

of the 'spoiling.' "The word is the same as when Sisera asked water and Jael gave him milk, and when Solomon asked wisdom, and did not ask long life, neither asked riches, neither asked the life of his enemies." (Chadwick.) These jewels, "portable valuables," would serve in place of coined money. On the monuments the male Egyptians appear to be almost as much ornamented in their dress as the females.

V. 3. *The Lord gave the people favour.* The Egyptians were moved by the calamities through which they had passed, so that they gave the people what they wished (ch. 12 : 36), glad too to be rid of them (v. 33). Moreover the man Moses was very great; because of the miracles that God had wrought by his hands. "Perhaps no other Israelite would have spoken of the man Moses with such a curious coldness or dryness"—one of the evidences, according to the writer, that Moses himself is the author of the book. Pharaoh's servants, the Egyptians, feared him; the people looked on him as a heavenly deliverer.

II. The First-born of Egypt Doomed, 4-6.

V. 4. *And Moses said.* This connects the narrative with the last interview between Moses and Pharaoh, ch. 10 : 27-29. Thus saith the Lord; words that should have come with overwhelming authority after all the marvels that had been wrought in His name. About midnight; some days after the present interview, for the preparation of the pass-over came in between. Will I go out. The pronoun "I" is expressed in Hebrew for emphasis. God Himself will personally inflict the crowning plague. (Amos 5 : 17.)

V. 5. *All the first-born . . . shall die.* Israel was God's firstborn (ch. 4 : 22), whom Egypt had oppressed. Now Egypt's firstborn must pay the penalty (v. 22). It was a judgment of indescribable severity, the special pre-eminence of eldest sons giving it emphasis; yet it was mild as compared with Pharaoh's decree, ch. 1 : 22. *Maid-servant that is behind the mill;* turning the one heavy stone around upon the other—one of the lowest forms of slave-labor. (Compare 12 : 29.) *The first-born of*

beasts. Egyptian religion was animal worship. This would be a blow at the heart of their religion.

V. 6. *There shall be a great cry through all the land.* When every home would be stricken, there would be a wail of anguish without any parallel. Loud lamentation is characteristic of Oriental mourning.

III. Israel Safe, 7, 8.

V. 7. *Shall not a dog move his tongue.* This proverb is used also in Joshua 10 : 21. Israel will be free from all injury or even the threat of danger. While Egypt would be given up to death, Israel would dwell in perfect safety. It would then be seen how the Lord had put a difference between the children of Israel and the Egyptians.

V. 8. *All these thy servants; Pharaoh's courtiers,* who have counselled him and encouraged him in the oppression of Israel. *Bow down themselves unto me;* present themselves as supplicants before Moses and, "cap in hand," make obeisance as to a king. *Saying, Get thee out;* asking as a favor that he and his people would depart, instead of hindering them from so doing. *After that I shall go out;* when everything shall have been brought low before the God of Israel. *He went out from Pharaoh in great anger.* The king had dismissed him abruptly and had threatened his life (ch. 10 : 28). This is the last time they met and strong words were uttered, for Moses delivered a message of terrible menace as the ambassador of God (v. 29). His was a righteous, yea God-like, resentment of wrong (Eph. 4 : 26).

IV. Pharaoh's Heart Hardened, 9, 10.

V. 9. *And the Lord said.* He had said (4 : 21 ; 7 : 3) that Pharaoh would harden his heart and refuse to let the people go. Not until the hand of God smote the first-born did Pharaoh's obstinacy give way. *That my wonders may be multiplied.* If the king had let them go early, such manifestations of God's power as followed would not have been seen, nor would such an impression have been made on the enemies of Jehovah as that produced by the death of the first-born. Besides, Pharaoh's continued oppres-