

the first-born, "and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house in which there was not one dead." Only those behind the blood-sprinkled door posts were safe. The pride of Egypt was humbled. "The first-born of Pharaoh that sat on his throne," the gallant prince Menephtah Seti, joint ruler with his father, and "chief of the archers," shared the doom of the meanest beggar and the beasts of the field. Moses did not need to plead any longer, "the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste." It was now fully understood that this was to be no religious pilgrimage to the desert from which they were to return to their burdens, but a complete and final exodus. Parting gifts were asked and willingly bestowed, with such munificence that the people "spoiled" the Egyptians like a victorious army. Instead of taking their course directly eastward, the Lord directed Moses to lead the host to the south. The result was that they seemed to be caught in a trap between the sea and the mountains. The treacherous and vacillating Pharaoh imagined that his revenge was at hand and pursued after them to bring them back. The timid multitude of liberated slaves were in despair, but Moses, with the majestic calmness of faith, bade them "fear not, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will show you to-day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day, ye shall see them again no more forever."

NOTES AND EXPLANATIONS.

LESSON PLAN. I. The Israelites Delivered. vs. 19-22. II. The Egyptians Overthrown. vs. 23-29.

I. THE ISRAELITES DELIVERED. 19. The Angel of God—called Jehovah in ch. 13: 21, it was the second Person of the Trinity, the Son of God, who became Jesus. The pillar of cloud and of fire led the Israelites until they came into the land of Canaan, see Num. 9: 15-23. **Stood behind them**—The Lord placed himself between his people and their enemies. See the application to Christ in Isa. 63: 9, 16. 20. The cloud must have changed its form and appeared as an impenetrable wall of darkness, completely concealing the Israelites from their pursuers, who may have thought that it was only the clouds connected with the north-east wind that was blowing. "Thus the word and providences of God have a two-fold aspect, a black and dark side towards sin and sinners, a bright and pleasant side towards those that are Israelites indeed." (Bush.) The Egyptians made no attempt to attack that night for they thought that they had their runaways safe. 21. **Moses stretched out his hand**—as he had been told to do (v. 16.) In it he held his old shepherd's staff to which miraculous properties had been given (Ex. 4: 17.) At this signal the north-east wind began to blow. The waters were swept back with the ebbing tide, and the shallow bed of the sea was laid bare. The lakes remained on the north, on the left hand, and the Red Sea in pools and deeper water to the south, on the right hand. Compare the similar miracle at the crossing of the Jordan (Josh. 3: 16; 4: 23.) 22. **The waters were a wall unto them**—It is not necessary to suppose that the sea stood up perpendicularly on each side. God never works superfluous miracles. The water that remained on either side protected them like a wall from a flank attack and compelled their pursuers to follow directly in the comparatively narrow way that had been made. The poetic language of ch. 15: 8 and Ps. 78: 13 must not be understood literally.