops of the boards, through which long bars of wood covered with gold will be run, to hold them together. The east end will be the entrance. There, attached to five pillars of shittim wood, will be suspended a richly embroidered curtain. The tabernacle is to be divided by a curtain into two apartments, the first to be called the Holy Place, the second, which is to be much smaller, is to be the Most Holy Place. Into the inner apartment no one will go but our high priest, and he only once a year. Aaron is to be appointed to this office, The tabernacle is to be placed in a court, or lot, about three times as long as itself, which is to be surrounded with pillars of brass, bound with silver, twenty on either side and ten on the ends. Fine white linen curtains are to enclose this court, except on the east end. The entrance will be a curtain of blue and purple and scarlet, and fine twined linen. Very much gold will be required to complete this building, more than a million



dollars worth, and all are invited to bring what they freely offer; there is to be no compulsion in making this house for our God. The tabernacle and all its appointments are typical of the great plan of redemption through the sacrificial blood, which is to be shed for us.

To-day gifts are coming in. Great quantities of beautiful earrings, bracelets, tablets, and rings, All jewels of pure gold are brought by the women, while men are constantly here with an abundance of everything required. The work has been given by Moses to two of our most skilful workmen, Bezaleel and Aholiab, whom God has qualified, and as they say they shall need nothing more than what is contributed, Moses has sent word throughout the camp that the gifts may be stopped.

Aaron and his sons are to be priests, to go out and in before the LORD and offer for us our sacrifices. They will be marked by their costly dress. Upon Aaron will be a breastplate set with twelve kinds of precious stones, and his robe will be of fine twined linen, all of blue with golden

pomegranates, and gold bells upon the hem. There are also to be coats and breeches, and bonnets and mitres, and many other things which Moses has written down in his book (Ex. 39).

All our people are interested in the building of this tabernacle, and all workmen who have skill are employed. In one part of our camp, men are at work in a brass foundry making rods, and rings and other articles which they polish very bright. Others are at work upon boards, cutting, polishing, and covering with gold. And in another quarter the goldsmiths are making the golden candlestick with its six branches and seven golden lamps. Even the tongs and the snuff-dishes are of pure gold. They are also making two cherubim with extended wings, to stand above the mercy seat. Very beautifully and wonderfully the tabernacle will be finished.

Day after day passes, and week after week, and still the sounds of the hammer, the plane and the loom are heard on every hand.

All have their appropriate duties. Some

of the women gather the manna and prepare the food for the rest; others are doing needle work, embroidering cherubim upon the long linen curtains, with purple and blue and scarlet. Others still are making the clothes of the priests; for Nadab and Abihu, Ithamar, and Eleazar are to have garments similar to their father's, in which to minister before the LORD.



The Ark of the Covenant

It is interesting to go with Moses to see how the work is done, but the camp is large, and we see but a small part of it in a day.

Several months have gone by since the

tabernacle was commenced, and now the people are beginning to bring in the furnished work. Bezaleel and Aholiab have brought the ark of the covenant, and Moses is examining it. It is of wood, nearly four feet long by two feet three inches in width and height, and covered within and without with gold. A rim of gold runs around the top, and there is a ring of gold at each corner, through which golden rods are run, that it may be carried without being touched. These rods are never to be taken out. The lid of this ark is of gold, like the rest, and is called the mercy-seat; upon its opposite ends sit those two golden cherubim with their outspread wings. In this ark is to be kept the tables of the law written by the finger of God. And from the mercy-seat God is to answer our petitions and accept our sacrifices. When we travel towards the land of promise this ark is to be carried by the priests under a purple canopy, with great reverence.

A table of shew-bread, about three feet long, covered with pure gold, is brought

in. Its spoons, covers, and bowls are all of gold, and when it is set up in the tabernacle, twelve loaves of unleavened bread are to be kept standing upon it, and offered with salt every Sabbath day, to represent the twelve tribes of Israel.



The Golden Candlestick.

Two men have brought in the golden candlestick. Nothing can be more beautiful. The mainshaft is about five feet high, and its six branches are richly embossed with flowers and little bowls, like the half of almond shells. It holds seven golden

lamps, and is to throw light upon the altar of incense. This altar is a table a foot and a half square and three feet high, covered with plates of gold. At the four corners are four horns, and on the sides are rings through which staves are inserted for the purpose of carrying it. On this altar incense is to be burned every morning and evening by the priests, representing our prayers.

It is now seven months since the tabernacle was commenced, and now the last piece of work is brought in. Moses has examined it all, and finds it agrees with the patterns showed him on the mount. He has spoken many kind and encouraging words to the people, and dismissed them with his blessing.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE SPLENDID NEW TABERNACLE.

TO-DAY is the beginning of a new year. One year ago this day the angel of death passed over our houses and entered the houses of the Egyptians, and we were thrust out of their land. This is the beginning of the feast of the Passover, and we are to celebrate it in our new tabernacle.

Bezaleel and Aholiab are bringing all the different parts together within the court, and the tabernacle is rising in its beauty. Crowds of people have gathered and secured places where they can look down upon the court, that they may have a view of the golden furniture. The ark with its cherubim dazzles in the sunlight for a moment, and we bow our heads, for it is holy. The altar of incense, the table

of shew-bread, and the candlestick are carried into the Holy Place, and Moses has lighted the seven lamps.

The great brazen altar, and the laver to hold water for the priest's use, are carried into the court and set down in their places. Moses has taken the precious oil and anointed the tabernacle and

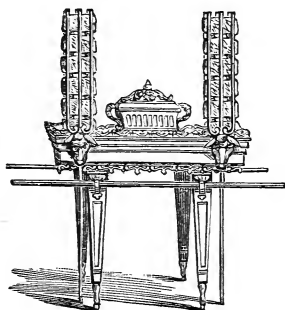


Table of Shew Bread.

its furniture, and the laver and the brazen altar, and pronounces them all holy. And now Aaron and his sons are called, that they may be consecrated.

Aaron, with bowed head, and solemn countenance, leads the way, followed by his four sons. They walk into the court



and up to the tabernacle door, where Moses receives them, and washes them with water. He then dresses Aaron in his priestly robes, the linen coat, the robe with its pomegranates, and its gold bells; the breastplate and the holy crown, upon which is engraven, HOLINESS TO THE LORD.



High Priest and Priest.

He has also fastened around him the curious girdle. And now Moses takes the anointing oil and pours it upon Aaron's head, and it runs down his beard, even to the skirts of his garment.

He is now the high priest, the LORD's

anointed, a mediator between a holy God and sinful man, a type of one who is to come.

The four young men, Nadab, Abihu, Ithamar, and Eleazar, now come forward, and Moses puts upon them the garments prepared, and their girdles, and anoints them with oil, and they are installed into the priest's office.

The pillar of cloud has filled the tabernacle with the glory of the LORD. God has taken up his abode in the house we have builded for him: he is our King and him will we follow.

Ithamar is to have charge of the property of the tabernacle (Ex. 38 : 21). Nadab and Abihu are to remain in the tabernacle till the eighth day and offer sacrifices as God directs. The princes of the tribes have joined in presenting six covered wagons, and twelve oxen. These are to be used in carrying the furniture of the tabernacle when we go forward.

Twelve days are set apart, that each of the tribes may have a day for sacrifice upon the altar.

Judah is the first, and the prince of his tribe is here. He brings a large silver charger and a silver bowl, both full of flour and oil, for a meat offering, and a gold spoon filled with incense. For a burnt offering he has a young bullock, one ram, and a lamb. These are killed, their skins taken off, and, one after another, they are laid upon the altar; fire comes down from the LORD and consumes them. The tribe is thus dedicated to God. A kid is then laid upon the altar as a sin offering. Then two oxen, five rams, five he goats, and five lambs are offered by the priests as peace or thank offerings. Judah's day is thus passed. The other tribes will each have similar offerings on their appointed days, the priests attending to all.

Our people look on with wonder at this costly way of worship, and begin to realize that it is no light thing to sin against God. It must be atoned for with the blood of the innocent.

The priests have a certain portion of the sacrifices, as do also those who offer them. Nadab and Abihu had been feast-

ing upon the meat offerings and the drink offerings, using wine freely, and became reckless, and instead of taking the fire from God's altar, as they were commanded, they took other fire and offered incense to the LORD unbidden. They were immediately struck down with fire from the LORD ; and there, before Moses and their father, and friends, they fell dead upon the ground.

Aaron was greatly shocked, as were all others present ; but Moses commanded that no sign of mourning should be shown, for fear of God's just judgment. Aaron held his peace.

Mishael and Elzaphan, cousins of the dead men, were called in to carry them forth, without the camp. There lay those blackened corpses dressed in their new priestly robes ; a sad sight ; and all the people bewailed and mourned. God will be a consuming fire to those who mock him. He has commanded that Aaron and his two sons shall drink no wine when they go into the tabernacle, lest they also die, and this is to be a law forever to the

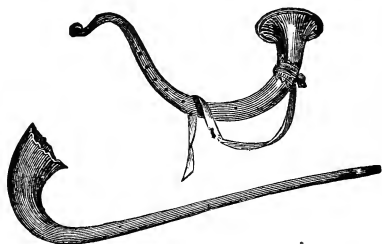
priesthood. The tribe of Levi has been consecrated for the service of the tabernacle; other hands must not touch the holy things.

Great excitement has prevailed to-day. A young man, whose mother is an Israelite and his father an Egyptian, of the mixed multitude, was brought in by two men to Moses. He had been fighting, and had blasphemed the name of the LORD Jehovah, and cursed. Moses inquired of the LORD what to do with him? God says, Bring him forth without the camp, and let all who heard him, lay their hands upon his head, and let all the congregation stone him. He that blasphemeth the name of his God shall surely be put to death. It is sad to see one so young die in this way; but he heard the commandment, "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain: for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain," and he should have heeded it.

Spring with its beauties is again with us, and we are soon to journey on towards Canaan. Moses is to number all the men

who are over twenty years old that we may know who are able to go to war. We shall find enemies on our journey, and we are to drive out the inhabitants of Canaan, and must have an army ready.

For many days our rulers have been doing this work, and we find that in all we have 603,550 men able to fight. Judah



Hebrew Trumpets.

is our largest tribe, having over 74,000; while Manasseh is the smallest, having 32,200. The tribe of Levi is not included, for priests are exempt from war.

Each tribe has its own officers; but Joshua is appointed commander-in-chief of the whole force.

Moses by God's command has made two silver trumpets, which are to be

sounded by Ithamar and Eleazar when he wishes the people to go forward. They are also to be blown when we are to be gathered together in our feast days and in war

What a wonderful year this has been to us. This people, so ignorant when we left Egypt, have been taught by God till we are wonderfully changed and elevated. We are unlike all other people, for our God is the LORD Jehovah, and we have his written word.

This morning we saw the cloud rising, and immediately we took down our tents and prepared to go forward. Moses and the Levites are taking down the tabernacle, which has been up one month, folding the curtains, and loading the wagons.

As the ark is moved, Moses says with a loud voice, "Rise up, LORD, and let thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee flee before thee."

The tribes are taking their places. The tabernacle, with its holy furniture, drawn by the oxen, and attended by the tribe of Levi, stands in the centre; we move away

from Mount Sinai where we have spent ten eventful months. Farewell to the graves in this solitude ; to Nadab and Abihu, who were so helpful to us in our former journey. We mourn their rashness and their early death.

The way is rough and leads to the northeast, towards Zipporah's early home. To-day her brother Hobab came out to meet us, and to bid us God-speed.

Moses said to him, "Come thou with us, and we will do thee good ; for the LORD hath spoken good concerning Israel."

Hobab replied that he would stay in his own land with his own people. Moses urged that he would be of great service to us, as he was so well acquainted with the route we are to travel, he would almost be as eyes for us. But Hobab said no ; he preferred his own wilderness home with his father and kindred. So we go on without him.

It is hard for Zipporah and her two sons to pass by the only home they have ever known, but they are full of hope for the future. We sometimes get glimpses of



the gulf of Akabah, as we wind around these black, barren hills, but not often.

The manna and the water follow us ; the cloud and fiery pillar lead us on. God cares for us in all ways, yet the mixed multitude are inciting the people to complain. They say their souls are fairly dried away with only eating this food, and they loathe it.

Moses has ordered a halt, that we may rest and recruit. He is considerate of the people's comfort, and makes frequent stops. To-day the complaints broke out afresh, and many are saying to Moses, "Who shall give us flesh to eat?" This manna ground into flour and made into cakes is good for a while, but we are tired of it! Give us flesh to eat!

It is hard for Moses to be called upon in this way to supply what he cannot get, and when he tells them so, these men of Israel who should be encouraging the weaker ones, weep, and complainingly say, "We remember the fish which we did eat in Egypt freely ; the cucumbers and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions,

and the garlick ; but now our soul is dried away ; there is nothing at all beside this manna." Would that we had died in Egypt!

In their longing for the flesh-pots of Egypt they seem to forget their bondage, their overwork, and the destruction of their children there.

Moses is very much troubled, as well he may be, when strong men weep in their tent doors for food, like children. As usual he has gone to God for help, and says, "Whence should I have flesh to give unto all this people? . . . I am not able to bear all this people alone, because *it is* too heavy for me. And if thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favor in thy sight ; and let me not see my wretchedness." Moses does not often get disheartened, but the care of this people, and the writing of the books of the law, and their rebellions are crushing him, and he cries for help. My heart sympathizes with him.

God also pities and says to him, "Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of

Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee. And I will come down and talk with thee there: and I will take of the spirit which *is* upon thee, and will put *it* upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear *it* not thyself alone."

God has ordered that the people be sanctified against to-morrow, for he has heard their murmurings, and will give them flesh which they shall eat a month, till it be loathsome to them, because they have rejected the LORD.

Moses is astonished at the largeness of the promise, and says, "The people among whom I *am, are* six hundred thousand footmen; and thou hast said, I will give them flesh, that they may eat a whole month. Shall the flocks and the herds be slain for them? . . . or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, to suffice them?"

And God asks, "Is the LORD'S hand

waxed short? Thou shalt see now whether my word shall come to pass."

Moses has done what he was commanded, and the seventy elders have received the spirit of the LORD, and all are prophesying in the tabernacle. Two of the men, called Eldad and Medad, neglected to be present, but the spirit of the LORD sought them out, and they began to prophesy in the camp. Joshua thought, as they had not obeyed the command to come to the tabernacle, they ought to be silenced, and he said, "My lord Moses, forbid them."

"Enviest thou for my sake?" asked Moses. "Would God that all the LORD's people were prophets, *and* that the LORD would put his spirit upon them."

We are west of the gulf of Akabah, and often feel the breezes from its waters. To-day a strong wind has been blowing from the east, and a dark cloud is coming. Some say that it reminds them of the cloud of locusts in Egypt, but it is more dense. It comes nearer, and we have discovered birds, and the cry goes up, Quails!

quails ! Then a wild tumult ensues as the birds begin to fall, and flutter upon the ground. The whole multitude of the Hebrew nation are killing quails, yet the cloud continues to empty itself upon us. The ground is covered for miles around with these fluttering creatures. The people rush upon them, like starving animals, and hurrying them to their tents they are soon cooked, and then in a shameful manner the people gorge themselves. The supply is too great ; they eat till they are satisfied. All through the day and night the people have worked, killing the quails and throwing them into heaps, or spreading them abroad, hoping to preserve them for future use. So greedy are they that they disregard God's command, and take no rest on the holy Sabbath day, There is little talked of but quails, and the best way to preserve them. Those who have gathered the least have not less than ten homers (an homer is about 8 bushels), and they are eating enormously. God has shown his power to supply, and now he is punishing the people for their

rebellion and gluttony. Sickness is general in the camp, and numbers are dying. From day to day it increases till it amounts to a great plague. The living loathe this meat now, as much as they did the manna, and are wishing they had been content with the food the LORD thought best to give. So many graves have been made in this place that Moses calls it, "Kibroth-hattaavah," "the graves of lust." Surely it is the place of graves.

We have been obliged to remain long here, but the plague is past and the cloudy pillar is lifting.

God is carrying us as on eagles' wings towards the land of promise, where all our wants will be supplied. The water is following us, the manna falls, our clothes are still good, and though we have travelled hundreds of miles over rocks and burning sand, our sandals are whole, and our feet have not swollen. Who is like our God?

## CHAPTER XI.

### MIRIAM'S LEPROSY.

WHILE the Hebrews were at Hazeroth resting themselves and their herds, Miriam became very much vexed with her brother Moses and an Ethiopian woman whom he had married. Miriam was not far from an hundred years old, and probably felt neglected, and thought that she and Aaron did not receive the honor that was their due. She talked her troubles over with Aaron, and said unkind things of Moses, who was not only enjoying the favor of God, but was honored by all the people ; and she sneeringly asked, "Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us?" And turning her spite and jealousy upon Moses' wife, she called her a Cushite woman.

All this was unkind and unbecoming a

woman of Miriam's character and position. She should not have dared to speak in this way of God's chosen prophet Moses ; in doing so she brought swift judgment upon herself. God heard, and suddenly called Moses, Aaron and Miriam to come to the tabernacle. And the three went. And the LORD came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam ; and they, with bowed heads, came tremblingly forth. God said to them of Moses, "With him will I speak mouth to mouth, . . . and not in dark speeches ; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold : wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses ?"

The cloud disappeared. God had departed ; and Miriam became white as snow. Aaron looked upon her and saw she was leprous. In his fright he cried to Moses, "Alas, my lord, I beseech thee, lay not the sin upon us, wherein we have done foolishly. . . . Let her not be as one dead, of whom the flesh is half consumed."



Moses' heart was forgiving, and he prayed earnestly to have the leprosy removed. God heard, and Miriam was cured, but she was shut out of the camp seven days, and kept in solitude. She was greatly humbled, for the whole nation were hindered in their journey by her sin. She who had led the women in their worship with timbrels and dances, and had spoken in the name of the LORD, had caused Aaron, the high priest, to sin, grieved Moses, her meek and loving brother, and brought the anger of the LORD upon herself.

When the seven days were ended, Miriam came back into camp, and after regaining her composure, she takes up the narrative and says,

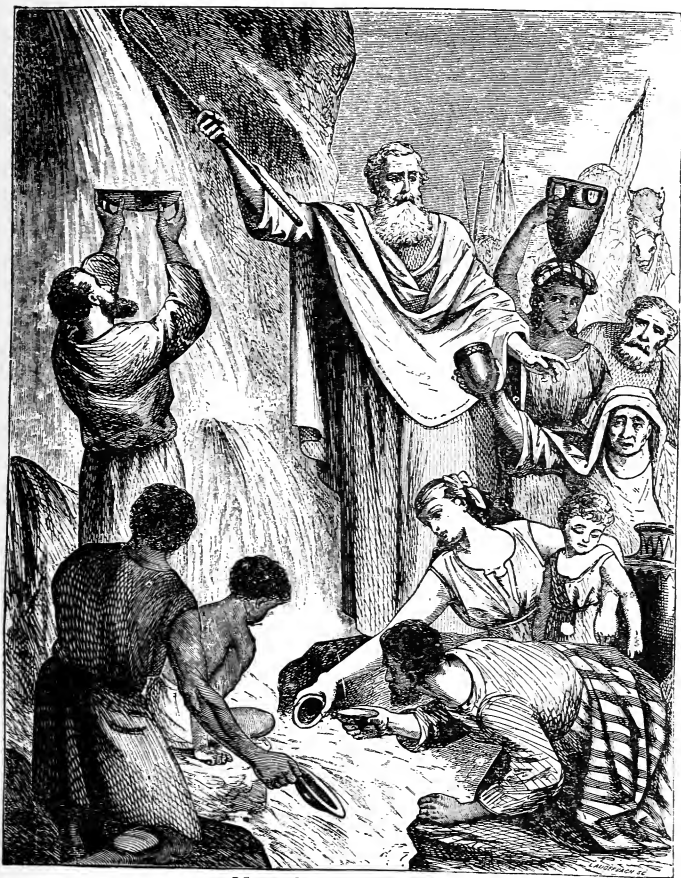
We go forward to-day. Judah's tents are down, and as the trumpet sounds, their ensign is raised on high, and the seventy-four thousand men move on northward. The tribes of Zebulun and Issachar move their hundred and ten thousand, following the tribe of Judah with shouts of joy. On our left is the tribe of Dan, sixty-two thousand,

with the tribes of Asher and Naphtali; and on our right are Reuben's, Simeon's and Gad's host; while in our rear are Manasseh, Ephraim, and Benjamin.

In the centre of this great multitude is the tabernacle, and ark, guarded by the whole tribe of Levi.

That we may still have twelve tribes without counting the Levites, we have divided that of Joseph into two, Ephraim, and Manasseh.

We move slowly, for our way is over high and desolate mountains, whose black and barren sides shut us in. We have had a hard day's march; night is coming on, and hungry and weary, we halt here in the wilderness. Not a tree is to be seen in any direction, and there is little for the cattle to eat. They seem to be preserved by miracle as well as ourselves. Black pebbles cover the ground, which have been hard for our feet to-day, but we can bear discomforts a little longer, and then we shall be in the promised land, where are streams of water and pastures. Within a week now we hope to be there,



Moses Smiting the Rock.



and our journeyings ended. High mountains are on either side of us. Mount Seir lies east, and extends from the Dead Sea to the gulf of Akabah. It is a long range, but broken in many places. The Arabian desert lies east and west of this range, but we keep in this valley which is the wilderness of Sin. We rise early and take the cool of the day for our journey, but we make slow progress.

Mount Hor, a peculiar mountain, rising abruptly from the plain, we are now passing. All our people are observing it, and talking of its height and shape.

We are coming into a better country, and see some grass and bushes. The buzz of insects is heard, and now towards night the chirp of a bird is delighting us. How delightful after the long silence.

On the east of Mount Seir is the land of Edom, where Esau settled after selling his birthright to our father Jacob. We see nothing of the people, though they may be watching our movements. We are very near the border of our land, and there is much talk among our people as

to the possibility of taking possession of it. They forget that God is to fight for us.

Beyond the mountain that is in front of us lies our new home. How glad we are that it is so near. The plain we have reached is large, and the silver trumpet of the Levites has sounded for a halt. Truly, we are here at last, and have only to go in and possess the land. The tribes are moving to their positions, and though the plain is large, many tents will be pitched on the hill-side at the west ; and here we rest, waiting for orders. Every one is solemn and quiet, as if in the expectation of some great event. Many stories are afloat about the country, and the people over the mountain, and some assert that we are watched, that armed men are hanging on our outskirts, and showing themselves in the distance. No doubt the Amorites and Canaanites are greatly disturbed by our presence ; for they know that God fights for us.

This morning Moses called the rulers together, and with outstretched hand, said,

“Behold, the Lord thy God hath set the land before thee : go up *and* possess *it*. . . . fear not, neither be discouraged.”

There is a holding back among these rulers ; they hesitate, and the Lord has directed Moses to send men up to spy out the land, that we may know what we have to contend with. The people also make this request. A ruler from each tribe is chosen. Caleb and Joshua are among the number ; and they will bring back no discouraging report. They are always reliable, and being about the same age, a little over forty, they are good companions, and full of hope. The twelve men have presented themselves and are ready to go. Moses says to them, “Get you up this *way* by the South, and go up into the mountains : and see the land, what it is ; and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they *be* strong or weak, . . . few or many ; and what the land *is* that they dwell in, . . . and what cities *they be* that they dwell in, whether in tents, or in strongholds ; and what the land *is*, whether it *be* fat or lean, whether there be

wood therein, or not. And be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land.”

These twelve men feel honored in being the first to set foot in the promised land, and they go forth with bright hopes. They will be gone many days, and while we wait we are very comfortable, for we have both pasturage and water. The manna still falls at night, and is gathered in the morning and ground into flour and made into bread for the day. There is a variety of employments in this great camp: many are spinning and weaving, or making up the cloth: others are embroidering the fine linen and dyeing the wools in bright colors. The workers in brass and gold are not idle, and on every hand we hear the sound of their tools. All seem contented and happy. Moses is not idle, for he writes in a book all our wanderings, and our rebellions, and the laws God reveals to him.

There is much talk of the spies we have sent out, and conjecture in regard to the report they will bring; and whether



we shall be able to conquer the land. It is hard for the people to remember that God is to give us the victory.

Forty days ago the spies went out from us, and now they have returned. The people are wild with expectation, and eager to know what they have seen. The large cluster of grapes, which they brought on a staff, borne by two men, causes great surprise. They also brought figs and pomegranates. It must be a wonderful country to produce such fruit. Moses and Aaron have assembled the people near the tabernacle to hear the report they bring. One of them says, "We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey ; . . . nevertheless, the people *be* strong that dwell in the land, and the cities *are* walled, *and* very great; and, moreover, we saw the children of Anak there. The Amalekites dwell in the land of the South; and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains; and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan."

At this point there was murmuring among the people, who were frightened at the report: but Caleb arose and stilled them, and with great earnestness said, "Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it." We be not able," shouted ten of the spies, "for they *are* stronger than we. . . . The land, through which we have gone to search it, *is* a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people we saw in it, *are* men of a great stature. And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, . . . and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight."

Caleb and Joshua both urge the people to go up at once, as God directs, and take the land and end their wanderings.

But the people are like frightened children, and are weeping and complaining of Moses and Aaron, and wishing they had died in the wilderness. They cry, "Wherefore hath the LORD brought us unto this land to fall by the sword; that our wives and our children should be a prey?"

And in their frenzy they are saying to one another, "Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt!"

There is great confusion and rebellion, and Moses and Aaron are prostrate on their faces before the LORD.

Caleb and Joshua have rent their clothes in abhorrence, and are trying to quiet the people down. They are saying, "The land, which we passed through to search it, *is* an exceeding good land. If the LORD delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it to us; . . . Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they *are* bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the LORD *is* with us: fear them not."

The people are enraged at these words, and are crying, Stone them with stones! Before they cast the first stone the cloud appeared at the tabernacle. Every hand and every stone dropped, and all looked towards the cloudy pillar. Moses is shut from sight. This rebellious people stand awed, not knowing what is to be their fate.

They tremble and are afraid. When Moses appeared, he said, "*As truly as I live, saith the LORD, . . . your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness ; and all that were numbered of you, . . . from twenty years old and upward . . . shall not come into the land, . . . save Caleb . . . and Joshua. . . .* But your little ones, which you said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which you have despised." As many days as the spies have been away, so many years shall we wander in the wilderness, a year for a day, forty years in all.

Scarcely had Moses done speaking, before a plague broke out, and all the spies, except Caleb and Joshua, are lying dead upon the ground. Moses cries to the Lord to spare. There is a great panic, and now the people are determined to go up to take the land. They are weeping, and mourning, and saying, We have sinned against the Lord. We will go up and fight, according to all that the Lord commands us.

It is of no use to try to restrain them,

for they are more determined now to go, than they were before not to go. Moses tells them that their opportunity is past, for the Lord will not go with them. They have gone to their tents weeping; even the chosen rulers have joined in the rebellion. Moses has retired to his rest, and we all hope that by morning peace will be restored to the people. The day has been very exciting.

Morning has come, and with it more rebellion, a large number of men are gathering upon the plain armed, going, they say, into Caanan to take it.

Moses assures them that it will be their destruction, for the LORD will not go with them, that they are transgressing the commandment of the Lord, and he asks them to disband, and go to their tents. He tells them that the Amalekites and Canaanites have been alarmed by our movements, and are lying in ambush on the mountain waiting and watching. But the people will not take advice, and are marching off up the mountain. The Amalekites remember their defeat at

Rephidim, and will revenge it. Before the top of the mountain is reached, the men are returning in great confusion. Rocks are rolled upon them, which bound from cliff to cliff, cutting their ranks, crushing and killing. Others are falling by the sword and by darts. They leave their dead, and are chased even to our borders, and come back in great confusion.

We have been kept up in our wanderings by the hope of entering Canaan, but alas, alas, we are to be turned back into the wilderness! oh, that we had obeyed the Lord! In this state of unrest and distrust Moses has great trials. A jealousy exists against him, and one and another are intimating that he and Aaron are setting themselves too high above the people.

To-day this spirit showed itself where least expected. Korah, Moses' own cousin, their fathers being brothers, and he a Levite, and Dathan and Abiram, and one or two others who are not of the tribe of Levi, and not entitled to any priestly

order, came with two hundred and fifty princes, men of fame and renown in the congregation, and boldly told Moses and Aaron that they were taking too much upon themselves; and insolently said, "Wherefore lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the LORD?" "All the congregation *are* holy, every one of them, and the LORD *is* among them."

Moses saw that they were planning their own ruin, and fell on his face before the LORD in prayer. Some of these men are Levites, and employed in the service of the Lord, to minister to the people. But they want the priest's office. Moses told them that if they felt entitled to the priest's office they could come in the morning and offer incense to the Lord. He then called Korah to him, and in plain words warned him against the step he was about to take, and told him he was rebelling against the Lord in seeking the office of priest. Korah would not regard his words. Moses, not wishing Dathan and Abiram to go blindly on to ruin, sent for them, to give them further words of

warning, but in the hearing of the people they said, "We will not come up: *Is it* a small thing that thou hast brought us up out of a land that floweth with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, except thou make thyself altogether a prince over us? Moreover, thou hast not brought us into a land flowing with milk and honey, or given us . . . fields and vineyards; . . . we will not come up."

Moses was very angry at these words, and prayed that the Lord would not respect their offering. It was not Moses' fault that they did not go up and take the land when commanded to do so, or that they were turned back into the wilderness.

For some time past these men have had two hundred and fifty brazen censers on hand, made secretly, thus planning long beforehand this rebellion. They have also labored among the people to convince them that Moses is an imposter, seeking his own glory, and multitudes of them are ready for a rebellion. This is the day for them to offer their incense, and as we

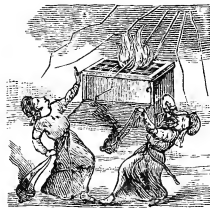


look abroad we see them coming, followed by a host of the people. Korah is at the head with Dathan and Abiram, and the would be priests, with their shining censers raised on high. They look quite formidable, as they march up and boldly enter the court of the tabernacle. The multitude stand without, while the censers are filled, and the fire applied, and then these censers are carried to the entrance that all may see their offering to the Lord.

At this moment God said to Moses and Aaron, "Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment."

Moses prostrated himself and prayed that the Lord would not destroy all, because of the sins of a few.

Then Moses goes out to the multitude and cries out to them to go from these wicked men lest they be destroyed. If "the earth open her mouth and swallow them up . . . then ye shall understand that these men have



provoked the LORD." The people crowded back, and immediately the earth opened, and all that followed Korah went down alive, with a cry that rent the air. Then the earth closed over them and they perished. The people fled in great terror, screaming and horrified. Scarcely was this done before a fire from the LORD flashed forth and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense; their burning censers lay upon the ground in the fire, where they fell, and Moses sent Eleazar, Aaron's son, to gather them up and scatter the fire from them. They are to be made into broad plates to cover the brazen altar with, as a sign to warn the people against the sin of Korah and his followers. No person who is not of the family of Aaron, the priest, shall offer incense to the Lord. The people are in a strange state of mind, but we hope a night's rest will quiet them.

The morning brings more trouble. Large numbers are gathering around the tabernacle in great excitement, wishing to do violence to Moses and Aaron. They

blame them, and are saying, You killed the people of the Lord yesterday. They are so angry that they may even attempt to stone our leaders. Moses and Aaron are sorely tried with this rebellion.

In the midst of the confusion, the cloud suddenly rested upon the tabernacle. And God said to Moses and Aaron, "Get you up from among this congregation, that I may consume them as in a moment."

While Moses besought the LORD to speak, the plague had already begun; and Moses hurried Aaron to go forth with a burning censer, and make an atonement for the people. Then Aaron put fire from the altar into his censer and poured incense on it, and ran and stood between the living and the dead, and made intercession for the people, and the plague was stopped; but not till fourteen thousand and seven hundred lay dead upon the ground. There is great mourning.

It is time the people recognized that Moses and Aaron are appointed of God. But another test is to be given.

God commands that each of the twelve

tribes bring an almond rod, with the name of the tribe written upon it. Aaron stands for the tribe of Levi, and his name is upon a rod, and all are laid up by the altar as God commands. The rod that blossoms will indicate the person whom God has chosen.

The people are becoming sobered, as well they may be, after such heavy judgments, and they have gone to their tents, and their beds for rest. It is a terrible calamity to be turned back into the wilderness, there to wander while we live; and the people rebel at the thought, and are fighting against it. But they should have gone up and taken possession of the promised land, as God commanded.

The morning has come, and the representatives of the twelve tribes have gone to the tabernacle to examine the rods. To the astonishment of all, when Aaron's rod was taken out it had not only blossomed, but had borne almonds. The others had not changed. This is convincing, and now they are willing to yield to his authority. Moses put the rod back into the ark to be

kept as a token against the rebels. We might to-day have been in Canaan, had it not been for our unbelief. A few of our number trust God wholly, but they go with the rest to wander in the wilderness till the forty years are passed. We need the discipline and desire to take it meekly.

The tents this morning are taken down and packed for carrying. All is bustle and activity, but the people are sad and silent. Canaan is but just over the mountain, where is plenty for man and beast; we turn our longing eyes towards it, but the cloud moves the other way, and one after another the tribes follow. Their heads are bowed, their hearts are bleeding, and as their ranks disappear beyond the hills a great and sad wail goes up, "Behold, we die! we perish! we all perish!" (Num. 17 : 12.) Farewell to Kadesh-barnea.

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE RETURN.

THE great Hebrew nation, which came out of Egypt a year and a half ago, now becomes lost to us.

Little is said of them in the Bible for the next thirty-eight years. Where they went, what they suffered, and how often they rebelled, we are not told. They, as a nation, were not fitted to enter Canaan, and hence this additional discipline was necessary. All who were twenty years old and over, when they were numbered, were to die in their wanderings, and be buried in the wilderness. Only Caleb and Joshua, the ones faithful, were to be spared.

Miriam, over ninety years old, was turned back with the rest, and we will continue the story for her.

Kadesh-barnea was a place of rebellion and suffering. Was it regarded as the head-quarters of the nation during their life in the desert?

The Amalekites and Canaanites had, no doubt, watched all the Israelites, and were eager to come down from the mountain and see their strength. . . . Not far off on the hill side were many graves, with nothing to distinguish one from the other.

The nations occupying Canaan and the country east of the Jordan, had armies like grasshoppers for multitude, and were rich in herds and lands: and fearing no enemy, they dwelt at ease, worshipping idols, as their fathers had done before them; and sinking deeper and deeper in debauchery and sin. Their cup of iniquity was fast filling to the brim.

While they were living in this way, God was fitting the Hebrew nation to act as a sword in his hand to destroy them from the face of the earth.

In the fourteenth century before Christ, the first month, answering to our April,

there gathered from the wilderness of Tih, a vast multitude of people, with flocks and herds. Division after division, with floating banners, and with blasts of trumpets, gathered, while a strange pillar of cloud led the host to Kadesh-barnea.

In the erect form and firm step of one who seems to be a commander, we recognize MOSES the law-giver. His eye is not dimmed, nor his natural force abated. By his side is Aaron, still active, and wearing the priestly robes, though over one hundred and twenty years old. And there is Miriam, changed indeed, and bending towards the grave; and there march Joshua and Caleb, at the head of their divisions, like military generals, as they are. These five, among the millions that surround them, are all that are left of those who were over twenty years old at Kadesh, thirty-eight years ago.

The nation is not diminished, though graves are thickly strewn on the track they have travelled. Instead of the fathers we see the children. They have been fed on manna, and have never



known any other home, but the great and terrible wilderness in which they have wandered.

They gather directly at Kadesh-barnea, and pitch their tents, and the tabernacle is there. Their fathers had told them that this was a place for grass and of springs, and some of the older ones remember where these springs were; but there are none there now: the dry season is upon them, and the water is gone.

The people begin to murmur and say, There are no vines, no figs, no pomegranates and, what is worse, no water to drink. Would God we had died when our brethren died before the Lord! and going to Moses they say, Why have you brought us up into this wilderness that we and our cattle should die here?

Moses and Aaron both remind them that they have not arrived in Canaan yet; but their complaints rise to such a pitch, that Moses and Aaron hasten to the tabernacle and prostrate themselves before the Lord. God commands that they take the rod, and go with the people to a rock not

far away and speak to it, and he promises that water sufficient for all the people and their cattle shall flow out. Moses remembers travelling a long way, forty years before, from Rephidim to Horeb, to get water for their fathers, and he is disturbed in spirit, and not a little vexed at these their rebellious children; so he goes forth hurriedly, followed by the multitude, and when he reached the rock he said, "Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock?" and with the rod he gave it two sharp blows. Moses was angry and spoke hastily. (Psalm 106:32-33).

The water came, and the people were satisfied. But Moses, as his anger passed away, remembered his sin, and was humbled; and he and Aaron went into the tabernacle and prostrated themselves before the Lord.

God spoke and said, "Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them."

See these two old men bowed down

side by side, before God, receiving their doom; for Aaron had joined in the disobedience. Both were guilty. And though they had been faithful all the long years past, this sin could not be overlooked. They were public men; examples for the rest: and could not be left unpunished. God promised, however, that though Moses could not enter the promised land, yet he should see its beautiful valleys and sloping hill-sides from a distance before he died. Moses meekly accepted his punishment and felt that it was just.

To add to his and Aaron's sorrow at this time, they found that their sister Miriam was very ill, evidently about to die. As Moses stood and looked upon her aged face, his mind went back over the years; and he remembered only her kindnesses,—her love for him when he was an infant; her anxious watch by the river that morning, when he lay in the frail ark among the bulrushes; her faithful kindness through all their tiresome wanderings in the wilderness; the good

example she had set for the women, leading them in their worship, and prophesying in the name of the Lord. She was his only sister, and his heart was pained to know that here they must part, she to be buried at Kadesh, and he and Aaron somewhere on the way, neither of them to enter with the people into Canaan.

One morning the words, Miriam is dead, went from tent to tent, and from heart to heart, for all had loved and respected her as a prophetess, and a leader in Israel. They made her ready for the grave, and there at Kadesh, by those old graves, they buried her. Miriam was gone, and Aaron was soon to follow.

Not long after this event, even while the people were mourning for her, the Canaanites, who lived over the mountain, heard that Moses and his hosts had returned to Kadesh-barnea; remembering the spies who had travelled through the land, and fearing an attack, they gathered an army and made a sudden descent upon the Israelites. So unexpected was the onset, that some of the Is-

raelites were carried off prisoners. This threw the camp into excitement, and the people gathered for war. Before starting they entered into a solemn vow, that if God would deliver these Canaanites into their hands, they would utterly destroy them and their cities.

God heard their vow and delivered the Canaanites into their hands, and so thoroughly did the people destroy them and their cities, that they named that part of the country, Hormah, "utter destruction" (Num. 21 ; 3).

It was now time for the Israelites to be moving forward. They would prefer to go directly through an opening in the mountain and pass through the land of Edom, south of the Dead Sea, and so come round east of the river Jordan. But they would not attempt it without liberty from the Edomites. Moses chose out honorable men and sent them to the King of Edom to say,

"Thus saith thy brother Israel, Thou knowest all the travail that hath befallen us: How our fathers went down into

Egypt; . . . and the Egyptians vexed us, and our fathers : And when we cried unto the LORD, he heard our voice, and sent an angel, and hath brought us forth out of Egypt : and, behold, we *are* in Kadesh, a city in the uttermost of thy border : let us pass, I pray thee, through thy country : we will not pass through the fields, or through the vineyards, neither will we drink *of* the water of the wells : we will go by the king's *high* way, we will not turn to the right hand, nor to, the left, until we have passed thy borders."

The messengers carried this very respectful salutation and request to the king ; but he gave them a flat denial, and said if they attempted to go through his land he would meet them with an army.

Moses had been commanded not to disturb the land of Edom, for it had been given to Esau for an everlasting habitation ; and he had no wish to do so ; but to be compelled to go south a hundred miles, and then back north as far, to get around this land, was discouraging, and would take my days, while it would be

only about twenty-five miles directly through it. He determined to ask again, and he sent other messengers and a very strong appeal. He said, Let me pass through thy land ; I will go by the highway. I will neither turn to the right hand, nor to the left. Thou shalt sell me meat for money, that I may eat ; and give me water for money, that I may drink. I will not pass through the fields, or through the vineyards. I will only, without doing any thing else, go through on my feet.

The king said again, "Thou shalt not pass by me, lest I come out against thee with the sword." And he sent out a large army to guard the mountain passes, lest the Israelites should attempt to force a passage.

It was in the heat of summer, and water was scarce, yet they were compelled to take the very route by which they came, over thirty-eight years before, through a desolate region. Moses, Aaron, Joshua and Caleb remembered it, and well might they dread to go over it again ; but the cloudy pillar moved forward, and they followed.

Aaron and Moses were now taking their last days' journey together, for at Mount Hor, only a short distance from Kadesh, Aaron was to die. Did they know that they were to be so soon parted? Did they have sweet and tender talks as they went on their way?

The cone-shaped mountain, with its rough sides, which rises four thousand feet above the plain, is before them, and at its base they stop and pitch their tents for rest. The Lord said to Moses, "Take Aaron and Eleazar his son, and bring them up unto Mount Hor; and strip Aaron of his garments, and put them upon Eleazar his son; and Aaron shall be gathered *unto his people*, and shall die there."

Here, while still in the wilderness, is another great trial for Moses. Aaron, the beloved brother of his whole life, is now to go out from him; the last one of his father's family. But there is no hesitation on the part of either. Aaron puts on his priestly robes for the last time, and with Moses and Eleazar he leaves the people and turns towards the mountain.



Their hearts are solemn and tender as they talk by the way, going higher and higher up the mountain, till wearied they seat themselves for rest. As they look down upon the multitude below, who are watching the retiring form of their high priest, their hearts are stirred, and tender and loving words are spoken. Their eyes glance over the desert through which they have wandered so long, and memory is busy with the past. But they must not tarry. Aaron is about to enter upon the glories of heaven. Moses and Eleazar are to perform a sad office, and then go back to the people. They reached the top and there they stood. God was their friend; they felt his presence and were not afraid.

Moses took off the garments which had so long indicated Aaron's office, and put them upon Eleazar, and the old man's work on earth was done; one hundred and twenty-three years of life and labor were finished. Aaron bade his brother, his son, and the world farewell; and there he died. He was at rest; no more toil,

no more sinning, but everlasting joy with God in heaven. They doubtless placed his body in one of the many cave tombs of the mount. To this day there is a peak in that region called *Jebel Neby Harun*, "the mount of the prophet Aaron."

The people below were watching and waiting, till at length they saw in the far distance two persons coming down the mountain. One was Moses; his noble form could not be mistaken. The other had on the priestly robes of Aaron, but as he came near they saw that their aged high priest was gone, and a younger man was filling the office. Under these solemn circumstances they could not deny his right to the office, and no question was raised. They loved Aaron notwithstanding all their hard words and rebellions, and they mourned for him thirty days.

But if they were sad, how much more so was Moses? He moved among the younger people, who surrounded him, as one alone. He was the last of his family and perhaps the oldest person in the nation.

At length the camp again moved on. Seventy miles further south lay the gulf of Akabah, and to that they must go to reach the southern limit of the land of Edom. Many hot days of weary travel went by, and many nights were spent under the tents before they caught sight of the welcome waters that stretched up into that barren, sunburnt, mountainous country.

The people were weary and discouraged. They had expected to be in Canaan before this, where they could have water from the wells their ancestors had dug, instead of drinking the warm, brackish water they carried with them. They wanted some of those large, juicy grapes that their fathers had told them of, and figs and pomegranates ; but they had, day in and day out, manna, manna, forever. The cattle, too, were becoming lean, and if they had to turn back again they would all die of starvation. They were now at the head of the gulf, where, several hundred years afterward, Solomon built the city of Ezion-geber, and made ships to sail on this same gulf. But there was

nothing there now but desolation. Their way lay to the east, and going through a pass in the mountain they came out south of the land of Edom, and the cloudy pillar, which was their guide, turned north towards the promised land.

Much of the way after this was up hill, the weather was hot and the water was gone ; the people were thirsty, tired, and discouraged, and began to murmur. They spoke against God, and against Moses, and asked again the same old question, Wherefore have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness ?

When they complained at Kadesh-barnea, causing Moses and Aaron to sin, no punishment followed, but, instead, water was given : so they were encouraged to give way to their impatience again. This must be checked. Moses ordered a halt, the trumpet was blown, and the tribes stood still. The camels were unloaded, the tents were raised, and they were about to resign themselves to rest when they found they were in the midst of a bed of serpents. The horrid crea-

tures crawled from the rocks, from the stunted shrubs, and from under the tents, and soon all through the sand were seen the winding paths of snakes. The people had often seen serpents in their wanderings, which did them no harm, but these were let loose upon them. They seemed to shoot about, and their bites produced terrible burning pains, and many of the people were dying.

The camp became greatly alarmed, and began to flock to Moses for help. They said, "We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD, and against thee; pray unto the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us."

Moses did pray, and God commanded him to make a serpent of brass, like the living ones, and set it upon a pole, that every one that was bitten might look upon it and live.

This was done as soon as possible, and Moses hastened to raise it before the dying people. [Mr. Bartlett, in his recent travels through that country, speaks of the sand as curiously marked with numer-

ous tracks of wild beasts and birds, and the sinuous trail of serpents. A promontory there is known as the mother of serpents.]

As many as looked lived : whether one was near death or slightly bitten, if he but saw the brazen serpent he was saved.

Nearly fifteen hundred years after this, when the whole human family were suffering by the poison of the old serpent the Devil, one came in the form of sinful flesh and said, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up : that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Those in the wilderness who did not believe, and would not look, but chose to try some other remedy, perished ; and in that place many graves were made.

When the cloud again moved the people followed, and took with them the brazen serpent as a memento. It was kept for hundreds of years, even till 726 before Christ. Hezekiah, the king of Judea, was then destroying objects of idolatry, and

he broke in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made, for the children of Israel burned incense to it. (2 Kings 18 : 4.)

For two or three days the people kept on in a northerly direction, rising higher and higher, till they reached a lofty, sandy plateau, which stretched off to the north-east for two or three hundred miles. Here the air was good and the travelling better, and they were happy again.

The suspicious Edomites kept an eye upon the Hebrews, but they were now east of their country and owed them no thanks. They were coming into a country of rivers and brooks, and they crossed the upper waters of the brook Zered.

The Moabites lay west, and the Ammonites were near ; but they were both descendants of Lot, and God commanded that they should not be disturbed. So the Israelites skirted along up between the nations on their left, and the sandy plain on their right, till they arrived at the river Arnon. This river flows in a deep and wild ravine, and bounds the country of Moab on the north and east. Here

they encamped. There was plenty of grass for the cattle, and food for themselves; the air was pleasant and they were in good spirits. But this was not the promised land: that was thirty or thirty-five miles west, beyond the Dead Sea and the Jordan. The country of the Amorites who descended from Canaan, lay between, and they must pass through it, for there was no other way to reach the Jordan.

It was a rich and beautiful country abounding in streams of water and in vegetation. Its luxuriance had tempted these Amorites from their homes in the south of Canaan not long before, and they had come over and taken it from the Moabites, crowding them further south. These Amorites were now fully established in their new home, and were looking with suspicious eyes towards any one likely to disturb them.

Sihon their king had his home in Heshbon, a city upon the hill-side, about twenty miles east of the river Jordan. He had set up his idol worship, and every



thing was going on very smoothly, when this host of Israelites encamped just east of his borders. What did they want? He was watching their movements closely, when one day two or three of these Hebrews arrived at Heshbon and asked an interview. Sihon was a little startled at this request, but admitted them.

After the usual salutations, they told King Sihon who they were, and that they had been sent by their leader, Moses, to ask permission to go through his country that they might pass over the river Jordan. They said, "We will not turn into the fields, or into the vineyards; we will not drink *of* the waters of the well: *but* we will go along the king's *high* way, until we be past thy borders."

Sihon heard them through, and then replied sternly, No, you shall not pass through my land.

Of course they went back somewhat discouraged. Moses heard the report, and then God said to him, "Rise ye up, take your journey, and pass over the river Arnon: behold I have given into thy hand

Sihon, the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land : begin to possess *it*, and contend with him in battle. This day will I begin to put the dread of thee, and the fear of thee, upon the nations *that are* under the whole heaven, who shall hear report of thee, and shall tremble, and be in anguish because of thee."

Moses called his army together ; but scarcely had they crossed the river, before they saw Sihon with all his forces coming on to drive them back. Moses arranged his troops in haste, and there they fought. How long the battle lasted we do not know, but Sihon was killed and his men defeated. Moses and his army went forward, and at God's command killed with the sword all they found both great and small, and took possession of their cities, and all their flocks, and herds, and goods. All the idols that Moses found he destroyed, for the people were but too ready to bow down to them if allowed.

God had chosen the Hebrew nation as the one to whom he would commit his revealed truth, and he planted it in them,

to be cherished and expanded and loved. There was no other light in the world ; all was darkness and death. Had the idolatrous nations been spared, the Israelites would have gone into idolatry, and the little light they had would have been extinguished; and not a spark of it would have survived to the coming of Christ. God saw what was best not only for the Israelites, but for the nations that followed them, even for us, in these ends of the earth. Therefore it was not cruel, as some assert, for God to order the death of the idolatrous nations that inhabited the land; it was a necessity. Christ was to come through the Israelites, and the world was to be redeemed. No sacrifice was too great in order to preserve the germs of revealed truth.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### A WONDERFUL COUNTRY.

ABOUT thirty miles north of Heshbon, was the kingdom of Bashan, where Og, the giant ruled ; and that we may know what Moses had to encounter, for he was commanded to take that country also, we will quote from some modern travellers who have explored that land.

Bashan was only about a hundred miles long, by sixty broad, yet it had sixty cities surrounded by high stone walls, with gates and bars, besides many cities and towns which had no walls.

Og's bedstead was of iron and was about fourteen feet long and six broad. This bedstead was taken in after years to Rabbah, in Ammon, where it was preserved as showing the great stature of Og the giant. On this he laid his great body for

rest at night, but during the day he moved among the people with his head above all others.

The city in which he lived stood on the southwestern part of a very strange rocky or mountainous region, called Argob, which shoots up three hundred feet in the centre. Travellers describe it as twenty-two miles long from north to south by fourteen miles in width, being generally from twenty to thirty feet above the plain. It is covered with jagged rocks, deep fissures, yawning gulfs, and filled with pits. There is little vegetation, and so wild is the whole hill, that a stranger there would soon be lost.

A projection of rough, basaltic rock stretches two miles along the southwestern side, and on this stood the city of Edrei, the home of Og. If Moses or any other enemy should attack and defeat him in his city, he and his men could flee into this strange mountain, Argob, and be safe.

Prof. J. L. Porter visited this country and says, "We went up to Edrei by a winding, rugged path, on which the horses

kept their footing with difficulty." Here he found the remains of an ancient city still covering a space of a mile long by two-thirds of a mile in width. The huge masonry which formed the houses could scarcely be distinguished from the black rocks which lay every where around them.

Not a human being was to be seen, though the ravines in the hill might be full of Arab robbers.

Another traveller who has recently explored this country, says, "Great cities are now here as they were three thousand years ago, except that they have not a human being in them. Streets are perfect, houses are perfect. They look as if they might have been great hives of human beings only yesterday, so complete is every thing. We walk along the streets and into the houses, or across the public squares, the echo of our feet is all we hear, and we are startled by the sound; our own shadows affright us in this utter solitude."

"The secret of the perfect preservation of these houses is in the material used,

the black basalt rock, which is as hard as iron, and the way in which they are built."

"The roofs, the doors, and gates are all of stone; only the bars inside of these latter, have perished, but the mortised apertures for them are as fresh as if made but yesterday. The doors stand yet in their places, the floors and roofs are sound, and a stranger has only to go in and swing the door together and he is in a rock castle, safe from the outward assaults of man, secure also from the weather, and in a house all his own. There are many thousands of such houses in city and country, all deserted."

The first one Prof. Porter entered he described as "having walls four feet in thickness, composed of blocks of square stones put together without cement; the roof, of regularly formed stones eighteen feet long, six inches in thickness and eighteen in breadth, their ends resting on other stones which projected about a foot beyond the walls on the inside, so as to form a cornice. The door of entrance was four and a half feet high, four feet

wide, and eighteen inches thick ; these doors are of stone and made to move on pivots, which are projecting parts of the door itself, and work in sockets above and below. Some of the houses have doors nine feet high, and many of them are ornamented with figures of scroll work, cut in relief on their faces. In a house measured, the first room was twenty feet by twelve, and ten feet high : a low door opened into another room of the same size, and from this a larger door admitted to a third room where was a descent by a flight of stone stairs. This last was a spacious hall equal in breadth to the other two rooms, and about twenty-five feet long by twenty feet in height ; the stone door being so large, that a camel could go out and in with ease."

Among the places visited by Mr. Graham, was an enormous ruined city, perhaps the Beth-gamul of Scripture.

"This," he says, "is perhaps the most perfect of the old cities that I saw. It is surrounded by a high wall forming a rectangle which seems to enclose as much



space as the modern Jerusalem. Some of the houses are very large, consisting usually of three rooms on the ground floor, and two on the second story, the stairs being formed of large stones built into the house walls, and leading up outside ; sometimes there were folding doors, and some of them were highly ornamented. Taking my rifle with me, I wandered about quite alone in the old streets of the town, entered one by one the old houses, went up stairs, looked into the rooms, and in short, made a careful survey of the whole place ; but so perfect was every street, every house, every room, that I could almost have fancied that I was wandering alone in the city of the dead, seeing all perfect, and yet not hearing a sound ; that I had come upon one of those enchanted places in the Arabian Nights, where the population of a whole city had been petrified for a century."

We are told in the Bible that the cities of Og were cities of stone, with high walls, bars and gates, and these are the cities which still are standing and bearing

testimony to God's word.\* As Moses and his army approached this country from the south, and looked upon these terrible cities, teeming with inhabitants, they were afraid; but God said, Fear him not: for I have delivered Og the king into thy hand, and all his people, and his land; and thou shalt do to him as thou didst unto Sihon, king of the Amorites.

At these encouraging words Moses took his army across the river Jabbok and stood upon the land of Bashan. The cities were near, but Moses put his men in order and marched on over the plain, and past several large and walled cities, full of excited inhabitants. Moses knew that he had no force that could break down those rock-like walls; so he did not attempt it, but continued on north, till he came into the neighborhood of the strange mountain, Argob. Not far from Edrei he saw Og, with his sons, and a large army, waiting to give him battle. Moses was nearly one hundred and twenty years old, pretty far

\* These ruins in the Argob are now generally believed to belong to an age since the Christian era; though they may have some of the foundation stones of a more ancient period.—Ed. Am. S. S. Union.

advanced to have charge in such a crisis as this, but his judgment was good, his natural force was unabated, and his eyesight perfect. Should Moses' soldiers get frightened and be driven back in this battle, all would be lost.

Moses and his men did not waver, but marched boldly up, and the armies met. Hand to hand, sword for sword, strength for strength, they fought; blood ran freely, and Og was killed. His sons also were slain, and fright seized his people, who were cut down on the right, and on the left, till "There was not a city which we took not from them, threescore cities, all the region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Bashan. All these cities *were* fenced with high walls, gates and bars; beside unwall'd towns a great many." (Deut. 3 : 5.)

Ashtoreth, their god of obscenities, which they had shamelessly worshipped so long, could not save them; their cup of iniquity was full, and the city and its temples were destroyed.

The Israelites were greatly elated over

their new possessions; and well they might rejoice, for the Lord had already given them a great and beautiful country, before they had crossed the Jordan, and with it they had taken six hundred and seventy-five thousand sheep, seventy-two thousand cattle, and sixty-one thousand asses, besides all the goods of the conquered people. Perhaps the very stone houses that Prof. Porter and Mr. Graham walked through and have described to us, belonged to the Israelites, and Moses may have had his home for a while in one like those now standing.

What a delight it was to the Israelites to turn their lean sheep and cattle, which they had driven so long in the desert, in among the fat cattle that fed in the rich pastures of Bashan. And how eagerly the poor creatures cropped the rich grass and drank of the clear, cool waters of the brooks!

What a change it was to the Israelites, who had so long wandered and suffered, to be set down in such a country as this, with houses all made and furnished ready

for their use, and all their own, and more in prospect.

They spread themselves out wherever they chose, gathered the fruits, and reaped the grain and supplied their army, which had camped down on the flats by the river Jordan. These flats were about three miles wide and partially covered by the acacia tree. Some then called them shittim trees, and spoke of this ground as the valley of Shittim. Others called it the valley of Moab, because the Moabites once owned it. It was a fine place for the army, and they pitched their tents among the beautiful trees, and near the banks of the rolling Jordan, and there they lay in peace and plenty.

The plains of Jericho, with the palm trees, only four miles off, were in full view on the other side of the river Jordan, and the Israelites were quite willing to go over and take possession; but the cloud which guided them did not move.

There was great consternation among the inhabitants of Canaan, for they had watched the progress and victory of the

Israelites, and were planning and combining for defence.

The Moabites and the Midianites, who had not been disturbed when Moses passed their borders, were also in great fear, thinking their turn might come next; and Balak, the king of Moab, anxious to do something to prevent destruction, called the princes of his own people and those of Midian together, and said "Now shall this company lick up all *that are* round about us, as the ox licketh up the grass." What shall be done? They have a god of their own and he blesses them. Our god has no power over them, but if we could induce their god to curse, instead of blessing them, we should escape from their power.

Some of these assembled wise heads had heard of a man of the same stamp of the Israelites, a prophet of the Lord, by the name of Balaam; he might have some power to curse. To be sure he lived two or three hundred miles east, near the Euphrates River, but that was a small matter if they could but get him. They

determined to try, and they appointed elders, both from the Moabites and from the Midianites, honorable men, and put a purse of gold in their hands, and Balak said, Go and tell Balaam, that there is a people come up from Egypt that cover the face of the earth ; that they are too strong for me, and if he will but come and curse them, they shall be cursed indeed, and I shall drive them out. The messengers departed.

There were no railroads in those days to hurry a person through a long journey and back ; so these messengers probably rode upon asses and made all the speed they could ; but doing their very best it would take weeks to go and come ; and in the meantime Balak was on the look-out thinking that any day those Egyptians, as he called them, might appear before his gates. Moses once asked, very civilly, to pass through his land, and had been refused ; now he has no doubt that Moses will retaliate by coming down upon him with his army. He wishes his elders would come back with Balaam.

At length one day, he saw in the distance the returning messengers. At first he could not quite tell, but he did not count any more than went out. Where was the prophet? Was it possible that he had not come.

When the messengers came up and said, Balaam refused to come with us, his worse fears were made sure; there was nothing now between him and destruction. Balaam must come; the king would not be refused, and he called the princes of Midian with his own, and held another counsel. The result was that princes more honorable than the first were appointed to go to Balaam and say, "Let nothing, I pray thee, hinder thee from coming unto me: for I will promote thee unto very great honor, and I will do whatsoever thou sayest unto me: come, therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people." This message they delivered when they came the second time.

Balaam was probably a descendant of Shem, and had some just ideas of the true God; but he was a sorcerer, a false



prophet like many we read of. He made great pretensions to sanctity, and of obedience to God's commands ; but he used enchantments which were forbidden.

God really seems to have answered him the night the first messengers came ; and though he was very anxious for the honors and money offered, he did not dare to go. He thought that was the end of it.

But other messengers from the king of Moab arrive, a second company more honorable than the first, with larger promises of reward. Surely, he thought, I am a man of consequence and importance. I'll go if I can: the money is very tempting, and so are the honors ; and, turning to the princes, he said, Stay here to-night and I will see what the Lord will say.

That night he obtained liberty to go with the messengers, on condition that he should say only what the Lord put in his mouth ; there should be nothing but blessing, because Israel was blessed.

Balaam was delighted : he would go, and if he could not curse, he would con-

trive some way by which to get the money offered.

The next morning the old animal, which he had ridden for years, was brought early to the door, and Balaam was ready. The princes paid him much attention, for they were gratified that they had succeeded, and they all went on together towards the land of Moab.

But during the journey Balaam's beast began to act in a very strange manner. Balaam had never seen any thing like it before. There was something the matter. The animal was frightened. Balaam could see nothing in the way. His patience was sorely tried, for the ass sheered off and crushed his master's foot against a wall, and finally fell flat down in the road. All this time Balaam was growing more and more angry and began pounding the ass with his staff. He was making a sad appearance here before the princes, his foot crushed, and he covered with dirt, and he pounded the beast furiously; he was almost insane with anger, and hardly knew or cared what he did. The ass very meekly said:

“What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times?”

Balaam's face was red with anger, and without thinking that it was an unusual thing for the beast to be talking, said, “Because thou hast mocked me: I would there was a sword in my hand, for now would I kill thee.”

Then the ass, more reasonable than its master, said, inquiringly, “*Am* not I thine ass, upon which thou hast ridden ever since *I was* thine unto this day? was I ever wont to do so unto thee?”

Balaam had just time to say “Nay,” when he saw an angel with a drawn sword standing in the way, and Balaam fell on his face.

Then the angel asked him why he had smitten his beast three times, and went on to tell him that his way was perverse, wicked; and if the beast had not turned aside, the angel would have killed him, and saved her alive. Balaam said, I have sinned. I did not know that you stood in the way. I will go back if you wish it.

But God had something for Balaam to

do, or suffer in Moab ; and told him to go on, but to speak only the word which he should give him. No more of false prophesying, no more mummery, however much he might wish to prophesy falsely.

In the meantime Balak, who had been waiting impatiently, heard that the princes and the prophet were coming, and in great joy he hurried off to a city in his farthest border to meet him.

Balak was very glad to see Balaam, as he stood before him with his turbaned head and oriental robe, but expressed surprise that he did not come when first sent for, seeing he had it in his power to promote the prophet to such great honor.

Balaam felt his dignity when princes and kings so eagerly sought his help, and he said, "Lo I am come unto thee ; have I now any power at all to say any thing ? The word that God putteth into my mouth, that shall I speak."

There was no time to be lost ; and Balak took him to one of the high places, and there they sacrificed oxen and sheep, and feasted. Then Balak waited for

the curse: the time had come that Israel's power should be withered by their own God: and as he seated himself to hear, he ordered the prophet to begin.

Balaam put himself in an attitude, and looking straight before him as if he saw nothing, said, "Balak the king of Moab hath brought me from Aram out of the mountains of the east, *saying*, Come, curse me Jacob, and come, defy Israel. How shall I curse, *whom* God hath not cursed? or how shall I defy, *whom* the LORD hath not defied? For from the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him: lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations. Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth *part* of Israel? Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!"

At this point Balak broke in upon him with, "What hast thou done unto me? I took thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast blessed *them* altogether."

Balaam, thus interrupted, turns and asks, "Must I not take heed to speak

that which the LORD hath put in my mouth?"

Perhaps this is not a favorable spot said Balak ; we will go to another spot where you can see the enemy better, though you cannot see all from any point ; and he took him to Mount Pisgah. There was a commanding view both of the country east of Jordan, and the land of Canaan. The deep ravine in which the river Jordan ran could be traced for a great distance, and there by the rolling water lay Moses and his army spread out over the plain of Shittim for miles. Their white tents shone beautifully in the clear morning sun, and the long golden tabernacle, with its gorgeously dressed priests, was an object of wonder. Sacrifices, they were sure, were being offered on Israel's one altar, for they could see the smoke arising in a column towards heaven. The Israelites were propitiating their God. Balak would counteract it. So they built seven altars, and offered a bullock and a ram upon each altar, and while they were burning, Balaam told Balak and the princes to stay

by them, and he would go a little way off to see what the LORD would say. But he went not, as before, to seek for enchantments, hoping to please Balak.

Contrary to his wishes the Lord put words in his mouth, and when he came back to the altars, Balak eagerly asked, "What hath the LORD spoken?" Balaam, fixing himself as before, began :

"Rise up, Balak, and hear ; hearken unto me, thou son of Zippor : God *is* not a man, that he should lie ; neither the son of man, that he should repent : hath he said, and shall he not do *it* ? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good ? Behold, I have received *commandment* to bless : and he hath blessed ; and I cannot reverse it. . . . Surely *there is* no enchantment against Jacob, neither *is there* any divination against Israel."

After he had said much more in this strain, Balak requested him to stop and neither bless nor curse. The king was losing his patience : he had enough of that kind of talk, and said we will go to another mountain : perhaps it will please

God to curse them from that place. Balaam no doubt felt a little vexed at himself that he had not done better, and meekly followed on with the others to Peor, another peak of the mountain. And there Balaam told them to build seven altars, and offer a bullock and a ram upon each. They did it. Balaam stood by in silence ; there was no use, he thought, in going one side for enchantments, as he had done, so he stood and looked down upon the Israelites till all was ready, and he was expected to speak. Then he turned his face towards the wilderness. He saw the Israelites in their tents, and began to speak :

“Balaam, the son of Beor, hath said, and the man whose eyes are open hath said: he hath said, *which* heard the words of God, *which* saw the vision of the Almighty, falling *into a trance*, but having his eyes open.”

The king and the princes stood in the greatest anxiety. Now, they thought, he was going to say something favorable ; but his next words were :



“How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, *and* thy tabernacles, O Israel!” and after going on in this way for some time, he added, “Blessed *is* he that blesseth thee, and cursed *is* he that curseth thee.”

By this time the king was so angry that he struck his hands together and said; “I called thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast altogether blessed *them* these three times. . . . Now flee thou to thy place,” you shall have no honors from me.

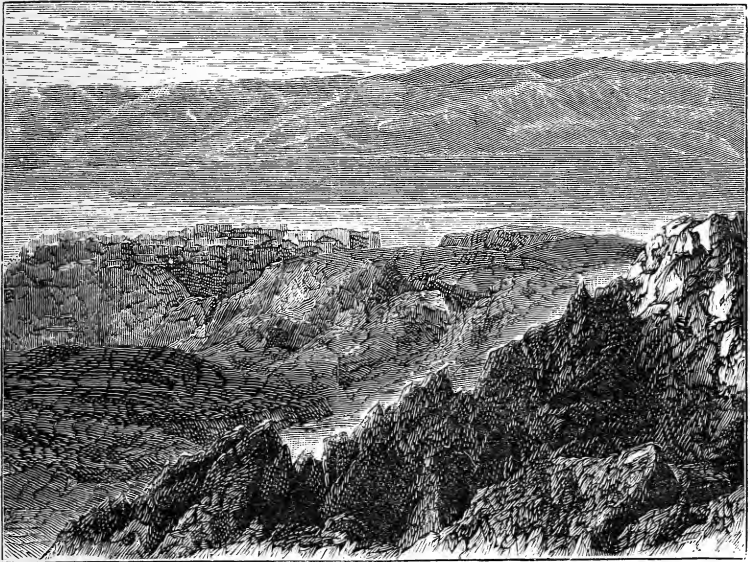
Balaam reminded him of what he told him at the beginning, that he should speak only what the Lord bade.

They were all disappointed; they had wasted all their sacrifices, and nothing was accomplished.

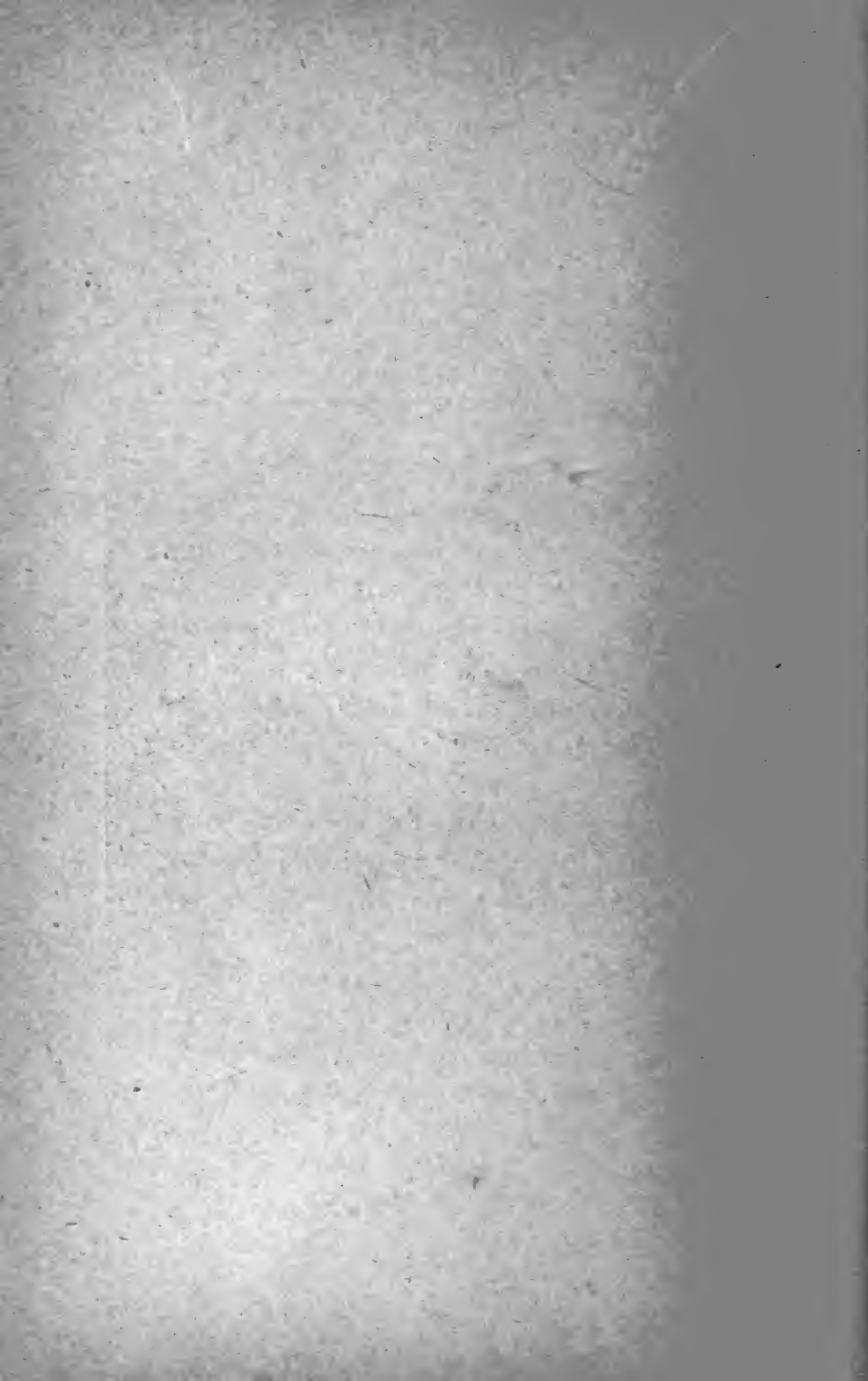
Balaam saw his honors and his gold slipping away, and cast about in his mind for a way to retain both and to please Balak, too. At length he had it,—a wicked thought, direct from the evil one himself; and he took Balak the king one side to tell him that heavy curses could be brought upon Israel by drawing them into

idolatry. Send your young Moabitish women into their camp, said he, and let them draw off the young men into their temples, and lead them into idolatry, and their God will come out in heavy judgments upon them. (Num. 31 : 16.)

Balak saw the cunning, and was pleased, and set about accomplishing his wicked designs at once. Balak and Balaam were good friends again, and there was plenty of money and honors awaiting if the plan should only succeed.



Mountains of Moab.



## CHAPTER VII.

### MOSES' DEATH.

SPRING, with its warm sunshine, its singing birds and bright flowers, was giving new life and joy to the great Hebrew nation as they lay at ease in their new possessions. The camp had been idle for weeks, and many of the young men were ready for any excitement or change to give them diversion. They accepted the attentions of some of the Moabite girls who visited them, and they formed, what they might consider, some pleasant acquaintances.

At length the Moabitish young women also came into the outskirts of the camp, and made acquaintance with the soldiers, and invited them to their temples in Beth-peor, where they worshipped Baal-peor, a filthy idol of the Moabites ; and the young

men went willingly ; led on to their own destruction by the smiles and fascinations of these bad women. It was not long till that temple of abominations at Beth-peor was crowded with men from the Hebrew camp.

Balak, and the false prophet, were watching with great pleasure the success of their diabolic plan, and were now quite sure of a curse upon Israel.

The whole thing was managed very secretly, lest the old lawgiver, Moses, should learn the facts. He, being busy with the affairs of the nation, had no suspicion of the great sin which existed in the camp, but when he heard of it, his whole soul was stirred within him.

He found that the feasts of the heathen gods, were beginning to be established among the chosen people of God, even as they lay upon the borders of the promised land.

Moses went to God for direction. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel ; and he commanded Moses to take the chiefs of the people and hang up those

who had sinned, before the sun, that the anger of the Lord might be turned away.

And Moses, filled with righteous anger, commanded the judges of Israel to slay every one his man, that was joined unto Baal-peor. The people heard of this order, and collected around the tabernacle, weeping, and confessing their sins; but the judges went out and executed some of the most notorious of these Baal worshippers, and then God, by a plague, destroyed twenty-four thousand more. Thus he showed his hatred of that evil.

God had seen the snare laid by the Moabites and Midianites, and now commanded Moses to vex and smite these nations for drawing the Hebrews into sin.

The whole plan of Balaam and Balak became known, and Moses was quite ready to draw up his army. He chose and armed a thousand men from each of the tribes, and with Phinehas the priest, and the trumpets, they went forth to the territory of Midian and Moab. Balak had brought destruction upon his own head by his acts. The Israelites, whom

he so much dreaded, had now come in earnest, and war was carried to every city. They killed and made captive till they had been over the whole land, and subdued it.

In one city, where they were looking over the dead, they found the false prophet Balaam, killed by the sword. He had expressed the wish to "die the death of the righteous," which he might have done if he had not cast in his lot with the wicked.

Balak was killed with five other kings ; and all his princes shared the same fate ; and the whole land, with its herds and flocks was captured.

The army came back, bringing hundreds of girls whose parents had been killed, probably kept for servants ; six hundred and seventy-five thousand sheep ; seventy-two thousand cattle, and sixty-one thousand asses, besides a great amount of gold. Moses and Eleazar, and all the princes went out to meet them. What a sight was that ! It was right for God to destroy those wicked people for their sins.



The work on the east of Jordan was about finished. Moses, the great law-giver, and leader, the beloved intercessor, who had stood so many years between the nation and God, was to go no further with them. He was to die on that side of Jordan. He had asked to go across and put his feet upon the promised land, but because of his sin at Kadesh he was refused. He was submissive to God.

He had done a great work during his life in leading a nation from bondage, and placing them as free men in a country of their own. The people had risen in intelligence and morality; and they were the only people in the world who possessed the written word of God. They were indebted to Moses for the five books which were then laid away in manuscript; but they have since been printed, and are now in our hands, and are read throughout the world. Their titles are Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. Moses had also written the 90th psalm, which is full of love and trust. He may have thought that his writings were then done :

But God spoke to him and said: The days approach when you must die. When you are gone this people will forsake me and worship the gods of the nations around them. Then my anger will be kindled and I will hide my face from them. Write this song and teach it to the children of Israel; put it into their mouths that it may be a witness against them.

This song of Moses can be found in the 32nd chapter of Deuteronomy, and commences: "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak: and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth." There are forty-three verses, all of which are beautiful and instructive. Moses wrote it the same day, and repeated it to the people, while they committed it to memory. He then said, "It *is* not a vain thing for you; because it *is* your life." He was anxious for the people, and told them that if they obeyed God's commandments, they should be set on high, above all the nations of the earth. They should be blessed in the city, and in the field; blessed in their children, and in their cattle; blessed in their basket, and

store ; blessed when they came in, and when they went out ; they should conquer their enemies ; they should be prospered in all they set their hands to ; the Lord would establish them a holy people, and all the nations of the earth should be afraid of them.

But, said Moses, if you do not obey God, but go after other gods to serve them, then you shall be cursed every where : in your children, in your cattle, cursed when you go in, or when you go out, cursed in all you set your hand to. You shall have pestilence, and consumption, and fever ; the sword shall destroy you ; the heaven over your head shall be brass and the earth under your feet shall be iron. You shall be smitten before your enemies, and they shall carry you away where you shall worship gods of wood and stone. You shall become a by-word and a proverb among all the nations where the Lord will send you. Then raising his hands he said, "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, *that* I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing ;

therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live . . . for he is your life.”

The people were deeply moved by Moses' earnest words and promised to obey. They would gladly have kept Moses with them; for they loved him, although they had so often murmured and rebelled and grieved his heart.

- Joshua and Caleb had been his true friends, and they now stood near him as he talked. Gershom and Eliezer listened with bowed heads, and tearful eyes, to their father's last counsel. Moses said :

I am a hundred and twenty years old this day. I can no more go in and out before you, for I must not pass over this Jordan. The Lord will go before you and destroy the nations, and you shall possess their land. Joshua shall go before you as the Lord has said. Be strong and of a good courage; fear not nor be afraid of them, for the Lord your God, he it is that goeth before you. He will not fail you nor forsake you.

Then Moses called for Joshua who came

and stood before him, and Moses with deep feeling said :

Be strong, Joshua, and of good courage ; for you must go with this people to the land which the Lord hath sworn to their fathers to give them. And you shall cause them to inherit it. The Lord, he it is that goes before you. He will be with you. He will not fail you nor forsake you ; fear not, neither be discouraged.

Moses was called by the Lord to go to the tabernacle with Joshua. The pillar of cloud rested over the door as they entered, and there Joshua received instructions from the Lord. Moses repeated these words to the people when he came out, and warned them against idolatry.

But the time had come for parting, and Moses lifted up his hands and pronounced a blessing separately upon the tribes. Reuben was first called ; and did not every person in that tribe bow his head as the prayer arose, " Let Reuben live, and not die ; and let *not* his men be few." Judah's name was next pronounced, and a blessing asked. Then followed the name

of Levi, Moses' own tribe. They were to teach God's judgments and law, to burn whole burnt sacrifices upon God's altar; and after a blessing, the prayer of the man of God arose for the tribe. As it included his own children and children's children, it came with earnestness from his heart. Benjamin, Ephraim, Manasseh, Zebulun, Gad, Dan, Naphtali, and Asher were each called and blessed. And then came the last words. Moses stretched wide his arms, as if to include all the tribes, and with deep pathos said :

“The eternal God *is thy* refuge, and underneath *are* the everlasting arms. . . . Happy art thou O Israel : who *is* like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who *is* the sword of thy excellency ! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee ; and thou shalt tread upon their high places.”

Moses' hands dropped by his side, and with a face full of peace, he turned away from the people and alone walked towards Mount Nebo. He was going up to die.

The tribes stood as if petrified, gazing after their dear leader, whose strong, erect form could be seen going higher and higher up among the crags. They were not allowed to follow, though they would gladly have been by his side. He was gone ; they could get no further glimpse of his beloved form, and they were filled with grief and mourning. They remembered the sorrows they had caused him by their rebellions, and his meek and forgiving spirit towards them, and his prayers, choosing rather to be cut off with them, than to live in honor after their destruction. And they wept and mourned for Moses thirty days.

But while they were in these low grounds of earth, struggling with their sins and regrets, Moses was with God and the angels in the mount. His spirit was in unison with the holy ones who surrounded him, and it was but a step into the celestial regions just beyond. No human weaknesses or sins now clouded his mind ; his vision was enlarged, and he saw spread out before him the promised

land, with its hills and valleys, its lakes and rivers, the land towards which he had been so long travelling, and which he so much wished to enter.

There, in later years, the great high priest, towards whom all those bloody sacrifices offered in the wilderness and on their way pointed, and of whom Moses himself was a type, Christ our righteousness, was to live and suffer. Moses foresaw it and was satisfied. He laid hold by faith of this blessed Saviour: his spiritual as his bodily vision was enlarged: his soul was in ecstasies; the earthly faded away in the greater glories of the heavenly. The angels became visible, celestial music was around him, and he was with God.

The poor body which he had inhabited 120 years lay upon the ground, but it was precious still: the shining angels hovered over it, and lifting it they bore it carefully down to a valley in the land of Moab over against Beth-peor and there they buried it, and there they will watch over it till the resurrection.



“By Nebo's lonely mountain,  
On this side Jordan's wave,  
In a vale in the land of Moab,  
There lies a lonely grave ;  
But no man dug that sepulchre,  
And no man saw it e'er,  
For the angels of God upturned the sod,  
And laid the dead man there.”

That was the grandest funeral  
That ever passed on earth,  
But no man heard the tramping,  
Or saw the train go forth ;  
For without sound of music,  
Or voice of them that wept,  
Silently down from the mountain crown  
The great procession swept.

Perchance the bald old eagle,  
On gray Beth-peor's height,  
Out of his rocky eyrie  
Looked on the wondrous sight ;  
Perchance the lion stalking  
Still shuns that hallowed spot,  
For beast and bird, have seen and heard  
That which man knoweth not.

This was the bravest warrior  
That ever buckled sword,  
This the most gifted poet  
That ever breathed a word ;  
And never earth's philosopher  
Traced with his golden pen  
On the deathless page, truths half so sage  
As he wrote down for men.

And had he not high honor ?  
 The hill-side for his pall,  
 To lie in state, where angels wait  
 With stars for tapers tall ;  
 And the dark rock-pines with tossing plumes,  
 Over his bier to wave ;  
 And God's own hand, in that lonely land  
 To lay him in the grave.

In that deep grave without a name  
 Whence his uncoffined clay  
 Shall break again,—most wondrous thought!  
 Before the judgment day ;  
 And stand, with glory wrapped around,  
 On the hills he never trod ;  
 And speak of the strife, that won our life  
 With the incarnate Son of God.

Oh lonely tomb in Moab's land !  
 Oh dark Beth-peor's hill !  
 Speak to these anxious hearts of ours,  
 And teach them to be still.  
 God hath his mysteries of grace,  
 Ways that we cannot tell ;  
 He hides them deep, like the secret sleep  
 Of him he loved so well.\*"

For many days the people mourned for Moses, but he came no more. Joshua was now in authority.

God commanded him to take the nation over into the promised land. This Joshua did triumphantly ; and just five days before

\* Mrs. Alexander.

the forty years of wandering ended, they were all standing on the plains of Jericho—they had possession.

Years of war followed, but the Lord gave them victory, as he promised; and all the land from the Mediterranean on the west, to the Euphrates on the east, and from the mountains of Lebanon on the north, to the river of Egypt on the south, was theirs, when Israel was most extended.

Joshua lived about twenty-six years after Moses' death, long enough to see each tribe fairly established in its own possession, and died at the age of one hundred and ten years. And he was buried in Mount Ephraim, on the north side of the hill of Gaash. Joseph's bones, which the Israelites had carried with them for forty years, they buried in Shechem, in the ground which Jacob bought so many years before for a hundred pieces of silver.

The Hebrew nation, after varying fortunes and discipline under the judges, rose rapidly under David, and under Solomon became, perhaps, the most civilized, en-

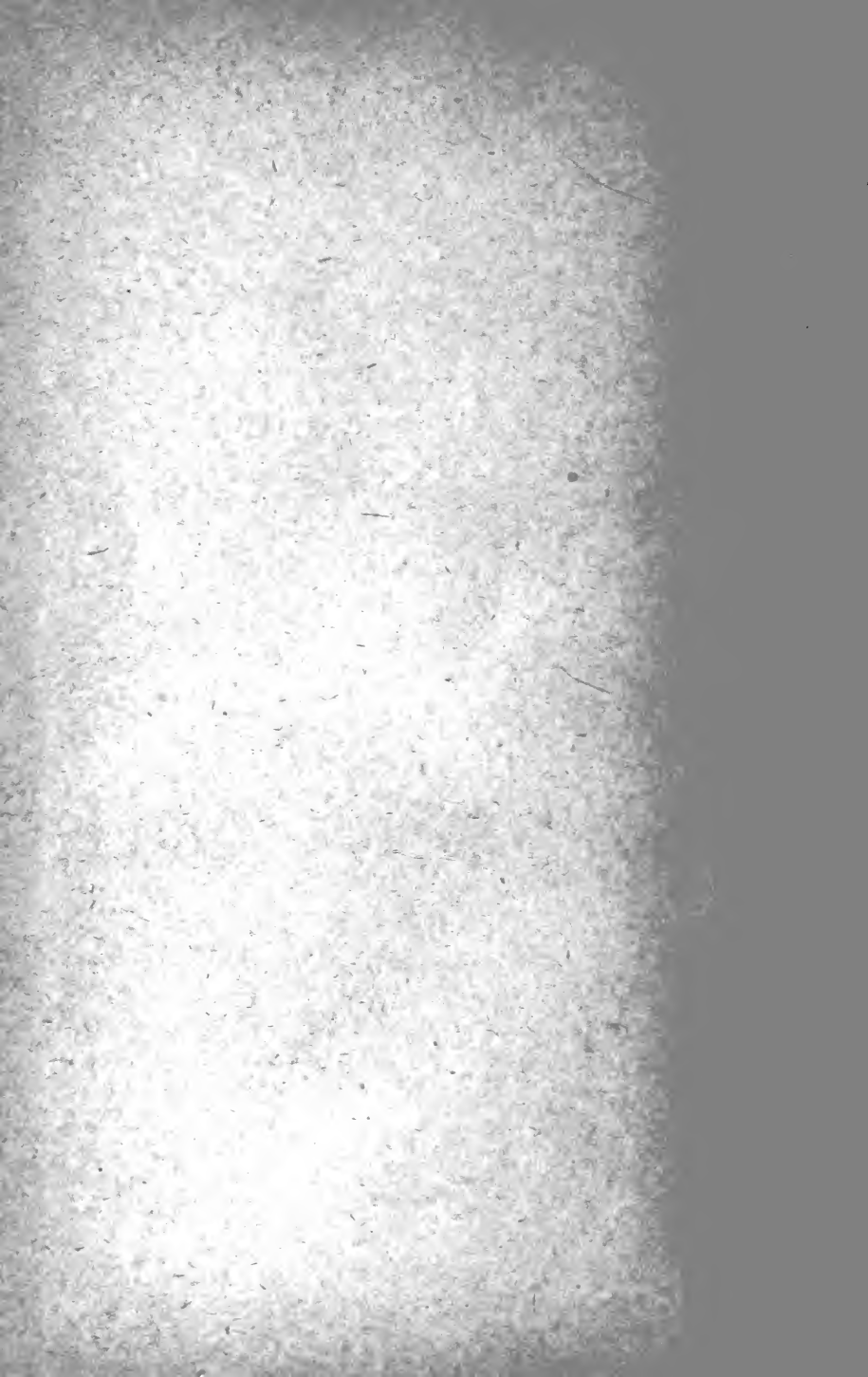
lightened and enterprising people on the earth.

In the fulness of time Christ came of the tribe of Judah, and made his home with this people ; but in their blindness they did not recognize their long expected Messiah, and they crucified him. Previous to his death Christ was transfigured before two of his disciples, and Moses, accompanied by Elijah, was with him on the mount ; they were talking to him of his decease. So glorious was this whole appearance that those present could not look upon it, but fell upon their faces till it was past. Moses again disappeared ; but when heaven was opened, by the revelation given to John on Patmos, the redeemed were singing,

“THE SONG OF MOSES THE SERVANT OF GOD AND THE SONG OF THE LAMB.”





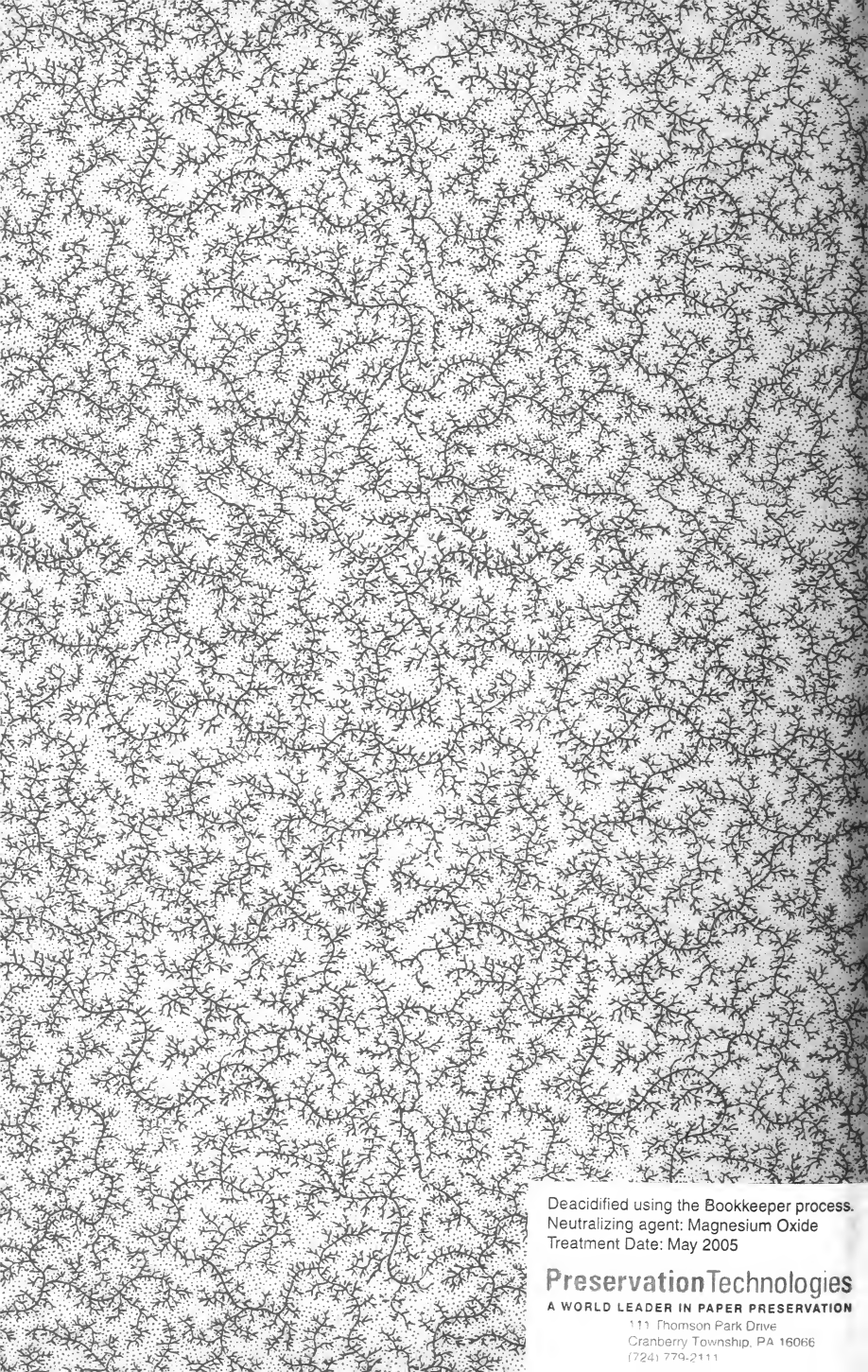








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