

people. Taking advantage of the common things, the Lord referred to the shepherd's staff which Moses carried and bade him throw it to the ground; it at once became a serpent. Moses' faith was again tested, and the Lord bade him take it up again, and it became a staff in his hand as at first. The assurance that he would be able to give the people this demonstration and other demonstrations that God had sent him to them strengthened Moses' confidence in God and made up for his lack of confidence in himself. And this should be the case with all of us; we are not to have confidence in ourselves, but if we go forth strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, confident and rejoicing because he is with us, we are not only safe as respects ourselves but in the proper condition for the Lord to more and more use us in his service—"He that humbleth himself shall be exalted; he that exalteth himself shall be abased," is the divine method of procedure.

Moses urged further that he could find some one much more capable of telling the good tidings than himself. He said, "I am slow of speech," I never was an orator that

could answer, reason out, this matter with Pharaoh. I should feel so abashed upon coming into his presence, and so feel my insignificance, that even though I were your representative I fear that I would not be able to present your message in a proper manner. Meeting this objection, the Lord told Moses that he would give him his brother Aaron as a mouth-piece. Thus strengthened and encouraged, the meekest man in all the earth set out upon his mission to meet the greatest king of earth at that time, Pharaoh Menephtah.

Let each of us then, dear readers, impress upon our hearts the essence of this lesson, that if God be with us and for us, however humble and weak of ourselves, we may be mighty through him to the pulling down of the strongholds of error and for the building up of his people in the most holy faith, and for their deliverance from the bondage of error. Let us in the name of the Lord do with our might what our hands find to do, but always with the thought that we serve the Lord. Let his words, "Certainly I will be with thee," be the strength in our every endeavor in his name and cause.

## SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

Dear Brother Russell:—

The last three months of 1906 were quite trying to me. My occupation brought me too much in contact with the world, so much so that I am not at all satisfied with myself; but I am starting in the new year with much experience and a full resolve to profit thereby. I am going to seek the Lord more diligently through his Word, and through association with his people. I intend giving up my present employment to seek a position elsewhere, where I can have more time to give to active service for him who bought me with the great price. Here I am completely penned up. I do not have even nights or Sundays in which to meet with the Lord's people, so I must get out where I can keep the rust from collecting on my armor. I shall put at least one-half of my time in spreading the glad news of the great rest day just at hand for all who are weary and heavy laden. Remember me at the heavenly court, that I may have that grace that is all-sufficient. Trusting in him, I am

Your brother and fellow-servant,

J. W. B.,—Wash.

Following is a letter written by a business customer to one of our friends:—

"I want to thank you for the little pamphlet you sent me last year when you answered my letter saying you could

not fill my order. It was one of those 'Old Theology' tracts you sent. I do not know you or your faith, but that little paper has done more for me than money could buy. Whoever you are I hope it has done even more for you. So I heartily thank you for sending it. It was bread cast upon the water and a hungry soul found it. I have now, from that pamphlet, the MILLENNIAL DAWN series and am reading the fourth volume, having read the first, second and third and liked them very much.

I feel I owe it all to you, for I never knew of that kind of literature. I said *all* to you, but I will take that back; I owe it all to God, but believe that you or whoever sent it to be the instrument he used in answer to my prayers. I hope many other hungry souls may be fed by the same means. Our efforts in scattering the precious truths will be a blessing to us as well as to those they reach.

I thought I was a Christian for a good many years, but I have only found out what a true Christian is, and know the mass of people will not accept that doctrine. But I hope there are still more truth-hungry souls who may find it, and that it will prove a blessing to them as it has to me.

I might say more, but as I do not know the sender will only say in conclusion, may the Lord bless you and keep you faithful for that high calling he has in store for the faithful.

Yours in the blessed hope,

J. H. S.,—Neb.

## LAYING UP HEAVENLY TREASURE

The present is the time for laying up heavenly treasures which cannot be stolen from us and which cannot corrupt. We fully agree that our Lord and the gracious things which he has in reservation for them that love him—the elect—are our treasures and that the store of them becomes larger and larger as we seek to set our affections on things above and not on the things of earth. But just now we wish to think of these heavenly things in respect to our earthly life, and to note the importance of laying up some heavenly treasure on earth.

According to our understanding of the Scriptures the Lord is now permitting a very tranquil period, which probably will not last long. In this time the winds are being held, the storm is not allowed to break *until the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads*. The thought is that just as soon as the sealing process has been accomplished the restraints will be released and the storm will sweep down upon us—upon the whole world to some extent, but especially upon the sealed ones, to try them, to prove them, and to test them. Not a pleasant prospect, some may say; but we answer that all of our heavenly Father's provisions for us are agreeable when we are rightly in harmony with him and his precious Word. We are symbolically represented as being enabled during that time of trouble to stand upon the sea of glass and to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, the meanwhile harping upon our harps—making melody from the Word of God and greatly rejoicing therein. This time of trouble, when the winds of persecution shall be loosed, will be the time of fiery trial which shall try us; and since the Lord's people are not to think strange of it, it is proper that it should be called to their attention repeatedly, and that they be helped in their preparation for it. He shall give his messengers

charge concerning thee [the Christ], and in their hands they shall bear thee up [the feet members] lest ye stumble against stones and difficulties in this evil day.—Psa. 91:11, 12.

### SEALED IN HEART AND FOREHEAD

The Scriptures refer to the sealing of the holy Spirit as necessarily essential to membership in the Lord's family at all. Whoever does not receive the seal, the impress of the holy Spirit, will not be a copy of God's dear Son in heart, in character, and cannot be associated with him in the kingdom. The sealing process is a gradual one, the impression becoming more permanent daily. We are not to understand sealing in the forehead to be identical with this sealing in the heart, although the two are closely related. Many of the Lord's dear people throughout the past have had the seal of the Lord upon their hearts and characters but not upon their foreheads—they did not have that intellectual knowledge of God and his glorious plan which he has provided for all of his faithful of the present time, and which now becomes a test, a proof, an evidence to us that we are in the Lord's favor and that he is showing us his deep things.

The question with each one of us should be, How am I prospering? How am I profiting by these provisions which the Lord has made for my preparation for the coming trials and tests? Am I living carelessly, thoughtlessly? Am I improving or am I wasting the precious moments, the blessed hours, the golden opportunities presented to me by God's favor? Surely the Lord has been faithful in all of his engagements; surely he is doing for us exceedingly more abundantly than we could ask or think; surely if we fail to make our calling and election sure the fault will not be his, for he is faithful who has called us, he also will do it. If, therefore, he has done all that he has promised and all that is

necessary and all that is proper for our aid, if there be any failure in the matter it will surely be our own fault. It is well that we should see how the Lord has placed the responsibility upon us, as is implied in his direction that we work out our salvation with fear and trembling, remembering that it is God that worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. All our blessings come from God, and come to us as gifts; but these gifts, to be of value to us in the end, must be received, must be used, must be appropriated, must be worked out in mind and heart, and so far as possible in our mortal bodies. The inspiration of God's promise first worked in us to will and to do his will, to lay down our all at his feet; and secondly, as we followed on, these promises continued to work in us to the point of doing service, putting into practice our good wills, good intentions—but only those who do put them into practice will get the eventual blessing of the kingdom.

**"O, FOR A THOUSAND TONGUES TO SING MY GREAT REDEEMER'S PRAISE"**

It is well that we have the sentiment here expressed, and the desire to praise the Lord a thousand-fold more than we have ability; but we do well to remember that the Lord looks for something more than songs and thankfulness: he looks for evidences of appreciation of his grace and his promises, he looks for evidences of our appropriation of these, in harmony with his design in giving them. If, then, he has fulfilled his promise that at his second presence he will gird himself as a servant and come forth to serve those who hear his knock and open their hearts to receive him, we may properly infer that the strengthening food he is now providing for his people is in some sense of the word necessary to them. It is so necessary that if they receive it not, if they feed not upon it, if they are not made thereby strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, it will ultimately be greatly to their disadvantage.

We write this because we observe that some who rejoice greatly in the bountiful supply provided by the Lord and who love to sing of his blessings, mercies, etc., seem not to be giving sufficiency of attention to the repast itself. They remind one of the man who purchased an encyclopedia and never used it, but often praised it and took great pleasure in it, with the thought that the information was there if ever he should need it. Some of the Lord's dear people seem disposed to do after this manner with the precious things of divine truth which are now in their hands. They would keep the volumes in their libraries, they would praise them, they would talk about them to their friends, but many of them neglect to read—many permit the cares of this life, the deceitfulness of riches, etc., to consume their time, the precious moments, the precious hours, the golden opportunities, so that they do not feast upon the viands provided by the Lord. The time is surely coming when the rejoicings of this class will be less—when the winds of persecution and opposition shall be let loose and play upon them. We fear that many will not have the sufficiency of foundation for their faith and love to stand the crucial tests of that time.

**WHEN THE DOOR SHALL BE SHUT**

The shutting of the door mentioned in one of our Lord's parables seems to imply something quite in harmony with the loosing of the winds when the sealing in the forehead shall have been accomplished. We cannot surmise just how this trouble will be precipitated and the door for further fellowship and promulgation of the truth be closed. It would not surprise us, however, if in some manner it should be accomplished through the Post Office Department. We cannot now think of what plea or pretext could be used to interfere with our legal rights and privileges under the law, but we are to expect that in a very few years the federation of the various Christian denominations will give them a political influence they have never before had, and we are to expect that politicians will be ready at that time to obey the united voice of the people, if not the voice of God, and that, however illegal or unjust the procedure, they would be prepared to put a stop to our work. When that time shall come we will consider it to be our duty to use all reasonable energy to maintain our legal rights and privileges and to keep the door open. When it shall close, in spite of our every endeavor, we will accept the result as being of divine providence and apply the Master's words, "Thou couldst have no power at all over me except it were given thee from above."—John 19:11.

**AN ILLUSTRATION—A HINT**

Such proceedings in any other nation under the sun might be more reasonably expected than in this land. Nevertheless our attention has recently been drawn to an illustration of such a power in this country as we would not have imagined.

The publishers of the *Woman's Magazine* of St. Louis started a banking arrangement amongst their subscribers, permitting banking and checking by mail. So far as we are able to understand the matter the entire arrangement was entirely honest and aboveboard. But about the time that the banking institution was ready to open, the Post Office Department prohibited it, declaring it to be fraudulent, and the publisher was cut off from all communication with the outside world because no mail was permitted to be delivered to him. Subsequently his journal, the *Woman's Magazine*, monthly, 10c per year, was prohibited from the mails as second-class matter under the claim that it was sold below cost. The publisher, apparently quite a wealthy man, seems to have spared no expense in his endeavor to obtain a hearing in the courts and a public examination of everything pertaining to his bank and to his magazine. He claims that he has thus far been unable to do this, and that he is practically helpless so far as any court of justice is concerned.

Without going into the merits of this case, of which we acknowledge we have little information aside from the publisher's plea, we nevertheless see in this feature of the law—so different from anything we could have anticipated in this land—something which could readily, we believe, be made applicable to this journal and the work of our Society in general when the time would come that it would be demanded by a large, influential party—when the time would come for the letting loose of the winds, the storms.

**HEAVENLY TREASURES SAFE**

If these conditions should come about speedily, how would they find you and me, dear brother and sister? Could we look up to the Lord and say that we had been faithful over the few things committed to our care and had done what we could to advance the honor of the Lord's name and to bring his truth, his gracious plan, to the attention of his followers? And could we thankfully acknowledge that we had received into good and honest hearts the precious message of the truth, and that there we had the things in our minds which we would not only be able to appreciate ourselves but be able to communicate to others if the time had passed when we could give them tracts or books? This is a very important question, dear friends, for it takes time to lay up this spiritual food in reserve, so that we could not only have it for the immediate present, but also enough for the coming emergencies.

Let us remember that it is not sufficient that we have the Bible, the *DAWN STUDIES*, upon our shelves or upon our tables. We need to use them, we need to partake of this bread, this meat in due season, this refreshment which our present Lord has supplied to us. In this connection we commend to all the dear friends afresh the suggestion thrown out by a dear sister about a year ago and commented upon in these columns. She remarked that herself and daughter had concluded to read over again the entire series of *DAWN STUDIES*, and that they found that the entire six volumes could be read through in a year by reading twelve pages each day. How much blessing would surely come to all by such a re-hungering, re-investigation, re-assimilation of the meat in due season. We call to your attention the fact that, so far as we are aware, no one has ever come fully, clearly, thoroughly into the light of present truth from the hearing of it preached orally—that all who have attained to a high development of knowledge and appreciation of the plan have done so by reading, studying. We suggest that this should govern us in respect to our endeavors to serve the flock and to strengthen ourselves.

**ADDITIONAL BIBLE STUDY HELPS**

Some not far advanced in the truth may get the thought that the *DAWN STUDIES*, *Berean Studies*, etc., are not Bible studies. But all those who have made progress in the truth are able to set them straight upon the matter, and to point out to them that this is Bible study of the most profitable kind they have ever engaged in: indeed that all of their previous study of the Bible amounted to nothing in comparison. Those familiar with the subject can readily show that the *DAWN STUDIES* merely give the Bible in arranged order which simplifies our comprehension of the divine plan and the divine book, and that the reference to the Scriptures continually keep before the mind of the students the fact that all stress, all authority, is laid upon the Word of God and not upon any human opinions.

We have a bit of news to communicate which we know will cause great rejoicing amongst the Bereans. It was apparently the Lord who put it into the heart of Brother C. J. Woodworth to go through his Bible from Genesis to Revelation and through all the volumes of the *DAWN* series and to make note of every sentence of Scripture treated or explained in

the DAWNS. He started this work for his own benefit, beginning with the book of Ephesians. He writes us that he was astonished to find how very much of the text had been discussed in the various volumes of DAWN. He assures us that he never got so much blessing from anything in his life as he got in that preparation. He then determined to go through the entire Bible in the same manner. He suggested the desirability of putting this in the hands of all the dear friends, so far as possible. We acquiesced in the suggestion and inquired how long time would be needed for the preparation. The dear brother bent his energies to the labor of love and sent us the whole of the manuscript about the first of this month. He is a rapid workman, and in the Lord's providence was able to devote seven hours of each day from the last of November to the first of April to this work. So far as we have had time to examine it will prove a most valuable aid to the dear household of faith. One can turn to this and find in its columns first the words of Scripture, secondly a condensed interpretation taken from the DAWNS, and thirdly the reference is given, so that one can turn to the DAWN and have the argument in detail. This brief Bible Commentary is already in the hands of the typesetters.

With it we propose to republish the Topical Index which appeared in the back of the special WATCH TOWER BIBLE published some years ago, the entire edition of which, five thousand, was promptly taken by the friends. Additionally we have had prepared an "Instructor's Assistant," which groups under various heads brief quotations of appropriate proof-texts, citing the references in the Bible and also in the DAWN STUDIES. With this little compilation in his hand every WATCH TOWER reader may be an able and efficient teacher of the Word, qualified to give to him that asketh not only a reason for the hope within him but the proof-texts, and, beyond this, an ability to call to his assistance in expounding the subject the help in the DAWNS. With every reader thus an Evangelist we may hope that the progress of the truth may be greatly enhanced. The two last-mentioned compilations have been made by Sisters Seibert and Sherman.

It is proposed that all three of these helps in the study of the Word and in the location of the DAWN references thereto, shall be published under one cover in a limp binding of a suitable size to carry under the cover of an ordinary

portable Bible. The price will be such as to bring it within the means of all, and any WATCH TOWER readers too poor to purchase will be supplied with a copy free.

#### A NEW WATCH TOWER BIBLE

Instead of getting out another edition of the WATCH TOWER BIBLE published in 1902, it is proposed that we shall have another, very different in style, and in some respects a great improvement upon the former edition. The new WATCH TOWER BIBLE will be quite small, 4½x7 inches, large pocket edition. It will be printed on India paper, be about ¾ of an inch thick and very light in weight, and in addition to maps will have our own special helps above mentioned bound in at the back, namely: (1) The DAWN Study Commentary, with references; (2) The Topical Index, with Scriptural and DAWN Study references; (3) The Instructor's Assistant with references. These will all be bound with round corners, red under gold edges, divinity circuit. The binding will be of three grades, namely, the so-called French Seal will be the cheapest: including postage it will cost our subscribers \$1.25 per copy—any quantity. The second grade will be the same, except that it will have linen linings, price \$1.38. We will have no intermediate grades, our third being the very best Genuine Sealskin, calf-lined, silk-sewed. The price of this grade, including postage, will be \$2.35—any quantity.

The patent index can be supplied on any of these Bibles at an additional cost of 25c per copy, but we do not recommend the index on so small a book. It is easy to place the fingers at the upper corners and run through the leaves so as to find any book desired.

The above prices are very special, obtained by reason of our ability to place a very large order. We have ordered 10,000 copies in these assorted bindings, and this is probably the largest order ever placed for India paper Bibles of one style. We feel confident that the book will be exactly what every WATCH TOWER reader will want, and have fixed the price at absolute cost. Six thousand of these Bibles are promised us this year and the remainder next year, but their preparation will require time. Do not expect them before next September. We are merely giving you timely announcement. Send in no orders until notified later on the second page of this journal.

### LITTLE OPPORTUNITIES

"We all might do good where we often do ill;  
There is always a way, if we have but the will:  
For even a word, kindly breathed or suppressed,  
May guard off some pain, or give peace to some breast.

"We all might do good in a thousand small ways;  
Forbearing to flatter, yet giving due praise:  
In spurning ill rumor, reproving wrong done,  
And treating but kindly the heart we have won.

"We all might do good whether lowly or great—  
A deed is not judged by the purse or estate;  
If only a cup of cold water is giv'n,  
Like the mite of the widow 'tis something for heav'n."

### SOME PLAGUED—SOME PASSED OVER

Exodus 12:21-30.—JUNE 9.

Golden Text—"When I see the blood, I will pass over you."—V. 13.

Moses, accompanied by Aaron, his brother and appointed mouthpiece, appeared before Pharaoh and informed him of his mission in part. He made no reference to the complete departure of the Israelites never to return, though Pharaoh evidently understood this to be the program. The request was to go a day's journey into the wilderness and to offer sacrifices to the Lord, no reference being made as to what would be done thereafter. To Pharaoh it seemed preposterous that the Egyptians should let go from them a skillful people, who had been serving them now for a good while as bond-servants, and helping along amazingly in their general prosperity and wealth. Pharaoh determined that he would not encourage such a thought by the slightest sign of timidity, but on the contrary he would discourage it and cause, if possible, that the people should feel that Moses and Aaron, their representatives and delegates, had done them an injury by the agitation. Accordingly Pharaoh not only refused their request, but imposed additional burdens upon the people as a penalty for making it. All this might be termed human nature—the natural thing for any person in power to do.

It was the natural thing, however, only because of man's depravity; it would have been a very unnatural thing for any perfect man to have done. A man more nearly perfect in the image and likeness of God would, on the contrary, have had

a spirit of fairness, a spirit of equity, which would have said, We have not been treating these people right; we have not been treating them according to the golden rule, as we would that they should have dealt with us. We have been taking advantage of their situation and of our power as a dominating race, and have been taking their labor by browbeating and by force. We will seek to make amends, not only by giving them their liberty, to which they have a right, but by pressing upon them as their rightful due a certain proportion of the wealth we have secured through their energies. We will then say to them,—Now, whether you go to another land or whether you stay here is a matter for yourselves to decide; but we will be glad to have you for neighbors and for friends, and to deal with you as fellowmembers of one race, according to the golden rule.

But the depraved heart never has such suggestions, or, if it has them, promptly stifles them as foolish, unbusinesslike. The Lord's people, begotten again of the holy Spirit, enlightened through the Word of truth and taught in the school of Christ, are not to take the worldly view on any such question, but in all their affairs to act in harmony with the golden rule. If any reader of this article has not been in the habit of so doing in the past, it is time that he should begin at once. Time is short in which to cultivate this proper

view and to learn to use this golden rule. If our hearts do not attain to this standard of love for our neighbors as for ourselves, the Apostle assures us that we may seriously doubt that we have any love for God that would be acceptable to him. (1 John 4:20.) True, not many are in the position of Pharaoh, and even Pharaoh might have been unable to carry out the golden rule in connection with his dealings with the Israelites by reason of a contrary spirit amongst his counsellors and others of influence in the nation. Similarly we may not be able to do all that we could do and would like to do in harmony with the golden rule in our dealings with neighbors, employees, etc., but we are to cultivate this spirit in our hearts, in our minds, and to live as nearly in accord with this rule as present conditions permit. Our hearts must be up to this mark, whether we are able to conform all of our affairs of life to this standard or not. Otherwise we may be sure that we shall come short of the required standard, and unless we correct the matter we will have no part in the kingdom, and would be totally unfit to be of that glorious class of kings and priests and judges who, according to the Lord's foreordination, are shortly to bless all the families of the earth in conjunction with their Lord and Head.—1 Cor. 6:2, 3.

#### "LET MY PEOPLE GO THAT THEY MAY WORSHIP"

One after another ten different plagues came upon Egypt to compel them to let the Israelites go. We can readily see how God could have made the matter much easier for them even in their wrong condition of heart. He could have raised up to the throne of Egypt a weaker man, who would have more readily yielded; but, on the contrary, the Scriptures inform us that God raised up to the throne a man of that particular character which would be strong in resistance, dogged. We read, "For this very purpose have I raised thee up, that thou might show forth my power." The means by which the Lord raised up that Pharaoh to the throne is not particularly stated, but we have illustrations of similar exaltations under divine providence. For instance, the present Emperor of Germany was raised up to power by reason of his father's death, which the Lord could easily have hindered. The Czar of Russia was raised up to his position by reason of his brother's incapacity for the office. Theodore Roosevelt was raised up to the presidency by reason of President McKinley's assassination.

Thus God has it in his own hand to set up or pull down rulers, and he orders the matter evidently to a considerable extent with a view to the impressing of the lessons which he desires to impart; and these lessons and providences have to do with other peoples than those apparently most particularly interested. For instance, the present Czar has had much to do in the matter of bringing forward the Japanese to notice; and so the Pharaoh of the Exodus, supposed to have been Menephtah, was raised up particularly on account of the Israelites and the divine intention respecting their deliverance, and the punishment of the Egyptians for the injustices that were done them. With a weaker man on the throne the Lord's power would have been less displayed and the Egyptians would have received far less chastisement.

#### THE TEN GREAT PLAGUES

The first nine of these plagues seem to divide themselves into three groups of three each, and the entire ten are supposed to have covered a period of nine months—not that they were continually enforced in that time, but that considerable intervals occurred between them. In the first three Aaron's rod was used as a symbol of divine power; in the second three the rod was not used; in the last three Moses' rod was used. In each of the three series the first was with full warning, the second with less warning, the last with no warning. The first plague is supposed to have occurred in June and the last one in the following April.

To the ordinary reader the story of these plagues and the deliverance of the Israelites is a wonderful one, but to those who have made some progress in the knowledge of the truth and who discern in the experiences of the Israelites something typical of the experiences of the Lord's people in the end of this age, the entire lesson has a still broader, deeper and stronger significance. From this standpoint the Pharaoh on the throne and the powers of Egypt represented Satan, the prince of this world, and the powers of this world. From this standpoint the antitype of Israel would be all of God's people who desire to worship and to serve him, but who are in bondage to sin and Satan. From this standpoint the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt typifies the deliverance in the end of this age of all who desire to come into harmony with God. And correspondingly, the plagues that came upon Egypt and which forced the deliverance of the Israelites

typified the great time of trouble coming upon the world in the end of this age, by means of which ultimately the power of the oppressor will be broken, and all who desire full liberty to worship and serve the Lord will be granted the opportunity; and as Pharaoh and his hosts, in seeking to interfere with the divine program, were destroyed, so Satan and all sympathizers and collaborators with him, seeking to restrain and interfere with the labors of those who would serve the Lord, will ultimately be overwhelmed and destroyed in the second death.

Noting that these ten plagues prefigured the time of trouble in the end of this age, we are not surprised to find similarly ten plagues mentioned in connection with the time of trouble portrayed in Revelation as constituting the consummation of this present age and this "present evil world." There the first three plagues are called the woe trumpets, and following them come the "seven last trumpets." The first three apparently affect all, the last seven are restricted to those who are in opposition to the Lord. And so it was in the plagues of Egypt: the first three affected the Israelites as well as the Egyptians, but from the last seven the Israelites were exempted.

#### UNDERSTANDABLE YET MIRACULOUS

While these plagues were very remarkable they were less so than might occur to us, because many of them were merely intensified experiences along lines from which the Egyptians had previously suffered. The intensity of these, and the fact that they came in harmony with preannouncements, constituted the main features that would commend them to the Egyptians as miracles. For instance, the first two the Egyptian magicians were able to imitate on a small scale. The names of these magicians are given us in the New Testament, where it is stated that as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so certain ones today resist the message of God at the hands of his servants and seek to produce counterfeit effects by the power of Satan.—2 Tim. 3:8.

The first plague—the waters turned to blood—caused serious inconvenience for the Egyptians, who are noted as the most cleanly of all the Orientals. They were obliged to dig wells near the river, using the soil as a purifier or strainer of the water. Of course the thought must be that the water became bloodlike. Geike offers a not unreasonable suggestion respecting the basis of this miracle—that it was "the presence and inconceivably rapid growth of microscopic animals (infusoria) and minute cryptogamous plants of a red color. Ehrenberg, in 1823, saw the whole bay of the Red Sea at Sinai turned into the color of blood by the presence of such plants. In *Silliman's Journal* there is an account of a fountain of blood in a cave in South Africa. It grew solid and burst bottles in which it was put, and dogs ate it greedily. The cause of these wonders is a minute alga which grows so rapidly that it actually flows, and is so small that there are from 40,656,000,000 to 824,736,000,000 plants in a cubic inch."

Another writer says concerning the Nile, as he saw it one morning, "The entire mass of the waters was opaque and of a dark red, more like blood than anything else to which I could compare it."—*Monumental History of Egypt, I., p. 10.*

The fact that we can imagine the process by which divine power produced this miracle does not interfere with its miraculousness, which is fully attested by its appearing just at the time indicated by Moses, and by the fact that it affected the water everywhere, even in household vessels.

#### THE SECOND PLAGUE—THE FROGS

Among the numerous Egyptian deities was the froghead goddess, Heka. The supposition therefore is that this plague was a special reproach to that goddess and her worshippers, and particularly severe because it was not lawful for the Egyptians to kill their tormentors. They were so abundant as to constitute a plague in the truest sense. Frogs were everywhere, in the fields, in the streets, in the homes, in the beds, in the kneading troughs. Of the physical basis of this miracle. Geike remarks that frogs in distressing numbers frequently come from the river Nile: "In the height of inundation, the abounding moisture quickens inconceivable myriads of frogs and toads which swarm everywhere, even in ordinary years."

The third plague—lice. The revised version margin renders the word lice sandflies, or fleas, and apparently with some reason. Sir Samuel Baker says of modern North Africa that, "At certain seasons it is as if the very dust of the land were turned into lice." He then describes the sandfly as a "sort of tick, not larger than a grain of sand, which when filled with blood expands to the size of a hazel nut." This miracle the magicians were unable to duplicate, and their words are the



first historical definition of a miracle: they said, "This is the finger of God."

The fourth plague—flies or beetles. The Hebrew word used in this connection is held to signify a mixture, that is various swarms of insects. The Septuagint translators, who lived in Egypt, considered the word to mean dog-flies; others hold that it signified beetles, a peculiarly serious plague to the Egyptians, because the beetle was considered the incarnation of Kephna, the Sun god, and was forbidden to be killed. A writer says,—

"Modern Egypt is sometimes visited with enormous swarms of beetles which inflict very painful bites, gnaw and destroy clothes, household furniture and leather, and consume or render unavailable all edibles."

This plague was also removed at Pharaoh's entreaty and his false promise to permit the people to go.

The fifth plague—murrain. This is supposed to have been a kind of epizootic or contagious fever affecting all domestic animals. Rawlinson declares, "There were several murrains in the years 1842, 1863, 1866, in which last-named year nearly the whole of the herds were destroyed." It was marked as one of these plagues by its prediction for a definite day and from the exemption of the cattle of the Hebrews.

#### THE SIXTH PLAGUE—BOILS

This plague was started by the symbolical scattering toward heaven of ashes of a furnace—possibly in allusion to the furnace of affliction through which the Hebrews had been passing, or possibly in sarcastic imitation of the methods of the Egyptian priests, who yearly offered sacrifices of burnt human bodies, sometimes Hebrews—to Typhon, the god of evil, scattering the ashes thus in the air.

The seventh plague—hail. This also was a very unusual experience for the Egyptians, for in their country thunder and lightning, snow and hail, are very rare. All the more it would be to them a demonstration of divine power; it terribly impressed them, besides causing serious loss not only to men and beasts but to vegetation. Pharaoh, alarmed, again proposed to accede to the demands, but again hardened his heart and refused when the plague was withdrawn.

The eighth plague—locusts. A German writer says it often happens that immense swarms of locusts come to Egypt from Nubia. Wherever they appear they cover the ground for miles and sometimes to considerable depth. It is in vain to attempt to drive them away. Only when the last bit of grass and grain is devoured will they depart, leaving behind those which in the dense mass of insects were hurt and could not go further. It takes weeks to kill these remnants. A newspaper remarks that in 1881 two hundred and fifty tons of locusts were buried in Cyprus, each ton numbering over 90,000,000 of these pests. In 1873 the writer witnessed a similar visitation of locusts or grasshoppers in the western part of the United States. They came in great clouds, obscuring the light of the sun as would a snow-storm, and greatly resembling it. Wherever they alighted it meant destruction. They were so plentiful that they could have been shoveled were they not continually in motion, and railway travel was greatly delayed in those parts by reason of the slipperiness of the tracks from the large numbers that were crushed. This also would be recognized as a plague because of its announcement and because of the usual exemption of the land of the Hebrews. Again Pharaoh repented, this time his courtiers urging upon him acquiescence with the command. Pharaoh even confessed sin, and yet subsequently hardened his heart and refused the people liberty.

The ninth plague—darkness. The physical basis of this miracle is thus stated: "In April, about Easter, there begins in Egypt a period of fifty days called *Chemsim*, meaning fifty. During this period the south wind at times brings a storm of fine sand, which sometimes is terrible. Wherever the storm passes a crackling sound is heard, as of electric sparks. A nervous depression seizes mankind and domestic animals. This is the Egyptian darkness."

Gieke says, "Artificial light at such times is of little use. The streets are practically emptied and a deep silence reigns everywhere." This plague of "deep darkness" impelled Pharaoh to grant the request of Moses provided the flocks and herds of the Hebrews did not go with them—a compromise which Moses promptly rejected.

#### THE TENTH AND LAST PLAGUE

The tenth plague—the death of the Egyptian first-born. Ample opportunity had been given for repentance, and the record is that Pharaoh once more refused to let the children of Israel go, and subsequently it is recorded that God hardened his heart. We are not to suppose that God interfered with his free moral agency in the matter, but that this hardening of his heart was accomplished through the Lord's leniency—his prompt granting of release from one plague

after another when Pharaoh repented and proposed obedience. The fact that he and his people had weathered so many of these storms and plagues doubtless encouraged the monarch to hope that eventually he would retain hold upon the Hebrews, despite all the threats and plagues. However, there was a limit to divine favor, and it was so arranged that that limit would not come until the people of Egypt had suffered a severer chastisement in punishment of their injustice toward the Hebrews. Although we are not living in a time when God is judging the world—rewarding and punishing every act of mankind, as will be done when Christ shall take to himself his great power and the Millennial reign shall begin—nevertheless we see that in the case of the church there is a judgment already enforced along spiritual lines, so that those who have made a covenant with the Lord by sacrifice, if willing and obedient, receive an hundredfold more in the present time as well as in the blessings of the future, while those who neglect their covenant receive correction and stripes, and fail to enjoy the riches of God's grace and peace. The Scriptures inform us, however, that the world will not entirely escape the wrong doings of the present time—that every misdeed will work an injury to character in proportion as it was wilful and against the light, and that all such undermining of character will require repairs and rectification under the restitution processes of the Millennial age. Thus, on the whole, has been arranged a very just and equitable system of rewards and punishments, measured according to the knowledge and perversity of each individual. It is in line with this that the Scriptures speak of the time of trouble, which is now near at hand, as being a just compensation upon Christendom for its failures to recognize the principle of equity. The collapse of the world's institutions of civilization in a period of anarchy will be the penalty of disregard for the golden rule.

#### WHY THE FIRST-BORN SUFFERED

The smiting of the first-born of Egypt contained two lessons: (1) It was the most severe blow because the first-born of the nation would be the more prominent persons in each family. (2) But the special object in confining the plague to the first-born was to show that only the first-born of the Hebrews were spared or passed over. The other members of the Hebrew families were in no more danger of that plague than were the other members of the Egyptian families. Only the first-born were marked, indicated as in danger, while the rest were to be saved. The Scriptures clearly show that the Lord thus intended to indicate the passing over or sparing of the church in the present time. The type therefore has nothing whatever to do with the world. Only the household of faith, known in the Scriptures as the church of the first-born, have that degree of light and knowledge that would permit them to be on trial for eternal life, with the danger of losing the same in the second death.

The world in general is not in this danger; they are still under the original condemnation, and hence not subject to the second condemnation or the second death. This type marks clearly what all the Scriptures so forcefully express, namely, that the present is the trial time of the church, as the Apostle expresses it, "If we sin wilfully after that we have received a knowledge of the truth there remaineth no more a sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking forward to of judgment that would devour us as adversaries of God." Again he says, "As touching those who were once enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the holy Spirit and tasted the good Word of God and the powers of the age to come, if these fall away it is impossible again to renew them unto repentance; seeing that they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh and put him to an open shame."—Heb. 6:4, 6; 10:26, 27.

Not only is the Gospel church scripturally termed the "church of the first-born," but it is also spoken of as the first-fruits unto God of his creatures. (Heb. 12:23; Jas. 1:18.) The two thoughts are in full accord; first-born ones imply later-born ones, first-fruits imply later-fruits. Thus does the Lord draw our attention to the fact that, while his plan has had its most gracious beginning with the elect of this Gospel age, his favor will not end with these, but ultimately proceed to all the families of the earth in accord with his great Oath-Bound Covenant to Abraham, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." The first-born constitute the seed class. Christ is the head or first of this first-born company, but it will not be complete until the last member of the body of Christ shall have been passed over from the earthly to the heavenly life and nature.

**LIFE ONLY UNDER THE BLOOD**

We have already noted that only the first three of the plagues extended to the habitations of the Hebrews, but in announcing to the people the tenth plague Moses informed the Hebrews that they also would be subject to this plague, except under the one condition—that they should remain inside their houses during this Passover night, and that the outside of the doorposts and lintels of their homes should be sprinkled with the blood of a specially sacrificed lamb, whose flesh was to be eaten during that night by those within the house. The message to them was, “The Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians, and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel and the two side posts, the Lord will pass over the door and will not suffer the destroyer to come into your house to smite you.”

How profoundly simple yet strong are the divine testimonies and types in their instruction of the spiritual Israelites respecting the necessities for faith in the precious blood as the only ground of acceptance with God, the only protection from the second death of those begotten of the holy Spirit. We do not think it strange that the world despises the blood, speaks lightly of the blood sacrifice of the Hebrews; but we are amazed that any of the Lord's people, after having once tasted in the sense of appreciating the merits of God's favor through the sacrifice of Christ, the Lamb of God—after once having realized that Christ died the Just for the unjust that he might bring us back to God's favor—after once having appreciated the fact that the death penalty was upon the race, that Christ died as father Adam's substitute, thus to redeem him and all who lost life in him—after all this we marvel greatly that any such could do despite to the blood of the covenant with which we are sanctified—we marvel that any such could go out from under the blood, thus repudiating it and doing despite to the divine favor thus manifested on our behalf. It is not for us to determine positively those who have been begotten of the holy Spirit and who have subsequently repudiated the merit of our Lord's atonement sacrifice on our behalf, but it is for us to recognize that all who take such a step wilfully, intelligently, deliberately, have fallen out of divine grace and have become a second time children of wrath, and that their case is a hopeless one, that they will be subject to the second death. It is respecting this form of sin that the Apostle declares, “There is a sin unto death: I do not say that you should pray for it.” Prayers for those who have taken themselves deliberately out of the Lord's hands and rejected the precious sacrifice which he provided for their covering would be unavailing, useless.

We picture before our minds the scenes of that night: the Hebrews by instruction were prepared for their journey into Canaan, and merely waiting for the morning light and the preparation which the tenth plague would effect by discouraging the Egyptians and leading them really to facilitate the departure of their bond-servants. Each family group had its lamb roasted with fire and without a bone broken. Each group must feed upon the lamb with unleavened bread and bitter herbs, with sandals on and staff in hand as sojourners. All of these details represented the household of faith during this Gospel age, the bitter herbs representing the trials and difficulties of life, which will only tend to sharpen our appetite for and our appreciation of the Lamb, and of the unleavened bread, which also symbolizes the flesh of Jesus. We are still eating, still waiting, still under the blood, but the morning is now very near, when all the passed-over ones, represented thereafter in the priestly type of Levi, will be the first to pass beyond the power of the antitypical Pharaoh, the adversary—and lead forth all the remainder of mankind, willing to become Israelites indeed. Under the New Covenant arrangement typified by the Law

Covenant, the royal priesthood, Christ and his church in glory, will antitype the Aaronic priesthood, while the associated great company will be the antitype of the tribe of the Levites.

**A WELL-ATTESTED MIRACLE**

For over 1600 years the people of Israel, by divine commandment, celebrated this passing over of their first-born on the night before they left Egypt; and our Lord, in the same night in which he was betrayed, his last night of earthly life, not only celebrated this Passover supper but gave his followers a new Memorial as a substitute for it, unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine as the symbol of our greater Passover, through faith in his blood, and as perpetuating the central thought of the original Passover we have under consideration. Here then is a celebration observed throughout the whole world today, and which we know has been in force as a Memorial for over 3,500 years! Can anyone of reasonable mind doubt the origin of this sacred Memorial, whether its significance is seen or not—whether its value is recognized or not—whether its antitypical meaning is seen or not? We hold that this Memorial is one of the strongest confirmations of the divine plan and purpose, and we much regret that many intelligent people observing the Memorial of our Lord's death fail to grasp the fact that it is a Memorial of that which was typified in Israel's Passover. If this fact were generally recognized, in how brief time all Christian people would celebrate the Memorial on its anniversary, actual or approximate, as did the Lord and his apostles and the early Church—and as we still do.

**WHAT MEAN YE BY THIS SERVICE?**

Most particularly did the Lord direct in respect to the observance of the type and its signification. Parents were to tell their children the story of the passing over of the first-born and of the favor of God thus manifested toward them, and of the deliverance thus effected on their behalf. And judging from the observance of the matter today amongst the Hebrews, we can well imagine that the divine injunction was never at any time overlooked. The Passover is the most important of all the Jewish festivals; corresponding in the spring of the year to the Atonement Day Memorial six months later. And if it was appropriate that the typical Israelite who knew only of the typical passing over should tell his children of the Lord's goodness and mercy, how much more should the spiritual Israelite, who discerns the antitype, and who recognizes the Lord Jesus as the antitypical Lamb, and the period of this Gospel age as the antitypical night of passing over, and the merit of Christ's sacrifice as the antitypical sprinkling of the blood, and the feeding upon Christ in our hearts, and the acceptance of his meritorious sacrifice as the antitype of Israel's going out of Egypt—how much more shall we feel it not only to be a duty but a privilege to tell our children, yea, and all who have ears to hear, respecting the grace of God in Christ, and the blessed opportunity of being passed over granted to all those who now by faith accept the divine favor, and present their bodies living sacrifices and become partakers of the holy Spirit. If any of us have been slack or remiss in respect to the telling of this great message, let us resolve that we shall be on the alert hereafter, and that we will more and more appreciate the opportunity to show forth the praises of our Lord.

Let us remember the golden text, “When I see the blood I will pass over you.” Let us all see to it that the blood of Christ is ever recognized, not only within our hearts but confessed, sprinkled, manifested, and declared outwardly to others. Let us remember the Apostle's words that without the shedding of blood there is no remission, and applying this thought let us recognize that we have remission of sins only in proportion as we recognize the merit of the great sin-offering effected by our Lord, finished at Calvary.

**THE SALVATION OF THE LORD**

Exodus 14:13-27.—JUNE 16.

*Golden Text*—“Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hands of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the seashore.”—Exodus 14:30.

The tenth plague, the death of all their first-born, convinced the Egyptians of the advisability of getting rid of the Hebrews. Forthwith they were as anxious to have the people go from them as they previously had been anxious to retain them. They now helped them and urged them, and when the Israelites asked for (in the text “borrowed”) mementos, such as jewels, etc., they gave to them, urging their departure, and probably feeling that with this generosity they were to some extent making good for the long years of compulsory labor they had exacted. By preconcerted arrangement, the Hebrews

quickly gathered to Succoth, en route for Palestine, nearly two millions of them, with flocks and herds which must have been of quite large numbers. If it seems impossible to us that the people should depart so suddenly, it is well that we remember that they had been waiting and preparing for the auspicious moment when Pharaoh should say that they might go. It should be remembered, too, that the people of that time, and to this day the people of that land, are much less encumbered by what we would consider necessities. The fel-lahen of the Egyptians and the Arabs of the desert think

nothing of lying down to sleep for the night by the roadside, wrapped in their outer garments, sometimes with a stone for a pillow as did Jacob. Stanley mentions a somewhat similar case, saying:

"In illustration of the event, a sudden retreat is recorded of a whole nomadic people—400,000 Tartars—under cover of a single night, from the confines of Russia into their native deserts, as late as the close of the last century."

Bishop C. H. Fowler offers a helpful comment, as follows:—

"In our own times, in this very century, we have witnessed an exodus from near that very land of Goshen where the Israelites dwelt. Mohammed Ali wished to manufacture silk, so he planted Jerusalem with mulberry trees and attracted Syrians from Damascus and Bedouin Arabs from Arabia, to whom he gave fertile pasture lands and freedom from taxation and military practice. They prospered and multiplied for many years. After the death of Mohammed Ali an attempt was made to tax and conscript them. Protestations were disregarded; therefore in one night the whole population, with their herds and flocks, moved away to their kinsfolk to the east of Egypt, leaving their homes empty and the valley a desolation, in which condition it was when De Lesseps dug his fresh-water canal."

The hosts of the Israelites first moved northward and eastward to Etham, then turning about went southward. This has the appearance of vacillation on the part of Moses, the leader, and on the part of God, his director. But we may be sure that known unto the Lord are all his ways, and hence that this movement was of design. The original intention probably was to follow the usual route out of Egypt to Palestine through the land of the Philistines, but the people were in no condition to battle with the latter. Another route would have been through the desert, but it would have been almost impossible because of their numbers and their flocks, and the fact that there would have been no pasturage, a deficiency of water, etc.

#### A BRIGHT CLOUD—A DARK CLOUD

They were guided south by the Lord directly by a cloud which was bright at night and dark in the daytime, affording them a measure of shelter from the heat of the sun. This phenomenon would probably not be noticed by the Egyptians and others, but was recognized by the Israelites because of their instructions, and because they had learned to have confidence in God as their leader. It was not, we are sure, anything like what some have pictured it—so radical a violation of nature as to be a demonstrated miracle. It was present with the people through all their wanderings in the wilderness for forty years, and was an evidence of the Lord's special care over them, and should have been a great aid to their faith. Only when they had finally crossed Jordan into Canaan was this phenomenon discontinued.

While following the narrative of Israel's deliverance and divine guidance, spiritual Israel must not overlook the fact that our deliverance from the world, symbolized by Egypt, is a still more wonderful one. As we under the Lord's providence began our escape from the power of the world, the flesh and the adversary, there are different ways of escape possible, some more and some less favorable. Left to ourselves we might choose the wrong way of the Philistines, where the battles would be too hard for us, or the way of the desert, where we would be discouraged and famished. It is for us to look for the Lord's providences in our affairs at this time, and to find them guiding us, sheltering us from the heat of persecution and tribulation and trial, and again at other times enlightening us, refreshing us in the dark seasons. And this leading of divine providence is intended to be ours so long as we are of the true Israel of God, until we pass over Jordan into heavenly Canaan and need such special providences no further. Blessed are those whose faith is awake and on the alert, and who discern the Lord's favors which the world will not discern, and which only those in the right attitude of mind can appreciate. O, Lord, help us more and more to appreciate thy leadings, thy providences, and to trust to thy wisdom in all of life's affairs, until thereby we shall be guided by thy Word and thy grace to the heavenly Canaan and its rest!

#### ENTANGLED IN THE LAND

The Israelites took the change of journey from northeast to south with full confidence because of their recognition of the leading of the Lord in the cloud that was dark by day and bright by night. But the Egyptians viewed the matter differently. Several days had now elapsed, their mourning for the first-born was ended, and they began to think of the loss they had sustained. The fact that the Israelites were probably efficient servants, the fact that the Egyptians had

been accustomed to using them in their own interests for a long time, and that the people were without military qualifications and arms, suggested to the Egyptians that it would be an easy matter to overtake them, to turn them back again—to say, Now you have had a few days as you desired, turn back again into the old lines. As they perceived the changed course of the Israelites, first northeast and then south, they concluded that they were entangled in the land—that is to say, that they were lost, did not know where they were going. Indeed this would be the natural conclusion, for as we look upon the map we find that they were marching to the Egyptian side of the Red Sea, whereas they wished really to go to the opposite side, to enter Palestine. We can imagine the Egyptians saying, "Poor, foolish people! they were far better with us even at hard bondage than free; they know not what to do; they will scatter by and by, and the majority doubtless will come back to us anyway." Selfishness may even have suggested that it was their duty to hold them in restraint—to turn them back again to be the bond-servants of the Egyptians. The Egyptians had not yet learned the lesson that it was the God of Israel they had to contend with. Neither, perhaps, had the Israelites sufficiently learned that it was God who was bringing them forth and not themselves and not Moses.

The hosts of the Israelites had by this time gotten well to the westward of the Bitter Lakes, which lengthen out the northernmost tongue of the Red Sea, when the word reached them that Pharaoh's six hundred chariots were coming. Terror spread throughout the mixed multitude: children cried, mothers wrung their hands and wept, and the strongest hearts of the Israelites were sore perplexed. As children to a father they came to Moses, saying, Is it because there was no graveyard in Egypt that you brought us away to die in the wilderness? Why did you thus—to bring us out of Egypt? Why did you not hearken to us when in Egypt we said, Let us alone that we may serve the Egyptians? Would it not have been better for us to serve them than that we should die in the wilderness?

#### SPIRITUAL ISRAELITES ENTANGLED TOO

It is the same with many spiritual Israelites: having started to leave the world they are of insufficient faith, and when beset by temptations and difficulties they are inclined to wish they had never started in the better way and toward the freedom wherewith Christ makes free, and toward the Canaan rest and blessing which he has promised but which to them seems so far off—so utterly impossible to be reached. But Moses was of better faith and courage, as well he might be, because of his superior advantages every way. He represented our leader, under whose direction and encouragement we have left the world behind. And so our Leader says to us, as Moses said to them, "Fear ye not! stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord which he will accomplish for you this day. And as for your enemies the Egyptians, whom ye fear, ye shall see them no more again forever." Evidently Moses was in very close touch with Jehovah when he could prophesy such an outcome in the face of such disastrous appearances. Similarly we may have confidence in our Lord Jesus when he assures us that the power of the adversary is limited, that it shall not go beyond the limitations of this present evil world; that tomorrow, in the Millennial age, we shall witness the overthrow of all the powers of evil. Moses added, "The Lord shall fight for you and ye shall hold your peace." This is the promise to the spiritual Israelites—"Greater is he that is on our part than all they that be with them," however mighty they may appear: "If God be for us who can be against us?"—to ultimate success; therefore "I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

#### THE ISRAELITES COMMANDED TO GO FORWARD

Before the Israelites was the tongue of the Red Sea, the chain of the Bitter Lakes; behind them the land of Egypt, and immediately in their rear Pharaoh's chariots and charioteers. The Israelites had not yet approached the water's edge. The command was that they should go forward, and no explanation was made of how the path would be opened for them through the waters. Not only was the faith of Moses demonstrated in the command, but the faith of the Israelites was also tested in their obediently going in the direction of the water. Is it not thus with spiritual Israelites? Does not the Lord sometimes allow adversity, difficulties, oppositions, to hedge us in? Does he not sometimes lead us by a way from which there seems to be no escape from some impending evil? This is the time to hearken to his voice and in faith to go forward, nothing doubting—trusting that he who has begun the good work in us will complete it unto the day of Jesus Christ—in the Millennial morning.

By divine direction Moses lifted up his rod and stretched out his hand over the sea, with the assurance that it would divide and furnish the necessary exit from their impending difficulties. Those who read this narrative and in their minds imagine the Israelites at one side of the Red Sea, and an intervening fifty miles or so across to the other shore, and who further imagine that the waters of the sea opened and stood upright hundreds of feet in perpendicular walls on either side, while the Israelites first went downward to its bottom and then upward along its shores on the other side, are taxing their faith unnecessarily. Not that we are to doubt that if necessity arose God could wipe out the Red Sea entirely, but that it is not necessary to so suppose when circumstances and conditions are rightly understood. We may well suppose that God does not make his miracles more stupendous than necessary. Let us look at this miracle as it really occurred, and then see its reasonableness. The fact that we can understand the procedure should not make the matter any less a miracle in our estimation.

Let us have in mind the fact that the Red Sea at its upper end connects with a stretch of low country in which are a number of lakes, called Bitter Lakes, the water being brackish. At this time the Red Sea, which is merely a large lake, must have been very nearly connected with the Mediterranean Sea. At its upper end, the junction point with marshy lands and the Bitter Lakes, the water is at no great depth, so that at times when the tide is low cavalry have forded it—for instance, Napoleon and an escort, the former nearly losing his life on the occasion. When the tide comes in the condition of things is very different indeed, for the tide-rise at this point seems very high.

#### THE PHILOSOPHY OF A MIRACLE

The entire narrative of the lesson is in accord with what we have seen. A strong wind blew to the northward, and, coöperating with the tide, exposed a wide sandbar across which the Israelites passed in safety toward morning, aided by the light from the cloud, which at this time was to their northward and served as a cloud of darkness to the Egyptians and of light to the Israelites, so that the pursuers had difficulty in the chase and probably were guided more by the sound of the confusion and flight of the Israelites than by anything else. It is entirely probable that the Egyptians were not aware that the tide and the wind had formed the sandbar, and that they were on it pursuing the Israelites. By the time the latter had reached the further bank of the sea, possibly two miles across, Moses again stretched forth his hand with his rod, and the wind's course again changed, the waters began to return, aided by the turning of the tide. Meantime the Egyptians in the midst of the sea found their chariot wheels choked by the soft sand, their horses sinking and struggling broke the wheels, there was general confusion, which held them until the tide was upon them and many if not all of them were drowned.

"An east or southeast wind arose and moved the upper water of the shallow bay toward the northwest, while probably a strong ebb tide set in at the same time and drew the lower water southwards, so that the bed of the sea was for a considerable space laid bare."—Rawlinson.

"This was soon after the full moon of the vernal equinox, when there would be a very low ebb and a very high flood. The tide rises from five to seven feet opposite Suez, and from eight to nine feet when aided by strong winds, returning with unusual suddenness and power after the ebb."—Newhall.

"M. DeLesseps mentioned to me the extraordinary facts of this kind which he had witnessed in storms which occurred at intervals of fifteen or twenty years. He had seen the northern end of the sea in places blown almost dry, and again had seen the waters driven far over the land toward the Bitter Lakes."—President Bartlett.

"It is God's usual method to make the most of natural causes, to make the supernatural begin only where the natural ends."—Blakie.

"The coming of the wind at once, in connection with the symbolical act of Moses, is as much a miracle as the immediate division of the waters without the intervention of any secondary cause would have been."—Taylor.

"The waters were a wall unto them on the right hand and on their left": this need not imply a perpendicular wall, but rather a protection, a shield on either side. The Israelites could go forward, knowing that their only danger was in the rear because the waters protected their flanks.

#### THE EGYPTIANS OVERTHROWN

If we still entertain the thought we once had that all mankind are on trial for eternal life in the present existence, and that all failure to gain eternal life means eternal tor-

ment, we would be inclined to wonder why Moses and the Israelites did not face about and begin to preach to the Egyptians. Indeed we might wonder why they left Egypt at all—why they did not become missionaries amongst them—why God delivered them from such a glorious opportunity for mission work. Then we would wonder, too, how Moses and the Israelites could rejoice in the thought that thousands of their enemies had gone to eternal torment. We thank God that in his providence he has enabled us to see the teachings of his Word more clearly. We see that the time had not yet come for the preaching of the Gospel, because the time had not yet come for the atonement for sin. Hence there could not be any offer of eternal life to the Egyptians, for Christ did not come to die for man's sins for more than sixteen centuries later; and even after he came his work was not for the world, even as he prayed not for the world—"I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me." (John 17:9.) The work of gathering the elect is the first item on the divine program: with its consummation the present age will end, and then will begin the work for the world. Then those Egyptians and the Sodomites, with all the families of the earth, shall be blessed through Abraham's seed—Christ and the church, the spiritual seed, and the natural Israelites, the earthly seed.

We see then, that as the Sodomites went down into death, so those hosts of the Egyptians went down into death, and all mankind go down into the great prison-house, the tomb, *sheol*, *hades*. We rejoice, too, that the Master says that surely "all that are in their graves shall come forth" (John 5:28, 29)—the few, the faithful, into the perfection of life, the masses unto a time of trial and testing and opportunity in connection with judgments and disciplines, so that if obedient they may ultimately also attain everlasting life through the knowledge of God's dear Son and obedience to him. Remembering our Master's words, that it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in that day of the world's judgment than for many who had greater enlightenment, we may wonder if it will not also be true that some of these Egyptian charioteers, who in blindness and selfishness pursued the Israelites, will not be found more excusable than some of the natural seed of Abraham whom Moses led out, but who, because of lack of faith, died in the wilderness. The overthrow of the Egyptian hosts at the hand of Moses prefigured the ultimate overthrow of the powers of evil and sin and bondage at the hands of Christ.

#### "THE SONG OF MOSES AND THE LAMB"

If evidence were necessary to disprove the claim of evolution—that the people of early times were one remove from monkeys—that proof would be found in the way the Israelites accepted the victory the Lord had given them in their own passage of the sea in safety and of the destruction therein of their pursuers and enemies. Did they riot in a carnival of vice? Did they have a war-dance with tomtoms? Quite to the contrary. Overflowing with religious sentiment, they gave thanks unto the Lord God, recognizing him as their Deliverer. Moses composed a hymn of praise in which the people joined, while Moses' sister Miriam and the singing women prepared a response to the various parts of the hymn of praise. Hebrew scholars have remarked on the evidence of the antiquity of the song of Moses, recorded in Exodus 15:1-20, some even noting the fact that a few of the words showed an intermingling of the Egyptian language. It is further authenticated by the reference made to it in the book of Psalms, where the entire matter of the deliverance of the people and the overthrow of their enemies in the sea is graphically described by the sweet singer of Israel. (Psa. 106:7-12.) The incident and the Song of Moses are further corroborated by our Lord in his last message to the church, in which he represents in symbol a certain class of his followers experiencing a great deliverance in the end of this age and singing, "The song of Moses, the servant of God, and of the Lamb."—Rev. 15:2, 3.

If it was appropriate, as we all admit that it was, that the Israelites should give glory to God for their deliverance from the bondage of Egypt, much more is it appropriate that spiritual Israel should recognize the still greater deliverance from the power of Satan and the thralldom of sin, accomplished for us through the blood of the Lamb of God who died for our sins. If the illiterate people who had been in a measure of slavery for a long period and who had not the advantages of this Gospel age were prompted to give thanks to the Lord, how much more should we, who have tasted of his grace and goodness, show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light." (1 Pet. 2:9.) What wonder, then, that the Scriptures everywhere refer to the Lord's people as being ministers, servants,



of the truth, and declare that the Lord has not only lifted our feet from the horrible pit and miry clay of sin and death, but has additionally "put into our mouths a new song, even the loving-kindness of our God."—Psa. 40:2, 3.

This song can now be sung by us who can exercise faith in the Lord, in his Word, in his providence, but it is not its complete fulfillment: that will be attained when all the people of God shall have been found—when the Lord's mercy during the Millennial age shall have opened the blind eyes of the world, unstopped the deaf ears, caused the knowledge of the Lord to fill the whole earth, and gathered all who are truly the Lord's to himself, and during the Millennial age shall have lifted them out of the bondage of sin and death and brought them into full harmony with the divine standard by the processes of restitution, according as it is written—There shall "be times of restitution of all things which God hath

promised by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3:19-21.) Then will be the great fulfillment of this passage of the Red Sea, and the overthrow of the enemies of the Lord and his people. It will be then, at the end of the Millennial age, that Satan and all who are on his side, enemies of righteousness, will be forever destroyed, and at the same time all who love righteousness and hate iniquity and avail themselves of the Lord's favors, privileges, will then be saved to the powers of an eternal life, under the leadership of the great antitypical Moses, as it is written—"A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you from amongst your brethren like unto me [Moses]; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that the soul that will not obey that Prophet shall be destroyed from amongst the people."—Acts 3:22, 23.

## BELATED REPORTS FROM FOREIGN BRANCHES

FOR THE YEAR 1906

Melbourne, Australia.

Dear Brother Russell:—

Once more it is my duty and privilege to send the Annual Report from this Branch.

The past year has been one of progress in some directions, particularly so in the number of DAWNS sold and new interest in the truth developed. The increase in the circulation of DAWNS has been more than 100 copies per week above the rate for the previous twelve months. Most of these have been circulated through the faithful efforts of the Colporteurs, who have been very successful in these colonies.

Although a good deal has been accomplished in this direction, much more remains to be done; and it is still appropriate for us to ask the Lord of the harvest to send more laborers into his vineyard. Many of our friends who have become interested in these things in the past year have reason to thank God for the Colporteur. And this fact should encourage not only those who are now devoting their energies to this work, but also any who may be considering the feasibility of giving up all earthly hopes and ambitions for the privileges (sometimes laborious) of this service of the truth. We shall be glad to hear from such, and to encourage and assist them in any way we can. The greatest number of orders secured by any one of our Colporteurs in one day in the past twelve months was for 126 volumes.

The Volunteer work of tract distribution has also had attention in the past year, albeit the total number of pages circulated is under the record for the previous twelve months. Probably some of our new friends do not clearly understand the opportunities, or are diffident about asking for the tracts free—enough to put them into every house in their districts. Let such hesitate no longer; the tracts are available, and the Lord's blessing has been so markedly upon this form of service in past years, that we may feel confident he will acknowledge it again.

Pilgrim service has been somewhat hindered in the past twelve months. No extended tour has been made, but several series of Chart talks have been given in the vicinity of Melbourne. God willing, we hope to travel some in 1907, and we now request the friends in all parts of Australia and New Zealand, who would be able and willing to arrange for two or three days public or cottage meetings, to send their answers to the "Pilgrim Questions," as published in ZION'S WATCH TOWER, to the Melbourne office, so that the dates may be fixed. Promptness in this matter will be appreciated, as we may not be able to alter a route, once it is arranged.

The tale of the Australasian Branch Tract Fund is still rather a melancholy one. Conforming to the principles governing the Society's work since its inception, we have never solicited a donation, all that we report being entirely voluntary on the part of the donors, as the spirit has prompted them. Up to now, we have to acknowledge the favor of God as expressed, in this particular direction, through the head office, which has enabled us to go so far as we have done with the work of circulating free literature, Pilgrim service, etc., etc., the expenses of which are charged to this fund.

As we observe the progress of events in this peculiar time, we see that some are drinking in the truth as it were the "new wine" of the kingdom joys; and are being refreshed thereby. Others are drinking the "mixed wine" (confused doctrine of Babylon) and are being stupefied thereby. So drunk are these last becoming that they will presently have quite lost their senses. (Obadiah 16.) But the sight of these is a good token for those who are of the day, for such can realize that the deliverance is even now on Mount Zion.

Let us, then, feel encouraged to lift up our heads, always remembering that one more year behind means one less in front, between us and the goal, at which having arrived we shall not have to think of one less, but always more and more.

Soliciting a continued interest in your prayers and in those of all saints, on behalf of the Australasian work and harvest workers, I remain, dear brother,

Your brother and Christ's,

E. C. HENNINGES.

### AUSTRALASIAN BRANCH SUMMARY

#### *Publications Circulated*

Copies of "Millennial Dawn".....	21,389
Copies of "Tower Dawn".....	1,560
Copies of Booklets .....	2,010

Total .....	24,959
Copies of Tracts and Z. W. T. sent free.....	249,700
These represent tract pages.....	3,935,800
Letters and cards received.....	1,699
Letters and cards sent out.....	2,367

Total ..... 4,066

#### *Expenditures*

	£	s.	d.
Deficit from last year.....	438	3	5
Printing, paper, postage, freight (in and out), rent, gas, Tracts, etc.....	306	11	8
Pilgrim work, meeting expenses, etc.....	38	6	11
Total .....	783	2	0

#### *Receipts*

Receipts from Australasia.....	176	4	11
Deficit, owing to head office at Allegheny, Pa., U. S. A.....	606	18	1

Stockholm, Sweden.

Dear Brother Russell:—

When I in the last issues of the TOWER read with great pleasure and thankfulness to God, the reports of the WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY'S work the last year by its different branches, then I have also at the same time felt a little ashamed, or sorry, because of my lack of opportunity to make and send a report from this branch to you in due time—this so much more as I never during the eight years since the work here was started, have been able to give you as detailed reports from this place as could have been desirable.

We are, of course, not so many in present truth here, nor is the work so advanced amongst us as in the more important parts of the great harvest field, but we feel sure that it is the Lord that has guided us hitherto in grasping the truth and in keeping us active in the service, and we trust that he will enable us to still better appreciate, with all the saints, the privilege in having opportunities to be his co-laborers and also to use the same still better in the future. I think we are now at least one thousand in this country which rejoice in the Lord and in his great plan of salvation, as it has been revealed to us by the MILLENNIAL DAWN and other publications of you, his servant, and I have herewith the privilege to bring you our deep and thankful greetings and Christian love. We remember you continually in our prayers and we rejoice in the thought that by and by you will see better how much your service has profited us.