

The Passover.

AUGUST 7th.

EXODUS XII : 1-14.

Golden Text, 1 Corin. 5 : 7.

ONE PLAGUE had followed another in rapid succession. The last terrible one was at hand of which Pharaoh had received due warning, ch. 11. We have here instructions to the Israelites in anticipation of the exodus—the institution of the Passover, just as the Lord's Supper was instituted before the betrayal of our Saviour. V. 2. *This month*—the month *Abib*, corresponding to our March—April, as it began a new era in the history of the Israelites, is henceforth to commence their ecclesiastical year. Vs. 3, 4. *The congregation*—so called for the first time. Moses had directed the people to prepare for their departure and now they assembled from all parts of the country. *A Lamb*—it might be from the sheep or the goats. V. 5. *For an house*—There is here the idea of *communion*, and the importance of family religion. V. 5. The Paschal lamb was eminently typical of Christ—The Lamb of God. John 1 : 29. 1 Cor. 5 : 7. *Without blemish*—denoting the purity of the Lord Jesus, 1 Pet. 1 : 18, 19. *A male*—to take the place of the male first-born of Israel—*Of the first year*—in its prime. Christ offered himself for us in the full vigour of manhood, not in infancy. V. 6. *Until the 14th day*—It is thought that our Lord died on the day of the regular passover, thus completing the simile. *The whole assembly*—but each in his own house. It was a personal transaction, yet unity in it. In every Egyptian house one died : in every Israelite's house one lamb died in place of the child. So in the scheme of Redemption, one Lamb, one Church, one Song, Rev. 5 : 9 and 7 : 14-17. Vs. 7, 8. *Of the blood*—the symbol of expiation, Heb. 9 : 22. *Strike it*—The killing of the lamb was not enough. The sprinkling was the token of the Israelite's faith, so the Spirit of God "applieth" to us the redemption purchased by Christ, "by working faith in us." S. Catechism, 29, 30. *Eat the flesh*—This solemn eating of the paschal lamb, while it strengthened them for their journey, indicated also their acceptance of the substitute. So do we receive Christ for our spiritual nourishment, John 6 : 53-55. *With bitter herbs*—recalling to their minds their bitter bondage, and to ours the remembrance of our sins. V. 10. *Let nothing remain*—to prevent a superstitious abuse of the ordinance, the elements were to be sacred for this purpose. V. 11. *With your loins girded*—The attitude was to be that of travellers and workers, waiting and ready for marching orders at any moment. So with the Christian, Ephes. 6 : 14, 15 ; 2 Pet. 3 : 11-12. V. 12. *I will pass*—Jehovah Himself is to execute this awful judgment without the intervention of Moses and Aaron. *This night*—of the Passover—that after the 14th of Abib, the transactions of which have just been described ; (a week after the words are spoken.) *The first-born*—and therefore the pride and hope of the family, Gen. 49 : 3. *The gods of Egypt*—the princes or judges, ch. 22 : 28, 3, 9, as well as the animals which were worshipped.

The Red Sea.

AUGUST 14th.

EXODUS XIV : 10-27.

Golden Text, Exodus 14 : 15.

WHILE the Israelites were eating the paschal lamb the Destroying Angel passed through the land. At midnight there was one dead in every Egyptian family. In Pharaoh's palace, in peasant's cottage, in the dungeon of the prison, there was consternation, and wailing. The terrible judgment conquered Pharaoh's pride for the time being. Rising in the night he summoned Moses and Aaron into his presence and bade them "be gone," ch. 12 : 30-32. Instantly the people were marshalled and the rising sun saw them on the march carrying with them the spoils of Egypt, ch. 12 : 35, 36, and "the bones of Joseph" which they had preserved for 140 years, ch. 13 : 19. A vast cavalcade—603,550 men, together with the women, the youths under 20 years, and the Levites—in all about 2,500,000. Guided by the pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night, they reached Etham, at the head of the Red Sea. Had they gone straight to Canaan they had certainly been overtaken. At the command of God they turn to the south and encamp before Pihahiroth on the western shore of the Red Sea. The place of crossing is uncertain, probably it was south of Suez where the gulph has a width of three miles at high tide. Read from v. 17 of ch. 13. Vs. 19, 20. *The angel of God*—The pillar of cloud, ch. 13 : 21. Hitherto before them, now in their rear, serving a double purpose, to blind the Egyptians and to protect the Israelites. The providences of God have ever a two-fold aspect—a dark side towards sin and sinners, a bright and pleasant side to believers. Vs. 21, 22. *Caused the sea to go back*—Compare Josh. 2 : 10. Natural agencies are used to effect what still was a miracle. Moses and Aaron would be the first to venture in. Example is better than precept. To say "come" in a good cause is better than "go." See in this evidence of their faith. See Ps. 66 : 6 and 77 : 11-20. Isa. 63 : 11-12. Heb. 11 : 29. *The waters were a wall*—answered the purpose of a wall—water to right of them, water to left of them, protecting them from a flank movement of the enemy. *Pharaoh's horses*, vs. 6-9. Perhaps Pharaoh himself, Ps. 136 : 15. Vs. 24, 25. *Morning watch*—about sunrise. This "look" of Jehovah may have been flashes of lightening with thunder and rain. *Took off their chariot wheels*—by coming into collision, or sinking into the sand. *Let us flee*—Too late! Besides, whither shall men flee from Jehovah? Ps. 139 : 7-12. V. 27. *Moses*—that he may still appear the ambassador of God, gives the signal upon which wind and wave combine to repeat the miracle precisely at the moment when the overthrow of the entire host may be effected. Natural causes alone can never account for these phenomena, Ps. 74 : 13. The controversy God had with Pharaoh was not so much in his individual capacity nor even as the ruler of Egypt, but as the representative of sinners who harden their hearts against the influences of the Holy Spirit.