

were confronted by a great wall, built by the earlier Pharaohs as a defense against attack, and stretching from sea to sea. Through this wall three great roads passed to the East; one along the Mediterranean, one across the desert, and one by the Red Sea. Moses chose the latter, and led his people southward, toward the sea. But the Egyptians had now recovered from their terror, and were again eager to keep their former slaves, and the Israelites may have found the Red Sea road closed against them. Therefore they turned southward, by divine direction, and marched directly toward

the head of the sea. Here they seemed to be shut in between the waters in front, the cliffs on either side, and the Egyptians on their rear. Night fell upon the scene, and in the darkness a path was hewn out for God's people across the waters. With the morning light they saw a ridge of sand rising between two lakes. They followed their leader across in safety, and as a free people stood on the shore of the wilderness, with the broad sea between them and the land of their oppression.

Explanatory and Practical Notes.

Verse 19. The Angel of God. The visible manifestation of a pillar of cloud, which attended the march of Israel as a messenger from God. **The camp of Israel.** Which was then located near the sea, with mountains on either side, and the Egyptian host in the rear. **The pillar of the cloud.** The host, spread out over many miles, was furnished with a signal which all could see, in a fire surrounded by a cloudy covering, which moved before the army, and by its rising or settling directed the march. This was entirely miraculous, and cannot be accounted for on natural grounds. With the birth of a nation through which the world is to be saved, supernatural accompaniments are to be expected. (1) *God is with his people still, though unseen.* (2) *Our pillar of cloud is the Holy Spirit, which only God's people recognize and follow.*

20. It came between. From its station on the front, the column removed to the rear, becoming a wall between the two armies. **Cloud and darkness.** The Rev. Ver. reads, "And there was the cloud and the darkness, yet gave it light by night." To the Israelites it was a bright and glorious cloud; to the Egyptians it was a threatening storm-cloud. **The Lord came not near the other.** God kept his people safe from their enemies by a cloudy wall which rose as a barrier. (3) *God's ways are dark to the world, but light to his people.* (4) *God still stands as a shield around his Church.*

21. Moses stretched out his hand. Thus the rising of the wind and the removal of the waters are in the narrative distinctly connected with the act of Moses, which was under a divine direction. **The sea.** The Red Sea, called in the Bible *Yam Suph*—"the sea of rushes." It is 1300 miles long, and nearly 300 miles wide. The northern end is cloven asunder by the peninsula of Sinai, forming on the west the Gulf of Suez, and on the east the Gulf of Akaba, or the Little Gulf. Various reasons have been given for its name, as the red cliffs on its shores, the coral under its bed, in some places the microscopic animals which tinge its waters, etc. **A strong east wind.** A powerful north-east wind (which would be called "east" by the Hebrews), aided by the outflowing tide, caused the water to recede from its bed along a shallow ridge in front of the Israelites. **Waters were divided.** Not by heaping up as a wall, for which there is no warrant in the statements of the history, but by leaving bare flats, with lakes on each side, north and south. (5) *God has natural as well as supernatural instrumentalities at hand for the accomplishment of his purposes.*



22. Went into the midst of the sea. The place was probably near the town of Suez, on the gulf of the same name, where the sea is about three miles wide. They were compelled to cross the Red Sea, instead of going around its head, probably because a fortified wall extended from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean. **The waters were a wall.** This does not mean that the waters stood up perpendicularly on each side, but that they were a protection from attack during the crossing. The expressions in Exod. 15, 8 and Psal. 78, 13 are poetical, and not to be interpreted literally.

23. The Egyptians pursued. Following in the darkness, and perhaps not aware that they were being led into the sea. **Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen.** In ancient times the horse was used only for war, and generally not as cavalry, but with

chariots, each of which carried a driver and a soldier. In this case the foot soldiers were left behind, that the pursuit might be the more rapid.

24. In the morning watch. Between two o'clock and sunrise. **The Lord looked.** Some special display of wrath is here implied. From Psal. 77, 15-20, other hints of Scripture, and the tradition given by Josephus, it has been concluded that a heavy storm, with thunder and lightning, took place while the Egyptians were in the sea and the Israelites were safe on the further shore. This must have greatly alarmed the Egyptians, for such storms do not occur in Egypt once in a generation.

25. Took off their chariot wheels. The wheels became mired in the mud and sand, and many of them were broken off, so that the chariots were moved with great difficulty. **Let us flee.** Just such panics have many times seized whole armies, and driven them into defeat and flight. **The Lord fought for them.** They began to realize, but too late, that they were fighting against a Being who was mightier than their own gods. (6) *God is always battling in behalf of his people.* (7) *It is well for every man to be found fighting on God's side.*

26, 27. The Lord said. We notice that throughout this chain of events Moses acts and speaks as the messenger of God, who is the Supreme Ruler. **Moses stretched forth his hand.** Probably holding in his hand the rod by which he had called down the plagues upon Egypt. **The sea returned.** When the wind ceased and the tide turned, a sudden rise in the waters took place, and the separated seas became one, overwhelming the marching army between them. **To his strength.** The tide comes up so suddenly in the Gulf of Suez that on one occasion Napoleon and his suits were with difficulty saved from drowning while crossing at low water in the very place where the Israelites passed over. **The Lord overthrew the Egyptians.** This was not an act of vengeance, though such might have been deserved. It was necessary that the Egyptian power should be so broken that no attempt would be made to interfere with the journey of the Israelites through the wilderness.

28, 29. Covered the chariots. It is a question whether Pharaoh himself perished with his army, or death is not definitely stated, and is doubted by Wilkinson, but asserted by Canon Cook. **Walked upon dry land.** They were safe where others were in peril, because their God was their guard.

30. The Lord saved Israel. We cannot tell just where the boundary line ran between the natural and the supernatural in this event. But the course of affairs was under a divine direction, in answer to the prayer of Moses, and the tide was so timed as to save Israel and destroy Israel's enemies. **Dead upon the seashore.** According to Josephus, the Jewish historian, a west wind aided the current to carry the bodies to the shore on the desert side, and through them the Israelites were supplied with arms.

31. Feared the Lord. They learned the lesson of reverence for God and trust in his power, from their experience of his mercy. Their fear was very different from the blind terror of the Egyptians. One was the dread of an enemy, the other was the loving regard of a son. (8) *He who has realized God's grace will have confidence in him.* **He saved Moses.** The trusted leader of Moses as God's representative and as their own divinely appointed leader.

M. T.
W. T.
W. T.
W. T.
F. B.
S. T.
S. W.

No. 109.

No. 119.

No. 264.

TIME

PLAC

DOCT

Nigiu.

QU

1. The

Wise

pear?

Where

How

ract?

What

ing to

What

Is it li

What

wander

2. The

What

the moun

What

superna

What

serve?

Or whi

What

What

Why

How

How

How

lest in

How

even to

In God

Man is d

The ex

The co

What G

But acti

Let us

God is

God ed

obeyed,

God ne

ing an e

If ther

not lea

1. This

can tell

2. Try