

time on which he dwelt *vehemently* in a public or open place (ch. xix. 1-6). The upper *coasts* were in comparison with two *s. a coast* where Ephesus was situated. This was Paul's second visit to that city (ch. xviii. 19). Here he found certain Christians, who, like Apollos, had only received John's baptism. Our version is in error here, for Paul's question was, "Did ye receive the Holy Ghost when ye believed?"—that is, as the gift of God in Christ. They replied, "We did not hear whether there were any Holy Ghost." Paul explained to them the meaning of the baptism of John. It was a baptism to repentance and to faith in the Messiah who should come; but Christian baptism is more than that; it is a baptism and faith in Jesus as the Messiah, which, when rightly received, is followed by the gift of the Spirit as the Spirit of sanctifying power. They were then baptized in or into the name—that is, the profession of faith of the Lord Jesus; but whether Paul baptized them is not said. He laid his hands upon them, however, and then they received the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with tongues as the outward manifestation of the fact. The number of them was twelve, which was somewhat significant (ver. 8-10). Paul went into the synagogue, and there spake boldly for three months; but many were hardened, whence he and the disciples left them, and then Paul discoursed daily in a hall belonging to one Tyrannus, who was probably a Greek. This hall was occupied by the apostle for two years, exclusive of the three months of ver. 8, from the year 55 to 57 A.D. Ephesus was an important city, and famous both for its commerce and its temple, whence Paul made it a centre of his operations for Proconsular Asia, and thus vast numbers both of Jews and Gentiles heard the Word of God (ver. 11-16). Special miracles were wrought, which certain vagabond exorcists attempted to imitate. Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, did so, and tried to cast out evil spirits as Paul did. They paid dearly for their folly, for they had to fly from the house with torn garments and many wounds.

September 16. *Morning*. THE FLIGHT FROM EGYPT (Exod. xiii. 17, xiv. 9). The Israelites left Egypt. God did not lead them by Gaza, the shortest route, for that would have brought them into contact with Philistines, and they were not yet prepared for war; but they were led from Goshen to the south-east, through Etham, on the edge of the wilderness, by the head of the Gulf of Suez. The word "harnessed" (ver. 18) is rendered in the margin by *fire in a rank*: but the meaning of the word is, rather, *well-organised*, not confusedly, like an undisciplined rabble. They came to Succoth—a word which means *booths*, or a temporary encampment—which was probably on the south-east of Ramesses. Thence they journeyed to Etham, which some say is Arzon, or "the border of the sea." Before them went the pillar of cloud and of fire, which was the symbol of God's presence, and it never left them until they came to the borders of the land of Canaan (Ps. cv. 39; Neh. ix. 9; Isa. iv. 5). This pillar was probably in the form of an inverted T, so that the lower part was a cover resting on the camp, and the upper part a lofty column which could be seen at a considerable distance (xiv. 2). The sites of Pihahioth, Migdol, and Baal-zephon have not been ascertained; but the probability is, that they were on, or near, the plain back of Suez (ver. 3-9). Pharaoh relented, and, his heart being hardened, he resolved to pursue the Israelites; he thought the mountains had shut them in, and that there would be no way of escape for them (cf. Num. xxxiii. 1-7); he made ready his own war-chariot, and took six hundred chosen chariots, the bodyguard of the king, and all the chariots of Egypt. On the monuments the Pharaohs appear as valiant warriors, heading their armies in person; and they possessed both chariots and infantry, which they could soon prepare for the field (vers. 8-9). With a vast army he pursued the fugitives, and overtook them encamping by the sea ("History of Moses," chap. xi.) Learn Ps. cvii. 14.

*Afternoon*. POWER OF THE WORD. (Acts xix. 13-28.) Wonderful results followed Paul's ministry at Ephesus. Many believed and were converted. They then brought their magical books, by means of which they used "curious arts," told fortunes, and pretended to ward off impending evils, and these books they committed to the flames. Ephesus was the seat of magic, and, in connection with the worship of Diana or Artemis, was practised extensively. But it was condemned by Christianity, and no true Christian can have resort to such folly. The modern spiritualism, so called, is but another species of it. The value of these books was found to be 50,000 pieces of silver (the Greek drachma), which would be about £1,770—that is, these books would have sold for that

sum; but being wicked books and leading only to wickedness, the Christians could not sell them—they must be burnt. If you are following a business that is in itself wrong, you may not transfer it to another; it must be abandoned altogether (vers. 21-28). St. Paul now intended to go to Jerusalem, by way of Macedonia and Achaia. His object was to take alms to the people in Jerusalem (ch. xxiv. 17; 1 Cor. xvi. 1-8, etc.). But here, for the first time, mention is made of Rome, which the Apostle wishes to see. Two of his assistants preceded him to Macedonia. Erastus is named again in 2 Tim. iv. 20; but whether the same person as the Erastus of Rom. xvi. 23 is doubtful. A commotion arose. Demetrius, who had probably a large manufactory of silver models of the great temple of Diana (Artemis) and employed a large number of workmen, found that his craft was in danger, and calling his people together, charged Paul with being the author of the mischief, - which he no doubt was. Nay, he said that the temple itself would be despised, and the goddess he destroyed or swept away, - a strange goddess, that could not take better care of herself. The address excited the religious fanaticism of the craftsmen, and, as if that would do any good, they cried out, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." Uproars are often occasioned by attempts to put down injurious trades and occupations. In our country to-day many are afraid of the liquor traffic being injured, and hence the noise they make about it.

September 23. *Morning*. THE SEA DIVIDED. (Exodus xiv. 10-31.) As Pharaoh's army drew near, the Israelites were sore afraid. They cried to the Lord, but they had little confidence in His help, for they began to murmur, and said to Moses, "Because there were no graves at all in Egypt, hast thou fetched us to die in the desert?" Moses encouraged them, and assured them of deliverance, for he had strong faith in God. "The Lord," he said, "will fight for you, and ye shall be quiet" (v. 15-18). Moses cried to God, or laid the complaints of the people before Him. God did not reprove him, but told him what he should do (compare v. 3 and 4). (Ver. 19 and 20.) The angel of God, probably the angel of the covenant which went before the Israelites, now removed and went behind, thus defending them against the Egyptians, and the pillar of cloud took the position between the two armies, and was a dark cloud to the Egyptians, but a bright one to the Israelites, so that all that night Israel was safe (v. 21, 22). And now the sea was dried up. A strong wind swept across it, and a way was made for God's ransomed to pass over. But where did they cross? They crossed the western arm of the Red Sea, now called the Gulf of Suez, which is 190 miles in length and twenty-one in average breadth, but the precise point of the passage is matter of controversy. Some maintain that it was the end of the Gulf of Suez, and during the ebbing of the tide, but we believe that it was ten miles farther south, near the Ras-Attakah, where the sea is six and a-half miles broad, a distance not too great for the Israelites to cross during the night ("History of Moses," p. 159). Ver. 22-31. The Egyptians, full of infatuation, followed closely behind; when Jehovah cast a look upon them from the pillar of fire, the fire bursting upon them suddenly, and throwing them into utter confusion (Psalm lxxviii. 18, 19). The whole of their chariots gave way, so that they drove heavily, yet on they went until they were in the very bed of the sea; then Moses stretched out his rod, and the walls on either side, formed to protect the Israelites, gave way, and the waters rolled over the Egyptians, and the next day their bodies were washed upon the opposite shore. Thus was "the great hand" of Jehovah made manifest upon the Egyptians, and the Israelites were confirmed in their faith both in Jehovah and in Moses. Learn Ps. ix. 16.

*Afternoon*. PAUL AT MILETUS. (Acts xx. 17-38.) Miletus was situated on the coast of the Egean Sea. St. Paul touched here on his journey to Jerusalem. Here he sent for the elders of the church at Ephesus, which by land was about twenty to thirty miles distant. They came, and he addressed them as here described (v. 18-35). It was a very touching address, and reminded them of his ministry among them, which had been eminently faithful. Repentance toward God, or a change of disposition, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ had been the chief lessons of his ministry. But now (ver. 22-25) he was bound in spirit, or led by an inward impulse and necessity, to go up to Jerusalem, where he knew not what would befall him, except that the Holy Spirit witnessed in every city by the mouth of Christian prophets (ch. xiii. 2; xxi. 4-10) that he would there meet with bonds and afflictions. But he was not afraid, for he