

# THE PEOPLE'S BIBLE HISTORY

PREPARED IN THE LIGHT OF RECENT INVESTIGATIONS

BY SOME OF

THE FOREMOST THINKERS IN EUROPE AND AMERICA.

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BEAUTIFULLY ILLUSTRATED.

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EDITED BY

REV. GEO. C. LORIMER, LL.D.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

RIGHT HON. WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE, M.P.

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## PREFACE.

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THE PEOPLE'S BIBLE HISTORY, while planned by the editor in the interest of evangelical religion, was not designed to be either narrow or repressive. Truth is never advantaged by seeming dread of thorough investigation and reasonable freedom of expression. The intelligent public has a right to know what eminent scholars think on subjects closely interwoven with man's spiritual welfare, and to judge for itself how far recent researches may or may not invalidate cherished faiths. It has not, therefore, been considered necessary or desirable by the editor that every representation relative to the human element in the sacred writings which does not command his own approval should be excluded. Certain extreme statements of a purely conjectural and speculative character he has prevailed on their authors to modify or eliminate; and an occasional, and as he trusts, involuntary, display of denominational bias he has ventured to suppress. As the prime purpose of this volume is to unfold the history recorded in the Bible, and not to discuss theories of inspiration or defend a system of theology, a wider range of opinion has been allowed than would have been admissible in other circumstances. But at the same time this generous latitude has made it apparent that there is a distinctively evangelical school of higher criticism—a school loyal to the cardinal doctrines of Christianity, though diverging somewhat from traditional estimates of their documentary sources. While the editor dissents from several of the positions assumed by some of his learned coadjutors, as being inconsistent and untenable, he is more than gratified to acknowledge their manifest loyalty to the Headship of Christ. Assuredly it is a great gain to the Christian world to see for itself that the old faith has nothing to fear from the freest thought and the most brilliant scholarship.

The reader of these pages should realize that the novel views set forth by various erudite teachers concerning the dates and composition of the sacred books, especially of the Hexateuch, are not as yet finally accepted, though, of course, their advocates regard them as irrefutable. But these enthusiasts overlook the fact that while such critics as Dillmann and Delitzsch, on the one side, and Graf and Wellhausen, on the other, coincide in the opinion that the Hexateuch has been compiled out of documents far older than itself, they are not altogether agreed as to the true analysis of its component parts. The differences may be slight, but they are real. Dillmann's A. is Wellhausen's P. C.; while his B. and C. stand for what is usually represented by E (Elohists) and J (Jahvist). Wellhausen considers one part of the composition, that marked J, as older than Dillmann does. The latter, likewise, concurs in the general truthfulness of the patriarchal histories as recorded in Genesis, and has no sympathy with Stade who regards their heroes as primitive deities, nor with the former in beginning his "History of Israel" at the birth of Moses. Dillmann is also impatient with some recent Assyriologists who insist on tracing the Biblical accounts of Creation and the Flood to Babylonian sources, rendered accessible by the Captivity. These variations are instructive and indicate that the end is not yet. There is no doubt that the Hexateuch reveals distinctions in vocabulary, style, and construction, and that narratives apparently are duplicated and enactments repeated on its pages, some accounts being Jehovistic and others Elohist. But then we have psalms thus differentiated by the Divine Name, and yet no hard, unyielding theory of their origin and age has been elaborated from such slim materials. We may, therefore, well pause before committing ourselves irrevocably to all of the confident assertions of modern critics. As dealing with the human side of the

Scriptures, with which this history has especially and almost exclusively to do, their suggestions and representations are not out of place, and add immeasurably to the interest and value of this volume; but at the same time they ought to be taken with caution and reserve. Even as these words are being penned, and while the brilliant assaults of George Adam Smith, Cheyne, and Driver, on the unity of "Isaiah," are still fresh in the public mind, Principal Douglas, their peer in learning and ability, is challenging their conclusions in a masterful treatise, entitled "Isaiah One and His Book One." It is consequently impossible at this date to anticipate the final findings of genuine and well-balanced criticism. That must be left to the future. Each author connected with this Bible History is alone responsible for the views he advocates; but whatever these personal teachings may be, every candid student will admit that they have not obscured the sublime truths, which the movements of the mighty past disclose, that God is in all history, and that all the ages have providentially been made tributary to his unique manifestation in the Divine Christ.

From the slow development of religion, which is perhaps the most notable feature of the inspired chronicle, it is evident that we cannot hope to comprehend its meaning in a moment or without patient application. God does not hasten: we cannot. It is also observable, that not only has religion been of tardy growth; it has been the product of various and oftentimes of indirect agencies. At the beginning God did not put coal in the mine, neither did he plant the full-grown tree, but scattered living germs on the earth, which afterward became forests. These forests drank in the sun until they were soaked with flame; then they sank into the darkness to be transmuted in the laboratory of nature into substance for heat and light. Thus the final religion had to pass through successive stages. At first it was but a seed; then it took shape in antediluvian, postdiluvian, patriarchal, theocratical, ceremonial, and prophetic eras—more than once being submerged in the night of exile, oppression, and apostasy—at last to blaze forth in all the splendors of the Christian dispensation. No wonder, then, if the history of this sublime progress should reveal the touch of many hands, and the interblending of diverse materials. It may be compared to a mosaic in which piece to piece has been joined that a glorious picture of heavenly things might be produced. Though the seams and divisions of this picture may not be apparent to all—for the Bible is not fashioned like the Byzantine mosaics, where all the articulations are palpable and rough, but like those of Rome where all the lines are ground down until they are nearly invisible—they still exist; and when some master-workman shows them to us and makes clear the various fragments that enter into the composition of the whole, let it not be doubted that even this may be true, and the divine origin of the grand old book remain uninvalidated. For one controlling, guiding, unifying mind must have been operative through all the weary ages to produce out of such composite elements a result so wonderfully unique, uplifting, and unfathomable as the Bible: and that mind in the nature of things could not have been human.

It has been customary in volumes of this character to give an account of the four centuries between the last of the Hebrew prophets and the first of the Roman emperors, and to embrace in the narrative a description of the overthrow of Jerusalem. This introduction of material not contained in the Scriptures is justified as necessary to an understanding of the relation existing between the old economy and the new, and to the coherent unfolding of the divine purpose in the calling of the Gentiles. But it has always seemed to the editor that the reason, good and sufficient as it is, for this method, ought to lead the historian yet farther. Instead of arresting his work at the point of catastrophe, he ought to carry it onward to the period of victory. That the student may perceive how Christianity emerged from obscurity to the preëminence it attained under the Cæsars; that he may see how it

began to fulfill what was foretold of its career, and observe the manner of its emancipation from the influence of Judaism and from reliance on miracles: in a word, that he may be able to form some idea of its transition by which, though never of the earth, it came to be in many respects like the kingdoms of earth, under the dominion of natural law, there should be furnished, at least in outline, an account of the events which make the two hundred years subsequent to the Apostolic era singularly significant in the spiritual annals of mankind. This will explain the unusual extension of the present treatise beyond the ordinary limits conventionally set to Bible history.

It is only right that the editor should refer in befitting terms to the publishers, and to others who have had much to do in preparing this volume for the press. All that money could do has cheerfully been done by Henry O. Shepard and his partners to render this contribution to religious literature scholarly in treatment and artistic in execution. The paper, letterpress, pictures, and binding speak for themselves, and the names of Gladstone and Farrar, to say nothing of the others, are evidence that the text is not unworthy its beautiful accessories. But if the company has been generous in its use of money, the business manager of the book, Mr. G. L. Howe, has been equally lavish in the thought and labor he has spent on its production. Though the editor is the architect, in a very real sense the book must be regarded as Mr. Howe's monument. He it was who invited the editor to elaborate the plan of the work and choose collaborators to aid in the execution. To him alone is due the merit of enlisting the pen of the Rt. Hon. W. E. Gladstone in the enterprise; and from first to last he has exercised an unsleeping oversight of its progress toward completion. And now that he assumes control of all agencies employed in its circulation, the public may receive him in confidence as a gentleman entitled to the highest consideration.

No pains have been spared to render the text as accurate as possible. This has not been an easy task, the editor and his literary associates living remote from one another, some of them being beyond the sea. The greatest care has been taken to guard against mistakes; and if the result is in any commensurate degree satisfactory, credit is largely due to the very thorough proofreading done in Chicago, especially by Mr. Robert D. Watts, and to the final supervision of the page proofs in Boston by the Rev. Charles Follen Lee, A.M., to whose scholarly attainments and critical taste testimony need hardly be borne.

And now that this History passes from the workshop of the editor to the great world outside, he trusts that it may find its way into multitudes of homes, and prove a fresh incentive to the study of that mysterious BOOK, wherein the highest genius of man appears enkindled and inspired by the Spirit of God.

GEORGE C. LORIMER,  
TREMONT TEMPLE,  
BOSTON, U. S. A.

JUNE 4, 1895.

# BOOK IV.

## FROM THE BIRTH OF MOSES TO THE BEGINNINGS OF FREEDOM.

BY REV. FRANK W. GUNSAULUS, D.D.

### CHAPTER I.

#### "THE CRADLE OF THE HEBREW NATION."

THERE are two majestic silences in the story of the Bible. One stretches from that hour whose chronicle we have in the closing words of the Book of Genesis, to that later hour, separated from the earlier by three hundred and fifty years, with which the Book of Exodus opens; the other, four centuries long, measures the distance between the utterance of the last prophet in the Old Testament and the outpoured melody of angels at the birth of Jesus in the New. In the lights and shadows of this first silence, we behold dimly outlined by the side of the dreamy Nile and the solemn pyramid, revealed only by the flash lights of a few short sentences written in a later period, the almost formless Israelitish host, around them that strange air invested with the purposes of Almighty God, and over them his distinct word of promise: "Fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation."<sup>1</sup> Recent readings of ancient monuments, the deciphering of moldering papyri, the pages of the Greek historians or Egyptian priests, vie with that magnificence of nature and of art which salutes the modern traveler, and that indubitable record made in the life and character of Israel, to show how admirably Egypt at that hour was fitted to be "the cradle of the Hebrew nation." The gift which, Herodotus says, was made to humanity by the Nile, was a seed bag containing the world's former harvestings.

The significance of all nature blooms into its fullness in the life and destiny of man. The equatorial rains creating the sluice-way for their outflow to the Mediterranean were ministers of him who sees the end from the beginning, and the delta thus created, as the torrents faded with the recession of the Nile, produced a civilization as opulent and various in its forces as were those material deposits on whose fertile surface it grew and flourished. But without a soul like Moses, and a people

educated to be led forth by such a leadership, despite what civilization had thus far achieved, these unrelated and unimpersonal energies were impotent. Egyptian life and idealism were able to preserve only as a memorial and a school for some divinely inspired people this wealth of the past, and this splendid present rapidly identifying itself with the past.

One of the facts which were certainly invalidating the intellectual and moral power of the throne of the Pharaohs to deal hopefully and in statesmanlike way with the possibilities of land and population was this enslaved mass of Jews. No other race could have contributed a multitude of bondmen so likely, even in the opinion of the Egyptian, to rebel, to incite trouble, and even to bring about revolution. For ages, Egypt and Israel had been hostile on every field. For centuries of Israel's sojourn, Egypt had beheld the people grow, develop a fierce independence in numerous predatory excursions into Canaan, and exhibit a far-sighted mastery of radical ideas. Taxes and burdens of incredible weight, seizures of ancient rights guaranteed by Joseph, and offenses against their old dream of freedom under God, only served to intensify a proud spirit of revolt. The oppressors feared the oppressed, as they were seen to assume new dignity with each new outrage visited upon them. The system of slavery was working its own destruction, largely by enslaving the throne with a wholesome dread of the enslaved. Conservatism, such as held visible empire but failed of real supremacy, then and there did, and always, indeed, does count up its traditions and wealth, its franchises and institutions, with such self-bewilderment that all young and righteous opposition, especially if it be in chains, appears as did the agitation of the American slave question in 1850 even to Daniel Webster, who called it a "rub-a-dub" agitation. Ancient privilege and crowned wrong are always being asked by the progressive and radical Christ of history to behold its institutions, while he says: "See ye not all these

<sup>1</sup>Genesis xlvii, 3.



things?" and, because they are *things* and man is a *soul*, the Christ of history adds somewhere and sometime: "There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."<sup>1</sup>

Egypt was rich in "*things*." She had wealth of soil and unbounded capacity of production. If ever slave labor may be called cheap—a proposition which the history of every slaveholding dynasty refutes—then did Egypt have cheap labor, which, with abundant food easily obtained from the luxuriant breast of nature, helped to make her a dowered queen in the company of half-fed oriental peoples. As day by day the spirit of freedom, grown up out of a sense of God's purpose, brought them nearer to the hour when the pilgrim children of Israel should look back upon all the past, there was deepening a richer material background, not the least impressive of whose elements was the Nile, teeming with fish, lakes brilliant with the plumage of birds, great stretches of garden land furnishing "the cucumbers and the melons and the leeks and the onions and the garlic"; roadways trodden by caravans of laden camels moving between fertile and succulent pastures, and the yellow wheatfields in which the shepherds of Israel had become agriculturists; wide channels for irrigation, near whose banks flourished the fig and date trees, and over whose enriching currents bended the sycamore and the palm. That portion of Egypt in which Israel was cradled and trained might well be worthy of the praise which the reigning Pharaoh bestowed upon it, when he addressed Joseph, calling it "the best land."

In peace and war, commerce had added large wealth, material and mental, to Egypt. In the fourteen dynasties which had lived and perished before Joseph's day, ships had entered the harbors from every land; the beer of Galilee came in Palestinian galleys; cattle and rare woods, furs and perfumes, negroes and precious metals, were floated down the Nile to her cities; the products of Libya burdened the dusty caravans. The Nile valley had always been attractive to the shepherd tribes. Cushites and the nomadic races joined with Phœnicians, and probably Syrians, to open this opportunity to enterprising power. The conquered Hittites contributed vases of gold, artistic material and products for temple and residence, war chariots and woven silks. Egyptian greed never forgot the hour, when, under the powerful Thothmes, she imposed tribute, like some earlier Rome, upon the whole world. Fourteen campaigns against Western Asia have left a record of their booty on the walls of the temple at Karnak. Even Ethiopia was despoiled of treasure. But,

<sup>1</sup> Matthew xxiv, 2.

greatest of all the gifts for the future of humanity, the commercial spirit at its basest moment had given to this land, Joseph to be Grand Vizier; and now in his bones was Israel's imperishable hope.

To her own thought, Egypt had a finer wealth than all this. This very district is its fragmentary memorial. Ghostlike and sublime, the gigantic wreck of a great artistic life is beheld in the multitude of sphinxes and columns which dot the weary monotony of sand. The ancient canal is dry, but the granite features of the king still command from the company of the gods. While the wealth of turquoise from the mines of Sinai, or gold ore from the desert of Nubia, was borne slowly upon the Nile, and large dykes guarded the arable land, architecture had already employed millions of human beings, in the quarries, at the cataracts, with huge instruments of engineering, with fine tools for cutting and polishing, to complete the most astonishing results that now challenge the wonder of our race. Abraham had probably mused and pondered there of the strength of man, as sixty pyramids rose up to assure him that certainly the princes of Pharaoh were descendants of men of power.<sup>1</sup> Joseph had beheld a whole realm of art in the multitude of sepulchers and huge relics—the burial place of kings and cities. Sanctuaries were there whose wilderness of columns and overwritten walls were only surpassed in splendor by their vast and gorgeous approaches. For ten centuries the pyramid of Cheops had given promise that, twenty centuries later, western culture might look upon it with increased surprise. The one city, Memphis, the capital, was so magnificent as to continue its fascination for a millennium and a half, until the Father of History might be taught within her walls. Obelisks and pillars, giant statues and wonderful carvings compel the belief that still finer and grander was the capital of the Middle Empire, Thebes, while the City of the Sun remained at once the religious and educational metropolis, a veritable Vatican of priests and an Oxford of scholars, the memorial of Joseph's love for the Egyptian maiden and the spot where the Hebrew student was to become "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians."<sup>2</sup> Like the sphinx itself, cut from a single enormous rock, stands out for the amazement of to-day the unique art-movement of this people.

Egypt was the college of the nations. Here was the academy in which the Platos and Bacon of the period held high converse—the birthplace of what is most attractive to the intellect in all human culture. This very fact was wealth. Egypt had the haughty self-con-

<sup>1</sup> Genesis xii, 15.    <sup>2</sup> Acts vii, 22.

fidence which sprang from the fact that her people were the most refined and cultured, if, indeed, they were not the only educated people in the known world. Greater than the builders of the capacious granaries and oil cellars, more deft and subtle than the artists of the wardrobes of all her thousand dignitaries in religion and government, partially accounting for her unmatched engineers, astronomers, chemists, architects, physicians, and philosophers, were Egypt's common-school teachers, a republic of primary pedagogues, which made her able to give to the first-grade boy in our schools his arithmetic as easily as she gave back to Greece her Pythagoras, but not until he was able to send a Plato to the City of On. A lettered class was formed of the scribes. The priest was the instructor. From the knowledge of the scales of notation, the student advanced to geometry and trigonometry. Civil engineering and mechanical engineering point to the aqueducts, and the huge stones lifted to their places in pyramids six hundred feet high, as proofs that the Egyptians understood not a little of their secrets. It is contended that their astronomy has left its memorial in the great pyramids; and it is certain that the year of three hundred and sixty-five days and a quarter was measured with a scholarship equal to our own. Our metallurgists have not scorned the blowpipe and bellows used at Thebes. The hydraulic engineer does not disdain the practical Egyptian's siphon; and the Israelites themselves became witnesses of what Egypt could give to slaves, in quite another direction of applied science and art, as they afterward manufactured beautiful works in gold and silver, embroidery and the setting of gems.

Egypt had government and religion. A long line of able rulers, a most brilliant career as a progressive people and the instinct for organization had furnished her with political traditions and revered methods of procedure. Herder insists that her pyramids and sepulchers are to be considered proof that her people had reached a misery and degradation incredible to us. Certainly, however, at an earlier time, very vital and energetic must have been the autonomy and self-dependence of the population to have produced such a specimen of what is called "a strong government."

Ancient paintings and sculptures reveal a high and firm civilization, as perhaps the earliest. At the time with which we are most concerned, Egyptian statecraft and politics added much to the richness of that background against which we may behold the portrait of Israel. The power to enslave foreign peoples was almost equalled by the finer strength

which wrought out of dissimilar populations such results as were achieved for government when Egyptian scribes, by a dominance of ideas, reconquered the rude shepherd kings. Such a warrior as Amenemhat I. enabled his successor to found such a city as Heliopolis. Her kings builded fortresses at the south and reservoirs for the Nile, while her priests crowded the cloisters with students. Her multitude of officials and her elaborate court ceremonial are to be considered along with a developing literature, a prophetic art-movement, and the career of a Thothmes who made Egypt the center of the world. Yet it was a statesmanship which dealt less earnestly with man than with "things."

As much may be said of her religion. Rich enough to contribute to Israel, it was, like her statesmanship, to afford by contrast a startling picture of the inherent supremacy of even an enslaved truth. If it had granted woman a high place, it had preached pious exercises of almost shameless beastliness. If it enthroned the Invisible and fostered some lofty ideas of God, it could deify cats and crocodiles, and prostrate itself before a golden bull or a chattering ape. Osiris might sit in the Judgment Hall of the two truths, himself a picture of justice; but vice was rampant under the blessings of the priesthood, and in the use of the Ritual for the Dead, while confession was made of the truths of divine self-existence and the soul's immortality, the pilgrim soul, on escaping a debased body, protested its virtue and righteousness. All this huge anomaly was made gorgeous in magnificent temples, musical or eloquent in a rich service, vital in the eager orthodoxy of countless priests, inclusive of astonishing achievements of science, and identical in methods and hope with a powerful government.

Against all these, wrapped up in the form of a helpless baby, lying in tears amidst the tall flags and lotus blossoms of the Nile, were the unredressed wrongs of a whole people, and the purposes of the unforgetting God. As a man-child of manacled Hebrewdom, he encountered the command of Pharaoh in the first breath he drew: "*Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river.*"<sup>1</sup> Doubtless many sons had perished, as mother after mother sighed near the bank of that river where a large portion of Israel had its dwelling; but the cause of the oppressed had not been drowned, and here, at this moment, that cause was identical with divine providence and human pity in saving for the leadership of the bondmen, Moses, the Captain, the Lawgiver, the Prophet, and the Emancipator of his people.

<sup>1</sup> Exodus i, 22.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE YOUTH OF MOSES.

WHEN Amram was joined in holy wedlock with Jochebed, there was consummated an alliance of great significance to human history. The name Jochebed was one of those anticipations, of that of which much has elsewhere been said — Israel's perpetually widening and enriching revelation of the character of God — a prophetic revelation of the covenant-making Lord, of whom Moses, their son, was soon to have a fuller vision — for her name means "*She whose glory is Jehovah.*" Amram, whose name signifies "*Kin of the High One,*" was of the tribe of Levi, the offspring of Kohath, who was the second son of the head of the Levitic priesthood. Any child of this marriage, therefore, belonged to the truest aristocracy of God. This blood had thrilled to the commands and inspirations of the purest faith. Their creed was continually alive with promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Almost alone, amidst the corrupting influences of Egyptian mythology and worship, the tribe of Levi had kept the faith. Already, Miriam and Aaron had been born, and the daughter was a grown-up girl of twelve or fourteen, the son a child of three, when God blessed their union again, and Moses, a child of "exceeding fairness," lay in his mother's arms. Probably Aaron had come to them before the inhuman tyrant had issued his desperate command that the male children of Hebrewdom should be drowned. But, here and now, motherhood meets this dreadful order with her fair babe. Three months of hiding her child made Jochebed more heroic in her faith in God. Trusting the "eternal womanly" in woman, she really trusted God. There were the growing rushes; they could be made into a waterproof ark by the use of slime and a coating of pitch. Silently and lovingly Jochebed might deposit the treasure of her love and hope in the Nile's shadows amidst the bulrushes. There Pharaoh's daughter would come to bathe with her attendant maidens. And there — it was motherhood's dearest dream — the child would be safe, because of God. Then occurred the most marvelous of "the marvelous things" "in the field of Zoan."<sup>1</sup> No vicious crocodile infested its beautiful waters, almost shadowed by the ancient royal residence; and, as the princess bathed, the cry of the babe, which she could not yet interpret as the cry of an enslaved race through her to God, came to her pitiful soul. The Egyptian Ritual for the Dead compelled any spirit to answer at the last: "I have not afflicted any man: I have not made any man weep: I have not

<sup>1</sup> Psalm lxxviii, 12.

withheld milk from the mouth of sucklings." Besides, in spite of the evident fact that this, by Pharaoh's law, was a doomed child of the hated and feared Hebrews, here was a woman's responsive heart ready to reëcho the baby's cry. Humanity has shaken many a dynasty into dust. At the moment when the discovery became a problem, and Pharaoh's daughter was perhaps pondering the words: "I have not withheld milk from the mouth of sucklings," the sister, furnishing for all ages a delicately and strongly drawn portrait of true sisterhood, naively offered the love-begotten proposition that some Hebrew woman be asked to nurse him. What the Nile-god had given to Pharaoh's daughter, the Almighty One had first given to Jochebed and Hebrewdom. Consent was easily obtained; the mother of Moses was chosen — and that night he lay in Jochebed's bosom.

Ebers has devoted many of his brilliant sentences to the description of the appearance of the princess, who probably was, as he insists, none other than the sister of that young Ramesses who was at that time associated king with Seti I. Traditions and inscriptions give her the names of Thermouthis and Merris. It is of more importance that Moses, whose name signifies "*Taken from the water,*" became, in due course of events, a member of the royal household. Here, and at the institutions of learning frequented by such distinguished youth, he was to be "instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians." He had soon entered the priestly caste. We have already referred to the fact that Egypt was herself a university in which every docile youth was matriculated. To know Egypt, as any bright young boy would know that superb memorial and grand workshop of scholars, was to be "learned." But Moses was vouchsafed all the unique advantages which were offered by the throne and the priesthood in which he was at least a novice. He trod the cloisters and sat in the lecture rooms where intelligence was imparted from the lips of illustrious professors. He mused in the libraries where eminent scribes were reproducing for such bibliographical museums as that of famous Alexandria was to be, the results of human thought and discovery; he was inducted into the art of song and the knowledge of the sacred physicians and astrologers, horoscopers and idol dressers, amidst the perpetual pageant of the palaces and the temples; but, more important still, he became the scholar of the "*Wisdom of Egypt.*" This was the sacred possession of a small circle of the intellectual and religious aristocracy. Into



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PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER AND THE CHILD MOSES.

the secrets of that treasure, of which we learn both so little and so much from the glimpses of Greek and Roman philosophers hundreds of years afterward, Moses entered with such docility and thoroughness that, through all the pilgrim march, at Sinai, and in his earnest appeals in the wilderness, he is still the debtor to the culture obtained in the land of his youth. Probably the university at Heliopolis took him for a large portion of his youth from the imperial palace, but it was only the residence of a king's favorite at the spot where more kingly minds than Pharaoh's contributed their science and philosophy to his large and open soul. Along with this, another culture grew. Amram and Jochebed and Hebrewdom, through solemn memory, ancient psalm, and inspiring promise, had obtained the start of the throne and university of the City of the Sun. The mother's knee is the altar at which the child-soul makes the sacrifice of itself to the learning which is life's chief resource and highest commandment. Against all this culture from Egypt, over it and through it, supple and strong enough to master and to use it, was the home culture of the Hebrew hearthstone. Then and there came what Principal Fairbairn calls "the conflict of the two natures, the native and the acquired in him; the victory of the Hebrew over the Egyptian."

On one of those days when slavery sullenly vaunted its hateful prerogative, the patriot Jew flashed forth from the scholarly courtier, as afterward William the Silent was to rise, with a sword in his hand, from out the sometime easy-going and compliant inmate of the palace of Charles V. One of the native masters was beating a Hebrew slave. In his wrath, Moses slew the Egyptian taskmaster. Of course, this conduct was murder, and it courted death as punishment. It separated him from his brethren. He added to his crime, in the eye of the Egyptian law, for, by concealing the corpse, he had prevented embalmment; and Egypt believed that the soul of the dead could not enter heaven. Nothing but exile remained for Moses, if he desired to live. Away to the craggy Sinaitic peninsula he hurried for refuge. The Almighty One was guiding Israel in every step which Moses took. Elsewhere, especially if he had fled to the south of Palestine, the authorities, acting under the Hittite treaty, would have returned him an extradited prisoner. No; God would acquaint Israel's emancipator with that set of facts of which neither Amram's household nor Egypt's university possessed the requisite knowledge. The Moses of Israel's emancipation was to need all he could acquire of the knowledge of Sinai. Barren Midian is better, at this stage in the education of any Moses, than Thebes or On, or even the feast of the Jews.

Cromwell must drain the fen country. So did God give Washington the English colonial territory to win, or to survey, before and after Braddock's defeat, that he might save it to the cause of the Continental army; so also did God educate Lincoln in the Midian of Kentucky, where he could know American slavery and survey the actual intellectual and spiritual territory through which he was to lead a race to the Canaan of liberty—a Canaan which, like Moses, he saw from afar as he died on Nebo.

Here in Midian, where he met Abraham and Keturah's wandering descendants, the man Moses, now forty years of age, was certain to obtain, not only from the nomadic race, but also from the vast solitudes of nature, a nobler and clearer idea of the Almighty One. Moses was full of fiery quality which was to temper his character, while now and then it burst forth, as it did at one of the ancient wells. Base and insulting shepherds had offended the daughters of the priest of Midian, driving away their flocks. The chivalric Moses protected them with a strong hand. Every such act deepens the soul's receptiveness for the truer vision of the Eternal Righteousness. Out of this came the invitation to their father's house and the marriage of Moses to Zipporah, his daughter. Slight indeed is the record of those forty years; but there is much evident, though it be unrecorded, history in these silences. Zipporah afterward proved to be strong-willed and high-tempered; and with her the soul of Moses was wifeless. When at length he went to Pharaoh, Zipporah was sent away. Doubtless the house of the rich sheik, Jethro, served Moses best, as it sent him back into the resources of his own spirit and the worship of God. His two sons seem by their very names to indicate that, while there, he was also exiled from the real business of his life. Their names were *Gershon*—"banishment"; *Eliczer*—"My God is help." All this while, Moses was moving toward God and divine destinies. Here were the Horeb mountains and there was Sinai—to them he would return. Here he was making definite and larger the knowledge of that land, many of whose valleys and heights, roadways, wells and streams would, at a future day, challenge or assist his ability to lead a nation to liberty. Those sandstone hills, purple and red in their craggy sublimity, lit by every variation of light; the vague and wide desert, less barren than now; the numerous wadies, shadowed by pinnacles and cliffs; the eagle flying with her young—these all deepened the solemnity of human life; and the musing man found here the majesty of God. All of these, like so many nourishing forces, prepared him for that event in whose mysterious lights the Hebrew nation found its torch lit for revolution.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE BURNING BUSH AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE.

“AND the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Moreover, he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.”<sup>1</sup>

Such is the divine narrative of the event most genetic and formative in the character of the Hebrew chieftain. Moses never before had an intelligent hold upon himself; never before had he a just conception of how his own life took hold of other lives and bound itself up with the fate of human society and the reign of God in the world. In the vision of God he gained the vision of himself. It is interesting to study the inner life of Moses before the vision of this burning bush and afterward. Nothing in the whole Bible, so truly as this, gives the portrait of a man's spiritual self in those moments of mingled hot-headedness and indifference, before he finds God and himself in some hour of vision, and the portrait of that other self when by that vision he has become an intelligent and conscientious force which knows no wasteful outburst of energy nor has a moment in which its constant vitality is not at work. Years before he had felt, in that unintelligent way in which men feel the pressure of great wrongs, the atrocity of Egyptian bondage, and when the Hebrew was receiving the cruel stroke, he dispatched the Egyptian taskmaster. It was an unregulated outburst of indignation which, so far as we know, did not leave a single great purpose in his heart. Indeed, it had left him poorer in all the requirements of a constructive reformer, rather than richer. There is always something enervating and dissipating in those fire-sweeping movements of the soul, when the blaze has not come from a great flaming truth or a torch-like principle lighting men on to a definite goal. Moses fled from the court of the king, and after years of love and exile, wherein no word is spoken,

so far as we know, of the mighty problem which he encountered in that beaten slave, and which he does not seem at all to try to solve, we find him an oriental shepherd. He is well married; why should he trouble himself about the great world and its perplexing questions? He reclines on the soft turf and sees the feeding flocks of a rich father-in-law; why should he worry about the people who are unfortunate enough to be in slavery? Let the fanatics take care of those matters. He once was all on fire, too. And he thinks, as he looks out from the mountain-side over the delightful valley, that his enthusiasm cost dearly enough. But yet, before that wretched self-content which keeps many a well-housed son-in-law and many an untroubled man from being of service to his race—just before that self-satisfied, comfortable and easy life puts its crown on—the native man in this shepherd wakes to behold the vision of God, the burning bush, the revealing omnipotence of righteousness, and the glowing but perpetual victory of truth.

Many a man has had all this experience, save the recognition of the burning bush. He, too, has been living in a world full of sin, and cruelty, and crime. In his ardent youth, he has seen some proud iniquity beat its slave, and he has hurled himself against it to put it out of existence. There has been no great principle at the bottom of his act; no peerless truth lay like a revelation in his soul; no profound righteousness shone like a star above the swelling anger of his indignant spirit. And that experience of trying to help the world has left him much less strong. It has exiled him from the very society in which he might be expected to shine. It has so thoroughly impressed him with the littleness of his power and the loneliness of his effort, that he is half ashamed that he has tried to do anything at all. Like Moses, domestic life is probably his chief concern. To be well fed and well clothed mean more than they meant then. To have a respectable income, even if it comes only by a fortunate marriage; to be sure of an easy, quiet life; to muse about nature, and, at a great distance, to pity the unfortunate—these are now of priceless value. When men talk about enthusiasm and the flaming truths of God, it is enough to remind them that once he was on fire too, and that he burned out with great rapidity; that these glowing moments are very brilliant, but full of dangerous heat and consuming flame. His dead Egyptian did not save Israel. But here Moses is transformed. He has found God;

<sup>1</sup> Exodus iii, 2-7.

he has found himself. Before, he was easy and content; now there blazes in his spirit the flame of glowing truth which shall furnish ensigns for the great revolution. No longer shall the beautiful pastures enchant his spirit; no foot of land shall be but cursed to him so long as Egypt bears the footstep of a slave. Before, he was isolated and knew no feeling which made the life he lived and the life his kinsmen lived one; now the full responsibility of humanity is upon him, and, with a consciousness of being in the presence of God, the luxuriant and selfish individualism goes out as the true personality comes into him. How strange was everything! Over the splendid sky under which he was delightedly watching the flock, was written, "*Let my people go!*"<sup>1</sup> On the rock against which he leaned, or in whose shade he fell asleep aforetime, blazed the words, "*Let my people go!*" Into the playful brook and along the rapid river on whose banks he had stood in easy grace and pastoral mood, there sounded the alarm to Pharaoh, the tocsin of war to the Egyptian throne, the first movement of freedom to the hapless slave. "*Let my people go!*" God had revealed himself, and Moses was a transformed man.

Truth will burn, and by its burning illuminate, yet it is inconsumable; principles will flame with living fire and make the very air to glow and quiver with heat, yet they are indestructible; right, love of God and love of man will blaze in their significance and tremble with their withering or beneficent fire, but they will know no consumption or waste; they cannot be reduced to ashes; they are as eternal as God. That little thorn bush which Moses saw has gone down into history as the teacher of these things. But it is not alone. Wherever any noble creature of God has seen the truth, which, through a thousand heated struggles, has burned its way into the air men breathe and perpetuated its existence while it made the tropics in some polar region of public sentiment, safe after all the fury of fire, still standing and still burning with a divine glory — there has been the vision of the burning bush. When any soul has seen a flaming principle, which, through dark and dismal times, has sent its illumination afar, still blazing after the eyes of men have been entranced by its revelation, waiting while it glows with the fervor of God to light up a new era, or scatter the darkness of some new danger — there has been the vision of the burning bush. Wherever the quenchless right which has trembled with fire divine through long ages, and warmed the damp air and made bright the landscape around it, still is seen to abide in the furnace

heat of its old splendor and wait to rouse men to new duties — there is the burning bush. Wherever some great heart feels the inextinguishable love of humanity which has felt the drenching rains of centuries of doubt and despair, and still believes that man is God's child, and still is ready with the old inconsumable enthusiasm to brave defeat and endure danger for man's sake — there the burning bush of Moses stands, and there a new Moses finds God.

Israel here found her greatness through the experience of her greatest soul. The revelation of himself in the commonplace is one of the most interesting facts of God's dealings with men. And the more we see of the nature of this burning bush, the more we discover of the fitness of this characteristic of the event. If that point in every man's history, where he becomes the true and earnest man he ought to be, is where he is fascinated with the permanency and missionary quality of truth, and right, and love, it is certain that God must get him to feel all this, in perfect independence of the circumstances in which it comes to him. To be great, a nation through its leaders must see God in the least of its events. There was just as much in the episode with the Egyptian to make a reformer; there was just as much of principle and righteousness involved as there was in the burning bush. Why did the bush arouse this man? The answer is: God was in it, to the eye of Moses. Of course, the years lying between had trained his vision to depth and spirituality. Never before did Moses see God shining in the truth that he was to use through that whole revolution; never before did he see the Omnipotent One behind the impersonal principle, which, because it was unilluminated and cold without God, had not yet roused him; never before did he know that *his* love for man was *God's* love for man in him. God might have spoken to Moses by some great event, in some huge way, which would have fitly shown how vast God's hand or voice was, but that would not have found the interior and essential Moses which the exigent future would demand. Moses had work before him to do, as has every man, of the sort which is not to be done by a soul whose sight is not fine enough to discover the significance of that flaming little bush, whose ear was not deft enough to catch the voice which spake in the midst of its flame. It must be a "great sight" to him. Never has there been a great leader, or a real helper of men, who has not been able to see that truth, principle, right, each is one. That eye alone can see the larger which sees intelligently the less. A man must know the infinity inside the right, burning but inconsumable, which is trampled upon, or struggled for, in the least conspicuous event of human

<sup>1</sup> Exodus v, 1.



life. He must be able to see the divine self inside the principle which shines above some little transaction of man with men. He must know the God in the right, or the truth, which is begging for championship in some insignificant occurrence in the whirl of business, the rush of trade, the movement of society, the action of each man toward his neighbor. To see that, is to see the burning bush.

God's training of the eye of Moses began where, by his grace, all training for great deeds ought to be begun. Give the child, Israel, the ability to discover the presence of God as ruler, as judge, as inspirer, in every truth, every principle, wherever he finds it; let him learn to hear the divine voice speaking out of it, in the very least event where the right burns and is not consumed—and his soul is fitted for the loftiest duties of the earth. When he comes to Sinai's thunder and lightning, his foremost man, Moses, shall understand them.

It is very characteristic of so rare a spirit as Moses that he should say, "I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt." For when Moses first noticed it, it was simply "a great sight"—a flame which did not consume. Every quality of mind, which the study of his after-life reveals, was aroused. Always the deeper the nature the more genuine is its wonder, the more profound is its sense of mystery. Just that questioning advance which Moses made toward that bush will be made by any true soul, when first it sees, somewhere along life's pathway, some principle flashing with flame and blazing with heat in some contest of right with wrong, and yet yielding nothing to the combustion, losing nothing in the fiercest fire. He is a dull man who, unlike Moses, does not feel that it is thus far "the great sight" of his life.

Israel, through Moses, met another method of God the moment he advanced toward the bush. God said to him what, at some time in the study of such mysteries, God says to every thoughtful soul: "Moses, Moses." He touched for the first time the *personal self* of the Hebrew leader with his own personal self. "*Here am I,*" said Moses. In his discovery of God, Moses had found himself, as every soul must. Then comes into action the old method of God with the human soul, when he says to it: "This mystery is the mystery which inheres in me and my presence in the good, the true, and the beautiful. It is not yours to understand, but to *use*. You are standing on holy ground now. Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet." The use of this inspiring wonder characterizes the life of Israel, and that alone differentiates Israel from all other ancient peoples.

It is a great step in the progress of any soul, or nation, toward the practical, useful understanding of God, when it obeys this voice from out the heat of the flame. Many a soul stands by that bush and loses all the benefit of God's revelation of himself in the good, the true, the beautiful, blazing yet unconsumed, because it will not recognize that the mystery of it is to be *used* as a mystery, not to be analyzed into the category of life's comprehended facts. God says to our speculation and rationalism: "Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet." It is profanity, and no soul or nation is deep, so long as it is irreverent and unawed. Heaven pity the soul or nation which, especially in its beginnings, has no holy ground. After all, it is the reserve of all noble life. Men and governments are great by the length and breadth of "holy ground" in their lives.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE MEMORIAL NAME AND ITS INFLUENCE.

IT is not too much to say that the majestic possibilities afterward unfolded in the character of this people inhered in the call of Moses which was communicated to him before he returned to Egypt. "The great events of the world," says the penetrative Amiel, "take place in the intellect." The author of the kingdom of love, himself a refashioner of man's life and conduct by means of inculcating a larger and truer conception of God, always spoke of the divine order of progress as "from above." First, "the new heavens" of thought and worship, then "the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." "Progress," says Hegel, "first in the idea,

then in the thing." This consideration, so variously stated, helps us to see that the resource which every great and reforming soul draws upon for strength is that which he calls supreme—the power that rules the worlds. The character and potency of *that which governs* is the base of supplies for every soul undertaking a task worthy of himself. If the task is greater than any preceding it, it is so partly because it involves greater truths. It must, therefore, call upon deeper fountains of inspiration and guidance. Every Moses makes new tasks command him, and every Moses goes deeper into the nature of God for the supply of his intellectual and spiritual necessities.



God discloses some hitherto unknown tract of himself: He renames *Moses* by renaming himself in the experience of his prophet. This is the significance of that episode in the life of mankind—for his was a contribution to the race's theology and statesmanship—in which Moses beholds the burning bush.

Nothing can excel in simple strength the account in the Bible: <sup>1</sup> "Now Moses was keeping the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the back of the wilderness, and came to the mountain of God, unto Horeb. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will turn aside now, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God. And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Amorite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite. And now, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: moreover I have seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them. Come now, therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt. And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt? And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be the token unto thee, that I sent thee: when thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain. And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? What shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he

said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name forever, and this is my memorial unto all generations."

All these incidents led, with that naturalness which characterizes the divine method of education, to an event of the supremest importance. The hour had come for God to give to his servant a new name for the supreme power above him—a name so profoundly related to the deeps this task might call upon, so intimately close to the heart of the people whose every throbbing energy it must tax, that it would stand as a memorial name. "And Moses said, Who am I that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?" That question "*Who am I?*" is not fundamental. God does not answer it to any hesitant soul. It is not so important to know "*Who am I?*" as to know "*Who art thou, O God?*" The resources and inspirations of every great task are not in Moses, but in the power which he calls supreme. No man sees himself, or knows himself, except as he knows the life that is his life, the spirit that inspirits him. It was not strange that Moses should find his own personality only in finding the surer lines of the personality of God. Moses then and there asked for the new name. And God answered: "I AM THAT I AM." In order to strengthen the idea which doubtless leaped into being, that he might *use* this new name, and that it had an inherent authority, God added: "*Tell Israel: I AM hath sent me unto you.*"

Already God's name, as Israel knew it, had served as a protection against the entrance into their worship of the animals of Egypt and the monsters of the river. In his exile in Midian, Moses had found, still more grand and awe-inspiring than ever before, the Almighty One. There was enough in that name by which his fathers had worshiped God, and enough in their deeper experiences in obeying and serving him, to suggest, even in the time mentioned in the Book of Genesis, the name *Jehovah*. But, at this hour, Moses was really to reveal its meaning, as past ran through present into future events, and to hear God utter to the growing life of Israel the truth of any prophetic idea of him. It was to the life of Israel a *new name*. From henceforth, they were "the people," not only of the Almighty, certainly not of Baal or Moloch: they were "the people of Jehovah." A long step had been taken toward that far-off hour when the greater Jew, whose life was a burning bush, would

<sup>1</sup>Exodus iii, 1-16 (Revised Version).

teach his followers to say: "Our Father who art in heaven."

Moses might now build loftily, because he had gone to the foundation of all being. His first stone of the edifice rested on the self-dependent. His appeal was to the cause of causes. Out of that name would arise commandments and codes, government and prophetic visions, as the blossoms from a seed. Pharaoh was right when he said: "*Who is Jehovah? I know not Jehovah.*" To name the power of powers *Jehovah*, was the declaration that the soul of all history and all hope is. All true philosophy of history begins in that moment of which God gives the account in the words: "And God spake unto Moses and said, I am *Jehovah*; and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of *El Shaddai* [The Omnipotent], but by the name *Jehovah* did I not make myself known unto them."

"I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Here, then, is the covenanting God—the supreme God of promises. One fact connects and relates the ages. "I AM THAT I AM" is himself both the promise and the promiser, to every Moses of civilization. This personal and care-taking God puts a soul into all the apparent chaos of ideas and things. These burning bushes are the beacon fires of the race's pilgrimage. Alone they last, while generations come and go. Man is never out of sight of their ardent glow. His children come to hear the same voice from the center of the flame, which has scarcely died away on the ears of their fathers. The ages of human life are thus, under *Jehovah*, one and indivisible.

With this resource, with this light illuminating the past, the present and the future, Israel could now speak, through Moses, to saint or to tyrant. The dead Joseph lived again in the words with which Moses addressed the elders of Israel. The dying words of the patriarch were: "God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob."<sup>1</sup> Now, nearly four hundred years later, they trembled again on the unquiet air, when Moses spake: "The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me, saying: I have surely visited you."<sup>2</sup> Joseph had made an oath: "Ye shall carry up my bones from hence."<sup>3</sup> In the ampler eloquence of Moses, the glad and heroic funeral procession was already forming. In this steady and sagacious leader, what a different man lives than was the self-confident, lawless, and rash avenger of that beaten slave!

Moses' ardor, however, while it had cooled, had permanently contributed to the intensity of his purpose to do something for his own people. In that exile of forty years, consequent upon his rash act, the slaves had been growing readier for noble revolt, and when their unknown leader returned, the very dependence he placed in the elders of Israel showed that he appreciated the value of organization in his enterprise. All the old fire was there, but now it played upon the resources, developing every cold drop into propulsive steam.

But, through the eyes of the leader, Israel must behold God's will in the most suggestive signs. Surely the method of God's training at such hours helps us to understand the prophet, ages afterward, when he says: "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt."<sup>1</sup> Moses was commanded to cast his shepherd's staff on the ground. It was transformed into a slithering serpent, and Moses was terrified and fled. God bids him to take it by the tail, and lo, it is "a rod in his hand." So the Lord was leading Israel; so also *does* the Lord lead his Israel evermore. It was more than the announcement to Moses that, as he had hitherto used the ordinary crook of the shepherd, so he was henceforth to use for sovereign purposes the power of Egypt. Even Pharaoh's diadem shone with the serpent—the symbol of royalty, the emblem of Egyptian power. It is true that when, once again, he seized it, his thought would apprehend Israel as his flock and this "rod of God" should be his staff of authority and affection. But more than this is to be learned here. The secret of all masterful manhood is here an open one. Every man is a victim of his power, or the victor over it—the victor *by* it and *through* it. The ambition of a life, if it be thrown on the ground, is a hissing serpent from which any frightened and timid soul flees; that ambition seized by the strong hand of faith becomes the rod of strength. Whatever authority over his fellows the man who possesses it is to have in this world must come from this very factor in his existence. A weakness is only a power cast down on the earth; a power is only a weakness seized and handled by the courage of faith. *Jehovah* continued this teaching of his children of Israel by Moses. He placed his hand in his bosom, and it became leprous; when he placed it there again it was restored to health and strength. The priestly power in his devotion to Israel brings out the leprous relationship in which they stand to Egypt, and that same power delivers them from this contagion. Again, the

<sup>1</sup> Genesis 1, 24.

<sup>2</sup> Exodus iii, 16.

<sup>3</sup> Genesis 1, 25.

<sup>1</sup> Hosea xi, 1.

water of the Nile shall become blood as he pours it on the dry land. Here, God seems to say, is a cause to which all the fruitful energies of the Nile are to be submissive. Surely, as Lange suggests, here are seen the prophetic, the priestly, and the kingly qualities of the deliverer. God gave these to him and developed these in him; and, in their growth, Moses was less self-confident; he was modest in the presence of new energies.

What could be more natural to such a concentrated soul, in the midst of so much din and confusion, than a desire to possess the orator's guerdon of strength? He bemoaned the slowness of his tongue. Here was the Cromwell of the period with what Sir Philip Warwick called a "sharp and untunable voice" and "no grace of speech." Like the stern Oliver, Moses was to change empires by saying "Yea" and "Nay," at the right times and with just emphasis, though he should also leave to the literature of eloquence some of its finest passages. No greater orator lives than he whose words, like his deeds, are God's utterances through him.

It must be confessed that Pharaoh heard a trumpet-tone within the words which soon left the lips of Moses and fell upon the ruler's ears: "The God of the Hebrews hath met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice unto the Lord our God."<sup>1</sup> "The God of

the Hebrews!" This expression echoed the arms of ancient battles and whispered of other and future fields of contest. We must remember that Moses was not always beyond reproach; God was delivering men by a man like unto themselves. But, at least, here was no shrewd diplomat seeking only the escape of Israel by way of false pretenses; the earnest-eyed Hebrew leader had not forgotten Israel's ancient rights; and, indeed, in this matter, he was regardful of the rights and religious sensitiveness of Egypt. It must be remembered that Israel had never been captured, or rightfully bound, even according to Egyptian jurisprudence. Under Joseph, it was understood that they "sojourned there." Besides in this case, their worship, in which they were granted such privileges, must be an abominable thing to Egyptian piety. This request on the part of Moses and Israel gave the government of Pharaoh an opportunity for wise and just concession. "All government," says Burke, "is possible only by compromise." A righteous compromise is truest statesmanship. Would he, *could* he, exercise the statesmanship which looked toward an assimilation of this people with the Egyptian nationality? To neglect to do this involved, here and now, such an act of despotism as could indicate nothing else to Israel than a determination to abolish the worship of Jehovah and stamp out the Hebrew. Pharaoh refused. So, and only so, does God "harden Pharaoh's heart."

## CHAPTER V.

### LAST DAYS IN EGYPT.

THE war of the great exile was on. It was, as Pharaoh dimly saw, a war with Jehovah also. He had felt the force of the Hebrew's vision of God. "Jehovah," said Moses, "God of Israel, saith: Let my people go that they may hold a feast in the wilderness." "Who is Jehovah?" protested the startled devotee of the golden bull — "Who is Jehovah that I should obey his voice?"<sup>2</sup> The King of Egypt had already lost his slaves. Statesmanship without the "*I am that I am*" has no future. It can only say to the strained institution, as Pharaoh said to that mass of bondmen, "Get you to your burdens." All revolution is repressed evolution. "Statesmanship," says Goldwin Smith, "is not the art of making a revolution, but the art of avoiding one." Moses seemed to be the revolutionist; he was only pleading for evolution. Pharaoh was the spring of the great revolt; and God said of him: "With a strong hand shall he

drive them out of his land. I am Jehovah!"<sup>1</sup> Pilgrims with Mayflower compacts in their cabins owe to Pharaoh their glorious exile. "I am Jehovah!" They alone bear republics and democracies into unsubdued wildernesses or lands of Canaan. "I am Jehovah!"

Too much honor is not likely to be paid to the less conspicuous and unrecorded forces in any beneficent revolution; and we are always likely to underestimate even so strong a spirit as Aaron, the elder brother of this divinely led man. While Moses had been in Midian, Aaron had been so sympathetic with God's purpose and so earnest in pushing it to achievement, that, at length, just before Moses returned to Egypt, Aaron journeyed to meet him at Sinai. In that forty years, Israel had grown ripe for revolt. The elders had fostered and guided the growing desire for freedom. As they came to understand God, they understood more truly man and his problem. With the development

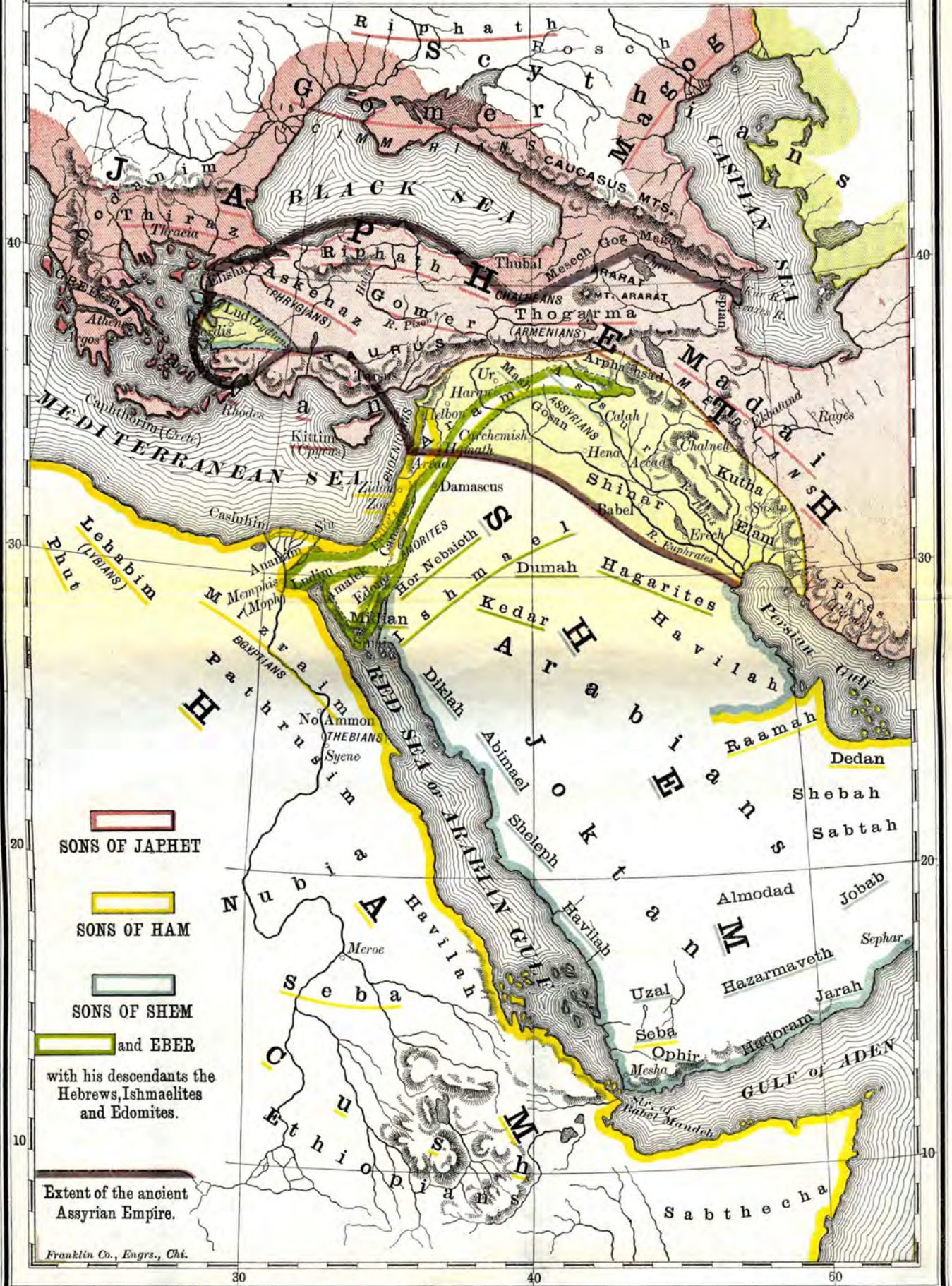
<sup>1</sup> Exodus v, 3 (Revised Version).    <sup>2</sup> Exodus v, 2.

<sup>1</sup> Exodus vi, 1-2.



# THE WORLD AS KNOWN TO THE HEBREWS

ACCORDING TO THE MOSAIC ACCOUNT.





of a sense of Jehovah's righteousness had come the development of a sense of the wrongs they had been suffering. Heavier burdens had created only clearer convictions; the lash of the oppressor had intensified a passionate devotion to the cause into whose deeper meanings their as yet unacknowledged leader had been looking. The hour for a shrinking leader had passed. Aaron had already been mentioned to the timid and awed Moses as a person more apt at public speech, and he was ready to go with Moses to Pharaoh—each of the brothers possessed of a new eloquence. Jethro had said to Moses, as he left Midian: "Go in peace!" but now there was no peace before his footsteps. God had told him that his *personal* enemies were dead; the foe of freedom was never more powerful; and Pharaoh would not let the people go. Before the man Moses was worthy to utter a command to Pharaoh, Jehovah had been compelled to strip Moses of all unworthiness; personalities must be lost in causes. It was a terrible culture; great souls may be wedded to great aims, not otherwise. A violent death, the impending of a fearful disease—God's threatened judgments—made him perceive the value of divine command above his own hesitant individualism and the disobedient whim of Zipporah, his wife. Herself compelled to perform the rite of circumcision upon the younger son, according to the covenant with Abraham, she had only this to say to Moses, "Surely a bloody husband art thou to me."<sup>1</sup> Only on the boy's quick recovery did she utter words of delayed gratefulness. The mighty words of God to Moses had been exchanged for Aaron's report of the condition of the Hebrews, as the brothers had conversed together. Pharaoh had offered them only his defiance. Back to their labors the children of Jehovah's covenant had been sent, no longer to be furnished with the usual chopped straw with which they had been manufacturing clay into bricks, no longer able to search for straw and keep up their tale of bricks, *therefore* no longer able to escape the beatings of the overseers—alas, no longer proof against the taunts of the ruler alleging their idleness. Though so recently the elders of Hebrewdom had expressed joy that the crisis had come, now, to train them more thoroughly, Moses and Aaron were charged by the united voice of Israel with being the authors of Israel's woes. Nothing could have given a harder blow. Yet God followed this apparently pitiless stroke against Moses by giving him additional assurances, all of them ringing with the old theme, "*I am Jehovah!*" Command, however, preceded only their failure to reach Pharaoh's heart.

Assurance from God swiftly followed defeat with man. At length, Moses and Aaron alone have utterly failed; and now let the Almighty One, whose new name is *Jehovah*, speak to him.

The Pharaoh of this date was, if the conclusions of scholars are right, Menephtah I., son of Rameses II., with whom Moses had doubtless been associated in his childhood within the royal palace. Why should *he* listen, even to this interesting and learned Jew? But his attention was now to be engaged by the power behind the Hebrew:

"*Right* forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne,—  
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and, behind the dim unknown,  
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above his own."

There rang through the mazes of the problem a divine word: "Against the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment; I am Jehovah!"<sup>1</sup> Moses and his eloquent brother Aaron again confronted the despot. The leader's mission was attested by wondrous signs. The rod became a serpent; but Pharaoh was unmoved, for he knew the Egyptian magicians might surpass this marvel. Great was the meaning of the serpent to idolatrous Egypt, but Aaron's rod swallowed up all the others. That rod symbolized the fact that God's purpose is all-inclusive. But such a lesson is too difficult for an unteachable ruler to learn. The worshipping Pharaoh, probably more than ever attentive to the Nile-god Osiris, is met at the river bank by Moses, just as always human plans that are wrong are met and judged by some lonely but omnipotent truth. Man is more deeply superstitious toward the old gods, when the command of unacknowledged truth is offensive to him. But the Nile is turned into blood. History has many such events, of which this is the symbol. The pride and wealth of evil—all its productiveness and profits—are suddenly made a loathing and hateful asset, when the hour comes for goodness to execute its plans for humanity and God. Many a people, refusing the true ideal, as did Pharaoh, have been unable to drink inspiration from an old one, which, perhaps, had become as much an idol to reactionary wrong as had the Nile to Pharaoh. It is not to the purpose to explain this phenomenon by reference to the transforming influences of the vanishing year upon the river, or to those still more evident influences of the setting sun upon the languid stream. All these Pharaoh understood. Even to explain the event by reference to the "rapid growth of infusoria and minute cryptogamous

<sup>1</sup> Exodus iv, 25.

<sup>1</sup> Exodus xii, 1

plants of a red color," making the water red, is to miss the spiritual and perennial fact that, whether these accounts are valid or not, even the best idol — be it a constitution or a man — when it has been made to represent crowned unrighteousness, will inevitably be made a curse by the first appearance of uncrowned righteousness.

As much may be said of the spiritual truths conveyed to any but the disobedient mind of Egypt, in the other plagues visited upon the land and people of Pharaoh. The frog had a high place in the animalistic worship of the realm. Probably the mud consequent on the annual inundation of the Nile had produced vast multitudes of these. Magicians could imitate Moses to a slight extent. But only Moses — only the supremacy of righteousness — can ever make the life of man worth living and the air he breathes pure. Again, God was *Jehovah*.

Sir Samuel Baker informs us that, after the rice harvest, it often seems that "the very dust is turned into lice." But, in remembering the plague of lice which followed the plague of frogs in Egypt, he must not forget the fact that Aaron's rod had touched the dusty earth. "Beware," says Emerson, "when God lets loose a thinker on the planet: then all things are at a risk." Aaron's rod was full of the divine vitality of truth, even to the point of budding. One living idea, touching a world of things out of harmony with its command, turns them all into curses. The very dust becomes lice. No magician can imitate this miracle, as those of Egypt could not. It is of God's true magic; only the genius of progressive righteousness may perform it; and it is performed all the while, whenever an unobeyed truth comes into contact with recalcitrant untruth. Old saws of obsolescent wisdom roused into a kind of life by a fresh, inherently supreme purpose in history, are the lice whose presence "hardens Pharaoh's heart." Even the magicians of the dull-eyed time sometimes say, as did those of Pharaoh's court, "It is the finger of *Elohim*." This is only part of the truth. It is more sympathetic with the whole truth to say, "It is the finger of *Jehovah*." But Pharaoh had not been led far enough to utter the new and memorial name: "*Jehovah*." The very name involved a statesmanship which meant ruin to his empire.

Another utterance of God — and other small, pestiferous, winged creatures swarmed in the air. This was a heavy stroke against the popular worship. This plague infests the land to this day; but it can never have such significance. These insects were the nation's very symbols of "the creative principle, its emblems of the sun." The profanity was that

they had become noxious vermin. Every reformer, perforce, by his introducing contrasting justice into unjust life or society, is a Moses whose power no Pharaoh suspects. Still the tyrant cries, "It is *Elohim*." "Yea," Moses would have added, "and *Jehovah*!" "Let the Hebrews go," said Pharaoh, at last; but on the cessation of the plague, he "hardened his heart"<sup>1</sup> again.

Following upon these, was the murrain, with its extensive desolation of death amongst the cattle. This stroke against the religiousness of Pharaoh's nation was severe. The cow and ox in Egypt were sacred; and, therefore, Isis and Osiris were offended gods. By this immense event, Apis and Mnevis had been insulted and profaned. Deities of evil are always dethroned by goodness; and the iconoclast is thought a nuisance, insolent and rebellious. And now man is touched. First, the *things* he worships, or prizes, are smitten by any progressive truth to which man is disobedient — first, his profits, or his ancient and outworn institutions; then the man himself is stricken. It is the method of progress. Even the magicians yielded before the ulcers and tumors of the people. Political and ecclesiastical magic goes down before realities. Liberty and truth cannot hide unpleasant facts. When Moses and Aaron threw into the air the ashes from the huge furnaces, which were the emblems of their slavery, the spirit of freedom used the magic of their visible chains, as later, in writing "Uncle Tom's Cabin," that spirit was able to bring a nation to its better ideal. Still *Jehovah* was unacknowledged by the throne of Egypt. Any victory without that acknowledgment, Moses knew, was a spiritual defeat. All real progress is by the advance of ideas. The harvest-growing fields of Egypt were swept with storm.

"For what avails the plough or sail,  
Or land, or life, if freedom fail?"

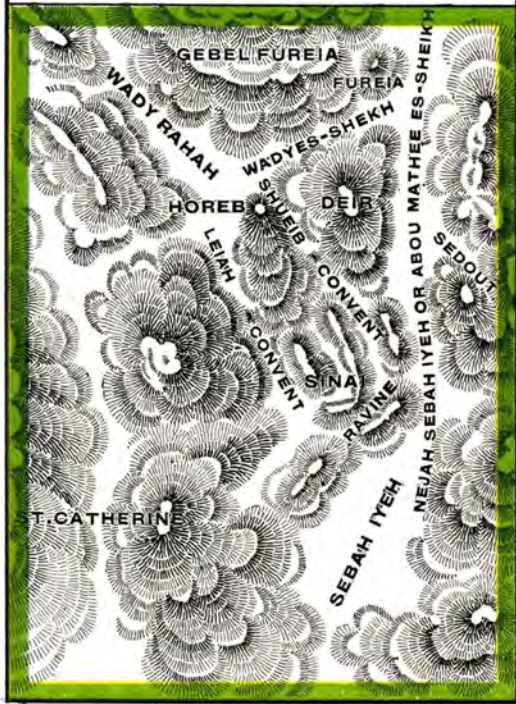
Man is not made for grain — grain exists for man; and at such crises, man untrue to his destiny is worthless. Let the grain fail! "*I am Jehovah*."<sup>2</sup>

Again the humbled Pharaoh listened awhile to the warning voices. Moses was instant upon the essential thing: "Ye will not yet fear *Jehovah-Elohim*."<sup>3</sup> It is significant that the reformer tries to help Pharaoh from one step to the next, using what he *has* acknowledged in connection with what he *ought* to acknowledge — "*Jehovah-Elohim*," he says. It was more evident than ever that Moses could not afford, and was not seeking, a personal triumph. God had said to Pharaoh through him: "How long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself before

<sup>1</sup> Exodus viii, 28-32. <sup>2</sup> Exodus vi, 2. <sup>3</sup> Exodus ix, 30.

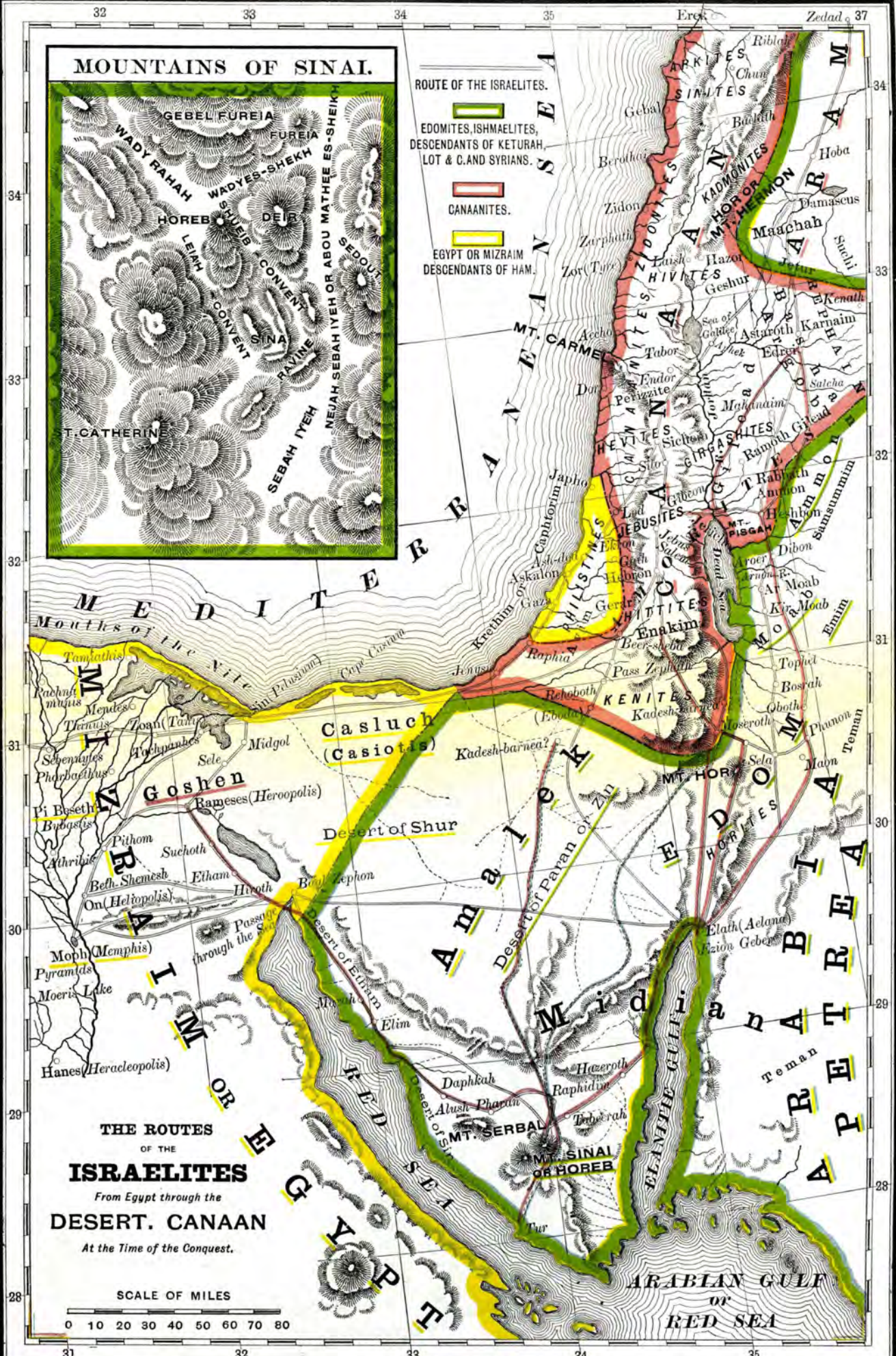


**MOUNTAINS OF SINAI.**



ROUTE OF THE ISRAELITES.

- EDOMITES, ISHMAELITES, DESCENDANTS OF KETURAH, LOT & CAN. AND SYRIANS.
- CANAANITES.
- EGYPT OR MIZRAIM, DESCENDANTS OF HAM.



**THE ROUTES OF THE ISRAELITES**  
 From Egypt through the **DESERT. CANAAN**  
 At the Time of the Conquest.





me?"<sup>1</sup> Moses had seen God in the bush; he was getting into the habit of realizing that the meaning in things is *God*. The apostle's account of him strikes the secret and opens it. It was summed up in this: "*He endured, as seeing him who is invisible.*"<sup>2</sup> It must be God's victory over Pharaoh, or it is worthless to Moses and Israel.

Even Pharaoh's servants now labor with the stubborn ruler. Compromises are offered by the throne; but to have accepted them, on the part of Moses, would have been for him to have lost what, Burke says, the statesman always must guard in any compromise—"the immediate jewel of the soul." The men of Israel would not go without their families and flocks. No irony of the king moved them, as he prated of their seeking to do evil. "Jehovah will be with you!"<sup>3</sup> was his sneer. The visitation of locusts came. The earth was beclouded and the fields were a desolation. Formerly Israel had asked only to go away to her feast—an event which was attended with such sacrifice of rams and oxen as would have offended the devotees of Apis, Osiris, and Isis; but now, they say boldly that their cattle must go with them; and it is a journey from which a return is not mentioned any more. Still Pharaoh resisted. Moses and Aaron were ordered from his sight.

Once more Jehovah made the attack, and this time, upon the loftiest bulwark of rebellious antagonism. Supreme above all gods, in the thought of Egypt, was the sun. According to their religious ideas and devotion, Pharaoh was the Incarnate Sun-god. Heliopolis was to this deity what Athens was to Athenè of Greece. There flashed the waters of the sacred spring of healing; there, in contrast with the lonely obelisk of to-day, shadowing the tamarind and fig tree, rose the gorgeous edifice near the sacred lake and grove, its approach gleaming with yellow marble; its main gateway ornamented with a vast and brilliant disk of the sun. And now the god supreme within all the Egyptian pantheon was hidden. The whole of Egypt except Goshen was covered with darkness. Surely there is much to learn here. The very earth, life itself, is meaningless, in all history—man sees nothing and can do nothing truly, when right is unobeyed, pleading for liberty. One radiant beam of unconfessed truth has often put the idolized sun of a generation into eclipse. Then Pharaoh again summoned Moses to his throne. The earlier Lorenzo de Medici calls for his Savonarola. Stern, as was the Florentine idealist when he cried: "Restore the liberties of Florence!" Moses refused his offered compromise. As the calm and stalwart Jew

left the angered Egyptian alone, he said: "I will see thy face again no more."<sup>1</sup>

Now that the false strength of the idolatry of Egypt had been made apparent and the faith of the Jewish population had received the needed education which these events imparted, there was but one thing likely and needful to come into the life of the Hebrews from whose dwellings in Goshen the sunlight had not vanished. That one object lesson God would now give them; it would unify them, and at the same time it would distract their foes. The event was at hand that would make even Pharaoh rejoice in Israel's departure at any cost and in any way. When, in obedience to God's command, the Hebrews had asked presents from the Egyptians, "jewels of silver and jewels of gold, and raiment,"<sup>2</sup> they were given many things which were sure to be of value to them. But Egypt could make no such priceless contribution as came to their spiritual life and hope in the institution of the Passover feast. A new calendar was created by this fact, each year thereafter beginning with the commemoration of their birthday as a nation. Out of great travail was Israel to come forth from Egypt. To Israel, it was an hour of joy. On the tenth day of the "*month of ears,*" *Abib,*<sup>3</sup> each family must choose its sacrifice—an unblemished male kid or lamb. Each sacrifice should be no more than a meal for a household, or, if a household were too small, then it should not be too large for the household and others properly invited to consume it. "Between the evenings"—that is, between sunset and moonrise, or starlight—the kids or lambs chosen were to be killed by the congregation. Each family was to sprinkle some of the blood "on the side posts and the upper doorposts of the houses."<sup>4</sup> For this, a branch of the cleansing hyssop was to be used. Then the feast was to be consumed. Sandaled and girdled, prepared also for instant departure with staff in hand, they were to eat hastily and refuse to leave the house that night. All the flesh not eaten was to be consumed with fire. That night the Lord was to pass through the land of Egypt. In his visitation, every firstborn child and the firstborn offspring of the beasts would be smitten, save those in the houses whose lintels bore the blood mark. That feast should signify Israel's redemption from Egypt's death, by the blood of innocence. It was to foreshadow the coming sacrifice, the Christ of God who is our Passover. Every householder was as yet the only priest of his family. They were also to observe at this hour the feast of unleavened bread. Later on, through the unleavened bread, they were to look back to an

<sup>1</sup> Exodus x, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Hebrews xi, 27.

<sup>3</sup> Exodus x, 10.

<sup>1</sup> Exodus x, 29.

<sup>2</sup> Exodus xii, 35.

<sup>3</sup> Exodus xii, 3.

<sup>4</sup> Exodus xii, 22, 23.



hour when, in haste, "they took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading troughs being bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders."<sup>1</sup>

The night came. Jehovah moved through Egypt, and the midnight air echoed with the cry of death. At last, Jehovah was triumphant over the gods of Egypt. In this desperate hour Moses and Aaron were sought by the king. The people of his realm had at length beseeched him, "Let them go, else we be all dead men!" "Go," cried out Pharaoh, "go and serve *Jehovah*. Take your flocks and herds, as ye have said, and begone."<sup>2</sup> At last he had acknowledged Jehovah. Then, as if his heart felt the foregleam of that bright noon, streaming from Canaan through the long years, over wandering and exile, and falling over the grave of his own firstborn who had perished that night, he added: "*And bless me also!*"<sup>3</sup> No one can look upon the monument, now in the museum at Berlin, which is said to commemorate this child of the bereaved Egyptian monarch, without hearing in his heart the echo of that pathetic appeal, "*And bless me also!*"

In all comparative study of crowned heads, Pharaoh appears to be most like a seventeenth century Charles I. or an eighteenth century Marie Antoinette. It is as impossible not to sympathize with his sorrow and perplexity when he cries, "*And bless me also!*" as it is to withhold a generous fellow-feeling when the

finely bred English king is brought to the block, or the pride of the French palaces is carted to execution. It is also impossible, amidst even such scenes as those, to forget that the Egyptian monarch commanded weary Israel to make bricks without straw; the cavalier king annulled parliamentary government, and the haughty queen set her dainty foot upon popular right.

Egypt had lost her slaves; in the echo of that wail, they slipped from her grasp. It had been impossible for Menephtah to succeed in holding a progressive people, leagued as were the Hebrews with the progressive Jehovah. Had the ruler granted their demands, his throne would have been a toy; but perhaps such thrones are most valuable only as toys. To neglect to do this was to offend the Almighty One. Now the great exodus had begun. More than two millions of Egypt's productive human chattels had gone; but, far more wonderful than that fact alone, this multitude of slaves had been so educated by poverty and visions, so trained by sorrow and hope, that on that paschal night, as a mass penetrated, but not yet pervaded, with a conception of the supreme idea of liberty under law, they had stepped from bondage to freedom; and, rallying round the bones of Joseph, they leaped into the form of the noblest nationality of ancient times. It was the noblest, because the ideal for which it stood was fullest of creative and transforming hope.

## CHAPTER VI.

### FOLLOWING THE PILLAR OF CLOUD AND FIRE.

**S**UCH a stupendous movement attracted to its multitude a crowd, made up not alone of Hebrews who joined them at point after point on their line of march, but also of peoples variously nurtured and moved by different motives. There were slaves, outcasts, and exiles, wandering shepherds, and, doubtless, here and there, came and followed a lover of liberty. Succoth furnished the great army with a halting place for the first night. Here, where the leafy booths offered them a new sort of hospitality, the world of the Orient beheld the first peaceful assemblage of so many devotees of the nobility of labor, the pricelessness of human beings; and here slept the largest army the world has ever seen, which has accomplished such a step toward freedom with hands unstained by blood. As in the next few hours they baked their unleavened bread, and the leader made his plans and purposes more complete and apparent to the elders, they were the

first representatives of the idea which has created for later days the ten dooms of every Alfred, the great remonstrance of Pym and Hampden, the declaration of independence of every Jefferson and Hancock, the emancipation proclamation of every Lincoln. Dean Stanley fitly reminds us how deeply Succoth, this "place of booths, or tabernacles," must have impressed them, inasmuch as, later on, they used this very name to designate the glad some Feast of Tabernacles. Indeed, it ought to be said here that no man more than Moses, no nation more than Hebrewdom, incarnates more truly the truth spoken by the English novelist and poet: "Our finest hope is finest memory," while, at the same time, being a witness to the truth which Emerson utters: "The contest between the Future and the Past is one between Divinity entering and Divinity departing." In his death hour, Moses begs for the "good will of him who dwelt in the bush." In the chapter of the Book of Exodus describing the events

<sup>1</sup> Exodus xii, 34. <sup>2</sup> Exodus xii, 32. <sup>3</sup> Exodus xii, 32.

immediately succeeding the departure of Israel from Egypt, we are told that Jehovah spake of the eating of the unleavened bread, saying, "Thou shalt tell thy son: This is done because of that which Jehovah did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt."<sup>1</sup> In the light of such memories as these—each a matrix of personal or national hope—Israel was able to reëcho that startling and early proclamation of the equal rights of men: "One law shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you."<sup>2</sup> Noble memory is always prophecy. But the comprehensive understanding of all that Israel had been led to undertake and all that Jehovah and his prophets had uttered was not, by any means, as yet a national possession. Therefore, the "wanderings" began, as they were to continue. Not to Canaan, by a route through Gaza, short and direct, would Jehovah lead them. They must be educated in the desert. As only by long and wearisome spiritual routes, which, indeed, often revert and cross each other, a man or a nation may reach a great truth and be able to see it, and willing devotedly to defend it, so the courage and intelligence, the faith and idealism equal to the future task of Hebrewdom in universal history had to be inspired, trained, and refined in their forty years of journeying in the wilderness.

There is no straight road for any God-inspired soul to any Canaan. Forward, then, to Etham. By taking this route, Israel was escaping the fierce Philistines, and nothing could have been more unfortunate than for the exiles to have been compelled to fight this strong people at such a moment in their march. At Etham in the edge of the wilderness, where the sand areas stretch away from the old green fields, rose before them the symbol of the guiding Jehovah. "And Jehovah went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night."<sup>3</sup>

Just as Moses found his source of ideals and aims in the burning bush of Horeb, so Israel found a perpetual commandment and culture for the long wilderness journey in this pillar of cloud and fire. It was more to Israel than was to Greece the great Alexander's brazier, whose combustibles, lit for illumination, flamed from the top of a lofty pole, elevated at the spot where the mighty captain had his pavilion whence he directed his army. It may have been connected with some older ideas which made fire a sacred symbol; it doubtless was related to the symbolism of the burning bush. It was, as we shall see, the second in the series of God's educative emblems. By being at

once a flame at night and a cloud by day, it told of truth, righteousness, love, beauty, which lead and protect, each of which furnishes an ensign by which the devoted soul may march on from duty to duty at all times.

In this and in all uses of its meanings, we must see that, as the value of every lawgiver, like Moses, lies in his ability to get man on to the Christ, in whom we find the "law of liberty,"<sup>1</sup> so every symbol which has progress in it for those who follow it must contain an anticipation of that complete symbol of God, his Christ. This is God's child-garden system of education. "The law was our tutor, leading us to Christ." In that tutoring, as in the use of all symbols of truths or realities in any true system of culture, each early emblem leads into, and so foretells each that succeeds, until the consummate symbol is reached. So the burning bush is, so far as it is a symbol worthy of being obeyed at all, significant of a still more rich symbolism which at length presents the truth of God in its highest form. The highest form of truth is not a burning bush, or a pillar of cloud and flame, not even Sinai's law or a holy institution; but the highest form of truth is personal humanity. Everything in God's system of education tends toward the incarnation of God in man. At last, as the Revelation says, even "the Tabernacle of God is with men"<sup>2</sup> and the revelator, beholding a picture of complete civilization, writes: "I saw no temple therein."<sup>3</sup> Incarnation is the highest form of reality under God. The Incarnate may say: "I and the Father are one."<sup>4</sup> Jesus Christ is, therefore, the reality to which, for example, the burning bush leads by its symbolism. *He* is the one personality ever burning with love, faith, truth, holiness, yet not consumed. As much is true of the pillar of cloud and flame. It is more than a relic of fire worship, if, indeed, that enters into it at all. It is a waymark to divine humanity, earlier than the Shekinah, leading up to and into the Shekinah which, in due course, because it is higher, is still more close to the highest symbol in this divine culture. That pillar of cloud and fire afterward rested upon the Most Holy Place, and the prophet Isaiah saw it, as in perfect accord with this developing scheme, "upon every dwelling place of Mount Zion."<sup>5</sup> Therefore, Saint Augustine touched the core of Christianity as a consummate stage in God's culture of humanity, after this method, when he said: "The true Shekinah is man." Thus, there is no more penetrative or sympathetic statement of the connection between local Israel and universal humanity, in this history, than the

<sup>1</sup> Exodus xiii, 8.

<sup>2</sup> Exodus xii, 49.

<sup>3</sup> Exodus xiii, 21.

<sup>1</sup> James i, 25, or ii, 12.

<sup>2</sup> Revelation xxi, 3.

<sup>3</sup> Revelation xxi, 22.

<sup>4</sup> John x, 30 (Revised Version).

<sup>5</sup> Isaiah iv, 5.

apostle's words, when he says: "All these things happened to them by way of figure."<sup>1</sup> Before that sacred wonder, they mused of Canaan by day, and beneath its splendor they dreamed of its milk and honey by night. Because they thus dreamed and often forgot the vision of something higher than milk and honey, they needed this kindergarten-like emblem as they had needed many other symbols of God's education before. Israel was yet "a child."<sup>2</sup>

All had gone well thus far, for water and food were in abundance, and the loneliness and peril of their situation, as in this state of contesting ignorance and intelligence they marched farther from the old scenes, and the surety of "three meals a day and a place to sleep in," had not yet fallen like a shadow upon them to oppress their hearts. Nothing in this world costs so much as liberty, save righteousness, and without righteousness there is no liberty. All this Israel had to learn in forty years—a lesson which thousands of years of efforts at civilization have as yet failed to teach the human race thoroughly. Man reverts. Safety as to food and drink and a bed to sleep in, the first of the good things of life, is an old goal to which all idealists are wont to look back longingly, in the first lonely confronting of those problems which come with every effort for true freedom. Dull compliance with any situation which guarantees these bodily comforts seems half a heroism, especially when the past, which has always furnished them, is turned into a foe. All efforts at liberty mean the enthronement of the soul above the body; and slavery had emphasized the value of the body in the life of these Hebrews; and under the fortress walls of Etham the soul's concern—freedom—appeared less sublime than when the body was stung with a slave-whip. The soul of Israel trembled on her new throne. The command came: "Speak unto the children of Israel, that they turn back."<sup>3</sup> Backward to "encamp before Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, over against Baal-Zephon!"<sup>4</sup> Moses knew Israel's weakness and strength at a point like this. Enemies were everywhere, the fortress soldiery of Etham, the rulers of the South who were as yet unexcited; Pharaoh was sure to repent of his act of permission, and Moses could already hear the war-chariots of Egypt in the rear. The somewhat extemporaneous courage of Israel was not to be depended upon. The huge caravans were as yet orderless and undisciplined; and now they were murmuring,

while their petty misunderstandings and little selfishnesses were leading them at length to complaining criticism and base clamor against Moses; the gleaming chariots of Pharaoh were rolling toward them in hot pursuit. The value of liberty was vanishing. They had felt the oppression of the fact that something had compelled them to turn back. Progress comes often by apparent retreat. Then the wilderness seems a huge and fearful place of death.

For fifty miles they had journeyed to the "place where the reeds grow," and from that camp, near to the present Suez, they sent up their wail. The Egyptian army, thinking that Moses had become "entangled in the land," and that "the wilderness" had "shut them in,"<sup>1</sup> enraged that the evident intention of Israel was to escape from bondage, and probably relying on news from the garrison, sent its cavalry to bring back or destroy the exiles. It was a great opportunity for a force which was at that hour at its finest condition. The chivalry of Egypt, driving highly bred horses and riding in chariots which roll yet in the incised temple-tale at Karnak, had now their moment of glory. Probably the long days of mourning over the deaths of Egypt's firstborn had added to the fierceness of their attack, after having delayed it for seventy days. Ebbtide, the hour for the receding flood in the Red Sea, which was now immediately in front of Israel, came as slowly as their caravans approached. There was no other path for them, save the way through the waters. Mountains frowned from west and south; the rush of dust-covered royal cavalry mingled with the lisp of the waves on the beach. "Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying: Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness."<sup>2</sup> This was all that Israel had to give to the sorely perplexed and burdened commander. Never did a feeble faithlessness in the worth of freedom, or a cheap cynicism in the presence of Jehovah's invisible resources, more offensively bedeck itself in its own rags.

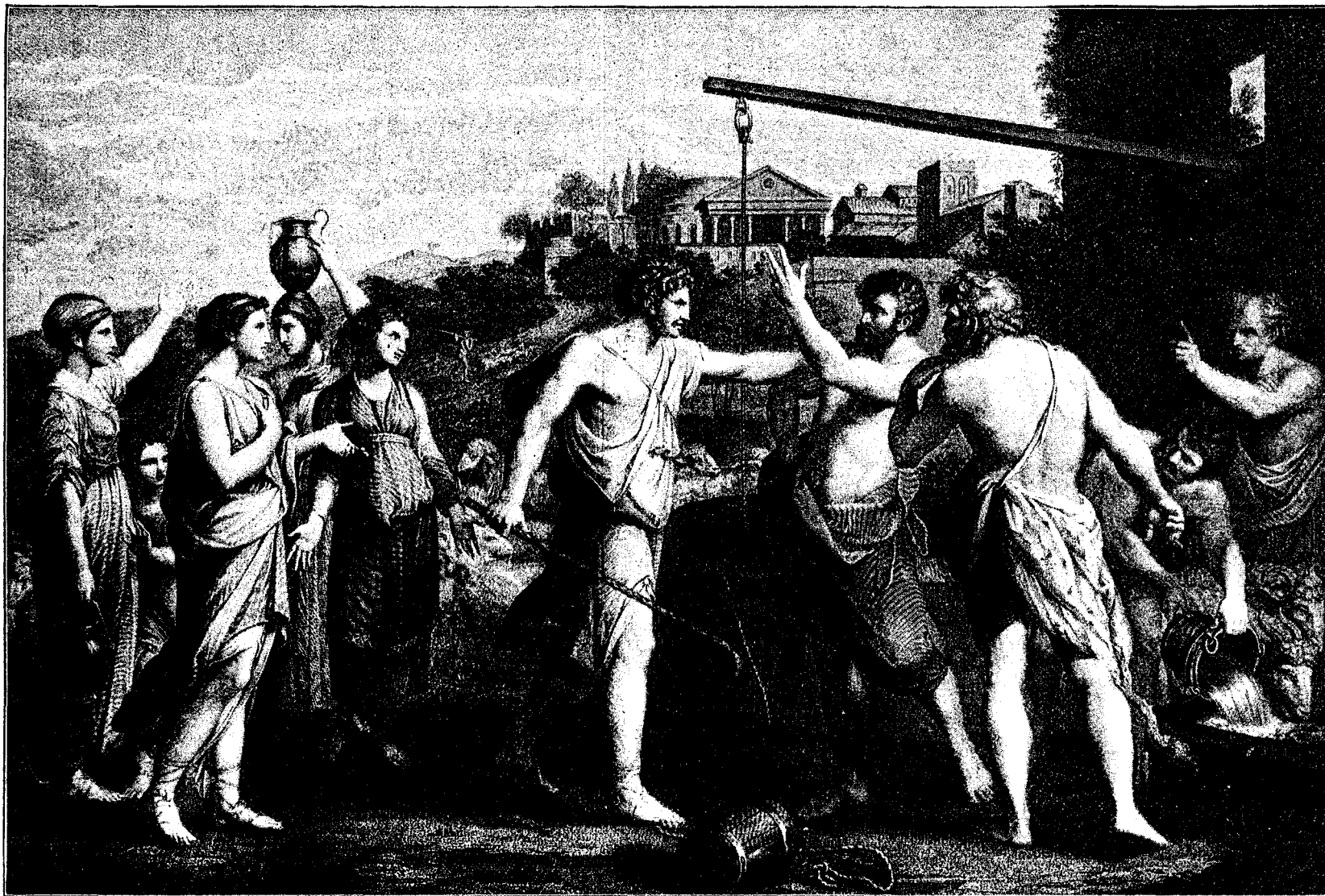
"Though love repine and reason chafe,  
There came a voice without reply,  
'Tis man's perdition to be safe  
When for the truth he ought to die."

This voice, as yet, they were not able to hear.

<sup>1</sup> I. Corinthians x, 11.    <sup>2</sup> Hosea xi, 1.

<sup>3</sup> Exodus xiv, 2.    <sup>4</sup> Exodus xiv, 2.

<sup>1</sup> Exodus xiv, 3.    <sup>2</sup> Exodus xiv, 11, 12.



NICOLAS POUSSIN.

MOSES DEFENDING THE WOMEN.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE RED SEA.

WONDERFUL as is the weakness of humanity, it is never quite so wonderful as the strength of God. As human history reveals mankind, it does not appear marvelous that "they were sore afraid,"<sup>1</sup> and that Egypt, which had taught them by its cities of the dead an almost fantastic belief as to the value of sepulture, should come before them as a fitter place to die in than was this desert. The hour had now come when that rod, once a serpent — the emblem of power seized for noble purposes — must be lifted up in dauntless faith. Night came, as night full of doubt and full of vision always comes when any soul or nation, led by divine influences, comes up to a circumstance apparently fatal to its progress. That night gave to the host of Israel a deeper meaning for the pillar of cloud and fire. Such times of trial to human faith in the supreme value of righteousness and freedom always disclose a fact which comes, as did the fiery cloud, between the hosts of Israel and the hosts of Egypt. That fact is Jesus Christ. This hour with Israel held a foregleam of him; and it gives an intimation of his place in the philosophy of history. His personality, his life, his ideal — these are pillars of cloud and fire in the process of history. History is largely the record of a perpetual flight of Israel out of Egypt, toward freedom. Always to Egyptlike conservatism and despotism this personal fact, Christ Jesus, is a cloud that bewilders and darkens — for unadvancing antiquity and selfishness never understands him; while, to Israel's faith in progress, even though it falters, this same fact, inextinguishable and serene, is a perpetual and kindly illumination. "It was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these, so that the one came not near the other all the night."<sup>2</sup>

Israel had followed the emblem to the sea's edge. "Wherefore criest thou unto me?" said the resourceful God, who would be trusted only by action; "speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward."<sup>3</sup> Over the sea the rod was lifted up, by the calm faith of Moses. Over the path left beneath its shadow, as the waves rolled back on either hand, the solemn and wondering Hebrews marched dry-shod. Their advance, however, was not enough. It is never enough that good may conquer; evil must be extirpated. The pursuing Egyptians followed into the midst of the sea. The later

song of the Psalmist indicates that a terrific thunderstorm burst upon them. This is the account in the Book of Exodus: "And it came to pass, that in the morning watch Jehovah looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians, and took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for Jehovah fighteth for them against the Egyptians. And Jehovah said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen. And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and Jehovah overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. And the waters returned and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them."<sup>1</sup>

Saint Paul, who seems to be attracted constantly to state and restate the problem and triumph of Israel, puts it all into these eloquent words: "They were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea."<sup>2</sup>

So much for Israel, and so much for Egypt. A national tragedy, almost fatal to the throne of Egypt, had at length succeeded the long and agonizing years of Israel's bondage. Retribution came, and every anguish had its compensation in the scales of Jehovah. Looked at from the point of view already taken, it does not at all detract from the present and permanent meaning to mankind of such a disaster to Egypt, which was also a victory for Jehovah and a deliverance to Israel, if any of the many explanations of the occurrence of the awful event be adopted, wholly or in part. None of them, however, appear to be entirely satisfactory. Travelers and scholars of the first rank have given the most thorough research and wide learning to this fragment of the world. From Strabo, and Josephus, and Diodorus of Sicily to Napoleon I., Niebuhr, Stanley, and Professor Palmer, every scrap of information concerning the past and present condition and location of these waters and mountains has been drawn into service, to make it less difficult for less believing minds to account for these unmatched incidents. Doubtless, the waters of the Red Sea, at that date, may have occupied a

<sup>1</sup> Exodus xiv, 10. <sup>2</sup> Exodus xiv, 20. <sup>3</sup> Exodus xiv, 15.

<sup>1</sup> Exodus xiv, 24-28. <sup>2</sup> I. Corinthians x, 2.

larger area. The ebb and flood tides have been shown to be almost obedient to the strong northeast winds. Islets that look like huge stepping stones, with narrow and deep waters between, are still seen when the wind drives the waters southward. Sandbanks and fords have been found that might have felt the trembling feet of the Hebrew exiles. Traditions tell of hours when, as Diodorus says, "the whole bay at the head of the sea was laid bare." A Greek historian of Hebrewdom speaks of the opinion of the priests of Memphis that Moses here called into service his accurate knowledge of the tides. This writer alludes also to the opposite opinion of the priests of Hierapolis, which leaves the event a miracle in which fire balls blinded the Egyptians when they essayed to follow the Hebrews. Geikie, who admirably gathers these and other opinions and facts, does well to quote the wise remark of Niebuhr: "It would be a great mistake to imagine that the passage of such a great caravan could have been effected by purely natural means." It is well to reflect that even if the event were in due course of nature, as we understand nature, God's will and action are not ruled out, and the fact is fully as significant as before. Not the extraordinary, but the ordinary processes of nature and life are those which God has chosen most often to be his ministers and his revelation.

From that hour, the throne of the Pharaohs was falling to pieces. The permanent fact which all this history contributes is that the righteous progress of man under God has met and will ever meet indubitable difficulty, Red Seas of peril that appear fatal; and in these, somehow and sometime, Jehovah executes judgment, saves the hosts of right, and brings disaster to the hosts of wrong.

Out of this peril came forth the richest national anthem in the annals of time. "Then sang Moses and the children of Israel."<sup>1</sup>

It is a saying as old as Fletcher of Saltoun: "Let me make the songs of a nation, and I care not who makes their laws." William Pitt confessed the unique value of Dibdin's sea songs in the hour when England needed something besides his genius for finance and the Iron Duke's sword. It is well-nigh impossible, in this connection and in view of the echoes of music which come to us from its use on fields of battle and in the more difficult crises of peace at later times in Hebrew history, to overstate the value of that unequaled ode of triumph which, at this glad hour, burst forth from the heart of Israel. Grand moments grandly apprehended and used by grand souls—these alone may produce grand poems. As

the Divine Comedy of Dante and the "Paradise Lost" of John Milton were the utterances of a later Puritanism, so was this magnificent song of Moses the outpouring of that earlier Puritanism which made all recent victories of the same spirit possible. It is not only the oldest triumphal ode in any literature; it is the richest deposit of gems shining upon the diadem of any young nation. It not only sounds the deeps and heights of the genius of Hebrewdom; it has furnished to her succeeding ages the noblest currents of prophecy. Psalms and battle cries, mystic foretellings and solemn anthems, have grown resonant with melody, by catching for a theme some single strain, or echoing to other times some separate chord of its harmony. It possesses the historic spirit and the poetic manner of the "Iliad" of Homer, who was as yet unborn, and the urgent faith and particular yearning of the "Ein' Feste Burg ist Unser Gott" of Martin Luther—the Moses of German song and piety. It is closer to the soul of Israel than the Marseillaise is to that of France, and its measures are as much more rich in creative power as was that revolution above the revolution of 1789. "Rule Britannia" of England and the "Heil Dir Im Siegeskranz" of Germany were not born out of any such matrix of divine energy, and they seem as patriotic lays in comparison with this trumpeted hymn of God's delivered ones. America has met two revolutions and crossed two Red Seas, without producing a soul equal to the task of so justly singing her joy and hope. The craggy elevation from which the leader of that vast choir uttered the first words is not known; the dancing maidens whose happy lips caught the refrain have been dust for thousands of years; Miriam and her choral multitude, the wave-like mass of chanting Hebrew soldiers, the solemn instruments strung with such intensity of feeling—all these have vanished; but so poetically and potently does this great lyric enshrine the life of the Jew in all time, so strenuous with involved hope for all mankind is this triumphal poem, that to-day it is repeated each sabbath in Hebrew temples, sung in Christian cathedrals, and yonder in heaven they who have overcome by the blood of the Lamb "sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb." Israel had taken another vast stride toward nationality. She was possessed of a national hymn, at once her declaration of independence and her song. With the utterance of its strophes, not only was the antiphony instituted in Hebrew music, but theocratic government found a surer place in universal politics. It is not to the purpose to say that it was a compilation of fragments, or that it is a collection of earlier psalms. The genius of Homer probably

<sup>1</sup> Exodus xv, 1.

made the "Iliad" of the ballads sung upon Grecian streets; and Taine says: "It is the Grecian Bible." It required a fiery soul to fuse these materials into such an imperishable monument of literature; and the "Iliad" is certainly not more Homeric than this ode is Mosaic. Even the negative critical spirit of Bleek allows that "a genuinely Mosaic song lies at the foundation" of the poem. The important fact is that it is the heart-beat of Israel throbbing with all the significance of the hour in which her nationality was conscious of itself.

"I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously:

The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.  
The Lord is my strength and song,  
And he is become my salvation:  
This is my God, and I will praise him;  
My father's God, and I will exalt him.  
The Lord is a man of war:  
The Lord is his name.  
Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea:  
And his chosen captains are sunk in the Red Sea.  
The deep cover them:  
They went down into the depths like a stone.  
Thy right hand, O Lord, is glorious in power:  
Thy right hand, O Lord, dasheth in pieces the enemy.  
And in the greatness of thine excellency thou overthrewest them that rise up against thee:  
Thou sendest forth thy wrath, it consumeth them as stubble.

And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were piled up,  
The floods stood upright as an heap;  
The deeps were congealed in the heart of the sea.  
The enemy said,  
I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil:  
My lust shall be satisfied upon them;  
I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them.  
Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them:  
They sank as lead in the mighty waters.  
Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods?  
Who is like thee, glorious in holiness,  
Fearful in praises, doing wonders?  
Thou stretchest out thy right hand,  
The earth swallowed them.  
Thou in thy mercy hast led the people which thou hast redeemed:  
Thou hast guided them in thy strength to thy holy habitation.  
The peoples have heard, they tremble:  
Pangs have taken hold on the inhabitants of Philistia.  
Then were the dukes of Edom amazed:  
The mighty men of Moab, trembling taketh hold upon them:  
All the inhabitants of Canaan are melted away.  
Terror and dread falleth upon them:  
By the greatness of thine arm they are as still as a stone:  
Till thy people pass over, O Lord.  
Till the people pass over which thou hast purchased.  
Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance,  
The place, O Lord, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in,  
The sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established.  
The Lord shall reign for ever and ever." 1

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE WILDERNESS OF SHUR—MARA AND ELIM—THE MANNA.

MOSES and Israel were now in the peninsula of Sinai: he and Israel knew Jehovah now better than ever before. Again the Hebrew and Midian—the man and his circumstances—confronted one another. With what different and larger responsibilities did the leader look again upon that apparent confusion of broken mountains, sandy plains, nestling patches of verdure, torrent paths, dwarfed and stunted trees, and the few perennial springs—the very territory in whose valleys he had tended the pasturing flocks of Jethro years before, now the training ground for the Hebrew nation.

Nations are born in the hour of some great agony, at the moment where wrong overreaches itself; they become conscious of their own individual vitality at some Red Sea. At such moments, they feel themselves possessed of their own melody which is to be fully expressed in years of national progress and achievement. This is the hour of song, of poetic vision, of transcendental faith. After this experience is passed, the finest statesmanship has always foreseen Sinai. Liberty is not a

gift vouchsafed at once, at the beginning of a life, or at the commencement of a nation's career. It is a fruit—the latest and best of time. It is an end toward which each songful declaration of independence, such as was this triumphal ode, or the American Declaration of Independence, is only an early and long stride. Between the hour of that outburst of song—which is always largely a protest and a faith—and the far-off hour when freedom is safe because freedom is true, there is no spot so sacred, because so necessary, as a Sinai where law establishes its authority. From the hour of the revelation of law, constitutionalism dates its molding and restraining operation on any people. Declarations of independence and songs of national birthtime make the atmosphere which the new commonwealth breathes. Law creates a pathway, makes the mass interdependent, and transforms what is only a mob into a government. Law is the source of precedents; and a crude

"Freedom slowly broadens down from precedent to precedent,"

1 Exodus xv, 1-18 (Revised Version).

at last reaching toward a finer freedom in which at length is possible "the parliament of man, the federation of the world."

Every step was now a step toward Sinai. These days were as important to these wanderers as the days between the Fourth of July, 1776, and the day of the meeting of the convention which wrought out the constitution were to the American Republic. The Wilderness of Shur, into which Israel was now led from the camp of Ayun Mûsa, was truly the wilderness of "the wall." Behind them was Africa; before them were the desert and the future. A gigantic range of peaks, now known as Jebel-er-Rahah, formed the wall which, coming close to the Red Sea, continues in the greater chain of Jebel-et-Tih on the north. Standing with memories of the green fields of Egypt immediately behind them, this mass of rock, desert, and difficulty directly confronted them. Three days had passed, and the weary marchers had exhausted the supplies of water obtained at Ayun Mûsa. Following the pillar of cloud and flame, they had come to wady after wady, each a dry torrent-bed, serviceable only as offering them a way through the masses of stone, silent gravel-wastes and the few green patches which were as thirsty as the pilgrims. Again it was demonstrated that, as yet, they set no high value upon liberty. True freedom faded in minds at that moment not sufficiently cultured to comprehend or appreciate. In their complaining, one hears the footsteps of forty years which must come and go before they get to the true ideas of what liberty really is and what it is worth. God puts Canaan farther away, at every occasion in the life of a nation or a soul, when it is certain that there is no conviction that liberty is faith in the divine order and that it is worth all it costs. The Ayun Mûsa, which is now a beautiful summer resort, with its nineteen wells, seemed the last spot of the golden age which is ever behind us when we doubt God. Israel was living so as to teach all men. Every rich life, the career of every highly inspired people, in proportion as life is subject to divine enriching, or the nation is visited with divine inspirations, seems to be an oscillation between hours where some Red Sea furnishes too much water and a desert where there is too little. There was a confronting sea; here is severe thirst.

But yonder is a green spot. It is, however, at this moment, bitter. The name is Marah—"bitter."<sup>1</sup> And it is not remarkable that Israel was disappointed there. The fierce light of the sun beating upon the hills fell, as from a heated wall, upon their suffering caravans. At Marah, which is the Huwarah of our day, even

yet the expectant traveler is met with the natives shouting to him, as he seeks refreshing, "Bitter! Bitter!" The geography of the soul likewise changes in no important particular. Just as that soil, filled with nitre, makes the spring unfit for quenching thirst, however sweet and refreshing the water itself might be if the solution might only rid itself of that which is within it; so the circumstances out of which, or through which many a healthful impulse or ennobling emotion comes makes it bitter and worse than useless. What does God do for his Israel, in such a case? Israel always murmurs here. The soul, at such a pass, usually looks back to its old chains, where at least water was plentiful, and complains that following an ideal costs too much. Moses shared in their want and suffering; the best that is in us feels the agony as much as the worst, even if, like Moses, it has always the support which comes of a devoted love of high aims and has counted their cost. It nevertheless has to pay the expense of having an ideal. Then, as if in contrast, the less open-eyed and faithful qualities of our nature, like the children of Israel, cry out—it is all they know; it indicates the level at which they live—"What shall we drink?" Man is always asking this question at the brink of some bitter problem. So rich, however, is God's universe, and so thorough is his education of souls that somewhere near the problem itself is *something*, which, if cast into it, will make it sweet. Here is the ancient record: "Jehovah showed him a tree, which, when he had cast into the waters the waters were made sweet."<sup>1</sup> The Arab natives assured Lesseps that it was their practice to put barberry branches into such pools and that they made the water fit to drink. Josephus asserts that "bad water was once purified by throwing in certain split pieces of wood." Life's bitterest experiences exist to be sweetened by the use of unsuspected and medicinal facts, which also have no value until they are used in connection with difficulties.

It must be noted that hitherto, and far beyond this hour, Israel had found nothing of what our earthy political economy, with its fatal worship of statistics, calls wealth. Rich land and fortune-bearing streams do not appear. Jehovah builds the greatness of a people out of spiritual discoveries. Part of the permanent wealth of Israel lay in the bitterness of Marah and the healing barberry branches. It was realized, as such wealth is always coined, by the commanding influence of an idea; even as the rocks and thin soil of New England responded at a later day to the same Puritan spirit and made rich and heroic the New England character.

<sup>1</sup> Exodus xv, 23.

<sup>1</sup> Exodus xv, 25.



Another birth-hour for an everlasting principle, capable of being wrought into life and statesmanship, had come. The Lord "made for them a statute and an ordinance."<sup>1</sup> This was the ordinance: "If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and will give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee which I have brought upon the Egyptians; for I am Jehovah, thy physician."<sup>2</sup> Here is a forelook toward Sinai and the lawgiving. That is a suggestive phrase: "all his statutes." This statute which was then given was the statute which really included all succeeding statutes. Liberty is a child of law; and the deliverance of any people *from* the diseases of a despotism is first a deliverance of that people *to* a law that orders their conduct. There is no commonwealth where it is not true that duty is as important a word as privilege, and the responsibilities of citizens are as large as their rights. This is accomplished only *by* and *through* law. Obedience of law is fundamental to freedom. "I will walk at liberty," says the Psalmist, "for I seek thy precepts."<sup>3</sup> "There," says the sacred record, "he proved them." Moses never showed forth the divine statesmanship to better advantage. Not with prating about liberty, not with shouting about rights, but with allegiance to constitutional forms, seeking even desirable changes by constitutional methods, is any people "*proved*" worthy to take the next step Canaanward. To be "*proved*" unworthy, to fall into loud-mouthed praise of lawlessness, which is often miscalled freedom, is ultimately to contract the diseases of the Egyptians. The despotism of anarchy is the most leprous of all despotisms. In this way, among many others, God says: "I am Jehovah—Rophrek:"—*Jehovah—Physician.*<sup>4</sup>

Immediately before them, now, lay the green plot toward which the pillar guided their steps. It was a veritable oasis, *Elim*. Fortunate, indeed, for their education in that constructive idealism which looks ever Canaanward, as it wanders in the desert, was the fact that they came to Marah before reaching Elim. This Elim was the most important of the desert's water courses, "where were twelve wells of water, and three-score and ten palm trees."<sup>5</sup> There "they encamped by the waters." A whole month went by, as their herds fed upon the fertile pastures. It was probably what is now Wady Gharandel. On they journeyed into the delightful Wady Taiyibeh. As was Elim, so all this route was in

beautiful contrast with bitter Marah. For a time by the Red Sea they had encamped; the tamarisks were in bloom; the cattle had been well fed, but before them their path now entered a vast sandy plain, stretching to the end of the peninsula, called the Wilderness of *Sin*. Passing out of the Murkhah, through the Wady-en-Nash, they had found sweet waters, but at the edge of the wilderness they saw only famine and death. The last remnant of Egypt's plenty was gone. Provisions had failed. Moses was equal to the crisis. Still the bush that burned with fire did not consume away. The great leader, who knew the wilderness so well, knew also Jehovah. "Would to God," they cried to Moses and Aaron, "that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger."<sup>1</sup>

"Would to God!"—this marked the level of their faith. They had even dropped the memorial name, *Jehovah*, out of their vocabulary in the violence of their complaint. Without *that* idea of God in the mind, all progress toward civilization costs more than it comes to. Some one fact must hopefully relate past, present, future, else the jostling events crash against one another, or they are so separate that courage and faith are drowned in the unknown abysses that yawn between. God had proposed to build their nationality out of the motives and inspirations contained in the new and memorial name, *Jehovah*—"I am that I am." Under that new name they were to be educated. At this crisis they had forgotten it. Surely, Canaan is far away. Egypt lay like a beautiful and vanished dream in yonder mist. This is an affair with *Jehovah*, as all human life is. Never has the *whole* congregation murmured before against *both* Moses and Aaron; now their complaining is unanimous. So does the stalwart captain understand it. Then said Jehovah to Moses, "I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they walk in my law or no."<sup>2</sup> And Moses and Aaron, true to the inspiration flowing out of the memorial name, said to all the children of Israel: "At even, then shall ye know that Jehovah hath brought you out of the land of Egypt. And in the morning, then ye shall see the glory of Jehovah; for that he heareth your murmurings against Jehovah: and what are we, that ye murmur against us?"<sup>3</sup>

What a transformation is to be noted here in the soul of the chieftain; he is eloquent; he

<sup>1</sup> Exodus xv, 25.

<sup>2</sup> Exodus xv, 26.

<sup>3</sup> Psalm cxix, 45.

<sup>4</sup> Our Revised Version says: "I am the Lord that healeth thee."

<sup>5</sup> Exodus xv, 27.

<sup>1</sup> Exodus xvi, 3. <sup>2</sup> Exodus xvi, 4. <sup>3</sup> Exodus xvi, 6, 7.

was once conscious only of being "slow of speech."<sup>1</sup> Moses has found that true personality which is strongest only when it has lost its self-consciousness in Jehovah. We may almost hear Jesus of Nazareth saying: "Not I, but the Father; he doth the works."

At evening, the air was filled with enormous numbers of flying quail. They faltered and fell upon the ground, until it was alive with wings. This does not seem to have been a strange thing in Egypt. Huge migratory flights of these birds often occur, and the weary birds fall in such numbers that they are easily taken, or killed by hand. The moment of their arrival, however, was divinely opportune; but perhaps not more so than is the moment of the most apparently commonplace event. Israel's eye was not spiritually quick enough to behold God in the ordinary; the burning bush had impressed Moses alone. Surely Jehovah is not less interesting and wonderful because he is present in all history, and utters his will through all nature and natural processes. This is part of the teaching of the long exodus. Next day, "when the dew that lay was gone up, behold upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small, round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground. And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another: It is *manna*: for they wist not what it was. And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which *Jehovah* hath given you to eat."<sup>2</sup>

It was natural that they said, "It is *manna*,"<sup>3</sup> for the word *manna* means, "What is this?" Certainly the Hebrews did not think that it was only the "sugary exudation from the twigs of the tamarisk tree," though this has, as Geikie says, been called "man, or manna, from the earliest ages." "Possibly," as Ritter says, "the objection to this, that this tamarisk manna is only found for a month or two in spring," is answered by the fact that the Bible does not say that it fell every day in the year, but was, on the other hand, probably only an addition to the food that the Hebrews obtained in large quantities elsewhere. They made too much out of the event to allow us to think that it was only a "rain of manna," such as is known in the Orient. "There is," says Geikie, "an edible lichen which sometimes falls in showers several inches deep, the wind having blown it from the spots where it grew and carried it onwards." It has been suggested that both these theories have truth, inasmuch as there must have been two kinds of manna, one of which was "ground in mills or beaten in mortars," another of which would "melt in the sun." None of these, however, comport with the statement that a double quantity fell

on the sixth day; and it is hardly to be supposed that, later on, the pot containing an omer of manna would have been preserved in the sanctuary, or that the sabbath should have had its history so bound up with the double portion which does not become corrupt, if, to their thought, this was by any means an event less than miraculous.

It is more to the point, for us who have our lives to live, that we be assured of the rich teaching unto all ages contained in this story. The history of Israel is not only the history of a people and the ideas and inspirations which made them a nation, but it is also the history of the process by which, at least with one people, God reveals his will and educational method. In the attainment of genuine freedom; the only definition of liberty which endures is that which Jesus Christ gave and which the whole life of Israel proves true: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."<sup>1</sup> Man is made free by the truth he knows in living experience. He knows it, only by trusting it. Of the coming of truth to man, and of the use of truth on this wilderness march, this history is perennially descriptive. A man, or a nation, gets just enough truth on hand for every day's supply, and the law of truth is that, if it is not used, like the manna, it grows untrue. The most untrue souls in our world are those who are like the children of Israel who disobeyed Moses' command, and sought to hoard the manna from day to day. These overwise persons pack truth up in the warehouses of accepted opinion, to be used at some future time, when the world shall hunger for it. Truth itself becomes a lie, unless it gets into flesh and blood at once. It is thus with all generous impulses, sweet sentiments, and blessed inspirations; they are most full of blessing when they are fresh from God's hands. The greatest people is the people that trusts the truth it sees absolutely and at once. No wise economy, or shrewd hoarding of truth, ever made a nation true. All fatal corruption of public sentiment comes from a heaven-sent truth, acknowledged and yet unobeyed—the omers of manna that wiseacres are keeping, because it is too valuable to be used up at present.

Again, this whole procedure of God was a forelooking to the creation and growth of that divine humanity whose life is in Christ Jesus, for the production of which every government exists and to which what we call civilization is ministering—a humanity that lives "not by bread alone." How significant this episode of Israel's life is in the life of mankind may be but partially understood when we read the

<sup>1</sup> Exodus iv, 10.    <sup>2</sup> Exodus xvi, 14, 15.

<sup>3</sup> Exodus xvi, 15.

<sup>1</sup> John viii, 32.

words of the Book of Deuteronomy, assuring us that this was its meaning: "By every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord, doth man live."<sup>1</sup> It may be entirely understood when we go with the Son of Man into the wilderness where Christ was tempted. Here, as in the Wilderness of *Sin*, we feel the solidarity of the race: "Who is weak, and I am not weak?"<sup>2</sup> Satan has challenged the Christ of God and Man to make the stones into bread. It is a long way this side of that hour when the Hebrew exiles are gathering their manna, but Christ's victory was wrapped up in God's proving of them and humanity there. The old words come to his lips, "It is written," he says, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."<sup>3</sup> It was, indeed, a

great hour of "*proving*" for all highest human interests in all time, when Jehovah gave Israel manna, and the law of its gathering and use; and Moses said: "He will prove you, whether ye walk in his law, or no."<sup>1</sup> It led on to the hour when One such as was Savior came; and so heaven-sent and truth-incarnating was he, that he justly said: "Your fathers did eat manna in the Wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven."<sup>2</sup> It is not to be wondered at, that this training by symbols should afterward keep "the golden pot," with its omer of manna, in the holiest of all, close by the rod of Aaron that budded and the tables of the Covenant, beneath the shining cherubim.

## CHAPTER IX.

### FROM THE FIRST BATTLEFIELD TO SINAI.

SOON the hosts of Israel, by following through the grandeur and beauty of Wady Feiran, entered their first battlefield. They had escaped Philistines and southern princes by their obedience of Moses; now, however, on the high plain opening out before them, walled by mountains, they were to meet Amalek, who held the springs. The table-land was called Rephidim. The great peaks of Sinai were lit up with all their many-colored splendors; and these gorgeous walls had long been in sight as they had led their flocks and herds, children and women, through Wady Maghara, near one of whose neighboring mountains, Dophkah, they had encamped. This spot was for ages the center of the Egyptian copper-mining region. From this place they had gone up to Alush. Here was nothing to compensate them for that weariness of body and soul which, amidst all this waste of rock and sand, had overtaken them. Perhaps here were found, in the ancient mines, some suggestions of the wealth which Egypt had drawn upon; but it was the Egypt now hopelessly lost. Again the cry, "Water! Water!" rose like a pathetic wail, and Moses heard it. Again, when they murmured, he reminded them of Jehovah. In accord with the divine command, he took the elders and the rod, which never meant so much as at that crisis, and as they approached a bare, brown rock, heated by the fierce sun, the rod was solemnly lifted up again. This time it smote the hardness of an apparently heartless circumstance; and a rivulet of water running forth was the testimony that the most

granitic fact which confronts human progress under God, has God's overflowing heart throbbing within it.

Another lesson had been taught to human faith. As the multitude behind heard the plash of waters, so gracious in their music, and they rushed with shouts to partake of its refreshing, they became the ancient representatives of the multitudes in all ages, who, without knowing of the perpetual miracle, are yet blessed with the results of obedient faith of the faithful. In whatsoever hard and bare fact to which Jehovah has ever led any nation, or man, by that pillar of cloud and flame, there lie to be revealed and to be used the hidden resources of the divine. Only a rod, like that of Moses, may open its treasure—a rod which is the emblem of power used for noble ends. That rod is a serpent when thrown on the ground, evil as Egyptian despotism; but it is a scepter of beneficent strength, when exalted by the hand of faith, gracious as God's love. Faith in the heart of a people, hardened by conservatism and unproductive as stone of any generous enthusiasm, has made a great financier the conqueror of Napoleon, by the treasure of England which flowed forth at his word. Webster said most truly of Alexander Hamilton, when the latter stood before the barren and hard poverty of the early American nationality: "He smote the rock of the national resources, and abundant streams of revenue gushed forth." Everything yields to noble ideas and loving sentiments. Even the human heart, often as hard and apparently fruitless as that rock in Horeb, pours forth its concealed

<sup>1</sup> Deuteronomy viii, 3.

<sup>2</sup> II. Corinthians xi, 29.

<sup>3</sup> Matthew iv, 4.

<sup>1</sup> Exodus xvi, 4.

<sup>2</sup> John vi, 49-51.

wealth of hope and love at the touch of a rod embodying a worthy ideal. Still more profound is this history with its proclamation of human hope. Saint Paul, again reverting to his favorite chapter of the story of mankind for an explanation of Jesus Christ and his unique place as the central and organizing fact of history, tells us that this Horeb rock was only an emblem, that it followed them, and that they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ."<sup>1</sup>

It was while they were drinking of the stream that Israel's rear, where all the feeble and faint and weary were huddled together, was fiercely attacked by a tribe of natives. They were probably Edomites, descendants of Esau, through his grandson, Amalek. It was a religious war—they "feared not God."<sup>2</sup> Here the descendants of Esau might have vengeance on the descendants of Jacob. Moses saw and understood. Against Jehovah, his plans and purposes, the enemy had come. Joshua was called into conspicuous service for the first time. He was commanded to fight against them with a picked band from Israel's most courageous men. Again Moses found the rod of power. That rod was to be, also, a prayer, as every true power is. Ascending the height with Aaron and Hur, he saw the battle waged, its fortune turning with the position of his rod. When the rod, once a serpent—that emblem of power seized and used for noble purposes—was uplifted, all was well for Israel; when it fell, all seemed lost. His strong arms grew weary; Aaron and Hur stayed his hands. Sundown came. The Amalekites were routed, and the Lord proclaimed the utter destruction of the foe of Israel. Another and earlier crisis had added a new line and a touch of affectionate color to the portrait of the supreme power, which portrait was making itself on the soul of Israel, when God said: "I am Jehovah that healeth thee"—*Jehovah, the Physician*. Here and now, the mental picture received a similar addition. The Amalekites had despised the flag of Israel, on which *Jehovah* was written and rewritten by every experience. Because "the hand of Amalek was upon the banner of the Lord," Moses built a monument altar, and called it "Jehovah-Nissi,"—"Jehovah, the Banner."<sup>3</sup> So, in all ages, the evolution of the complete idea of God has come, through human experience. "Physician"—"Banner"; and all the other ideas and hopes which have been uttered by man's need, or yearning, or love, have been prophecies of Christ, who truly said, because he embodied each of them in his infinite glory: "*He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.*"<sup>4</sup>

The successful battle with the Amalekites, a proud and numerous people called by Balaam "the first of the nations,"<sup>1</sup> doubtless tended to solidify the mass of Hebrew fugitives, and, by giving them a new trust in God and a crude self-respect, prepared them for nationality. Sinai was very near—they *must* have law and government. But before the momentous hour came to Moses, he was permitted a most interesting incident in the strenuous life he was living. "The Little Bird"—Zipporah, his wife—and the two sons, Gershom and Eliezer, had been left with Jethro, his father-in-law, in Midian. To the Wilderness where Moses "encamped at the Mount of God"<sup>2</sup> now came this priest of Midian, bringing his daughter, Zipporah, and the two sons. Jethro "rejoiced for all the goodness which Jehovah had done to Israel."<sup>3</sup> Whatever was Zipporah's opinion of the man who had declined to have her accompany him in his severe task, Jethro sent his servant before him to Moses, who received him with oriental courtesy and affectionateness. The Midianitish priest had a profound sense of the greatness of Jehovah, and he professed it. He made burnt offerings and sacrifices, and then sat with Moses and Aaron and the elders at the sacrificial meal of fellowship. Both Moses and Jethro showed themselves men of true manhood during the whole visit. There is, however, a strange silence as to Zipporah and the sons. Moses will have an opportunity to prove his chivalry, as a husband, at a later time. But Jethro had a valuable contribution to make to the man who was marching Sinaiward.

Moses had undertaken, for the whole people, the settlement of each and every case in dispute. With this administration of justice among all the people, the judge had certainly been prepared for that next great act of statesmanship which he would be called upon to perform. He had been already a lawgiver. But what Jethro saw most clearly was this—his son-in-law and friend was "wearing away," and the delays of justice were so many, by reason of the overworked condition of their court, that the people were administering justice, or injustice, with their own hands. Never was there a more critical moment. Jethro offered his sagacious counsel, that Moses should divide these labors, appoint rulers of tens, of fifties, of hundreds, and of thousands, teach the people ordinances and laws, let the judges apply these to the cases brought before them, and, if any "great matters" made their appeal beyond the wisdom of these men, who were provided "from all the people—able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating

<sup>1</sup> Corinthians x, 4.

<sup>2</sup> Deuteronomy xxv, 18.

<sup>3</sup> Exodus xvii, 15.

<sup>4</sup> John xiv, 9.

<sup>1</sup> Numbers xxiv, 20.

<sup>2</sup> Exodus xviii, 5.

<sup>3</sup> Exodus xviii, 9.

covetousness"<sup>1</sup>—let these be brought to Moses, who should bring "the causes unto God."<sup>2</sup> It was an impulse Sinaiward, modestly given by what has been called the Gentile world to that Hebrewdom which was about to receive, through the loftiest of her sons, a law which is the basis and organon of the jurisprudence of the civilized world.

The modern traveler, after having examined the extended literature pertaining to this fascinating subject, and having reverently visited what is now known as Mount Serbal's gigantic peaks, set about with pinnacles, parted only by abysses, and hallowed by hoary tradition, will probably turn to the traditional Mount Sinai, equally celebrated by the legends of monks and the presence of consecrated buildings, to find a sufficiently large plain for the encampment of Israel, while they received the law. Having failed to find such a vast open space, and a brook "that descended out of the mount," such as the Bible story mentions, he will follow the feet of other scholars through valleys and over smaller ranges to Horeb, as the cliffs on the northwest of the Jebel-Musa are called, and agree with Dean Stanley as he saw "the wide yellow plain sweeping down to the very edge of the cliffs, exactly answering to the plain on which 'the people removed and stood afar off,'" that here, after following up the Wadyes-Sheik until the huge plain of El-Rahch was reached by all the host, Israel stood, and, in the neighborhood of so much grandeur and an hour of such imperial significance, "all the people that was in the camp trembled."<sup>3</sup> In these eloquent words, Dean Stanley describes the majestic scenery about Sinai, to which they had now come: "At each successive advance, these cliffs disengaged themselves from the intervening and surrounding hills, and at last they stood out—I should rather say, the columnar mass, which they form, stood out—alone against the sky. On each side, the infinite complications of twisted and jagged mountains fell away from it. On each side the sky compassed it around as though it were alone in the wilderness. And to this great mass we approached through a wide valley, a long continuous plain, which, inclosed as it was between two precipitous mountain ranges of black and yellow granite, and having almost at its end this prodigious mountain-block, I could compare to nothing else than the immense avenue through which the approach was made to the great Egyptian temples." "The low lines of alluvial mounds at the foot of the cliff exactly answer to the 'bounds' which were to keep the people off from 'touching the mount.' The plain itself is not broken, and unevenly and

narrowly shut in, like almost all others in the range, but presents a long retiring sweep, against which the people could remove and stand afar off. The cliff, rising like a huge altar in front of the whole congregation and visible against the sky in lonely grandeur, from end to end of the whole plain, is the very image of the 'mount that might be touched' and from which the voice of God might be heard, far and wide, over the stillness of the plain below, widened at that point to its utmost extent by the confluence of all the contiguous valleys." Here one may see how Moses might have descended from the height, as the sacred narrative relates, the host of Israel unseen, yet their shouting heard before he apprehended its real cause; and here also is a brook "flowing down out of the mount."

More than four thousand five hundred feet above the sea's level, the plain is confronted by the Horeb mountains, the loftiest peak attaining an altitude nearly three thousand feet greater than this, and between this plain and that height juts out the less lofty and altar-like elevation of Ras Sufsáfch, where Moses took leave of the elders. Members of the Ordnance Survey found peaks behind this mountain, whereupon Moses, having been forty days alone with God, might have come down into the vale, heard the shouting, and been unable clearly to perceive operations in the camp. At a spring which flows here, crystalline and cool, the Bedouin tradition does not hesitate to say that Moses watered the flocks of Jethro, in those days when he was not an emancipator, but only a son-in-law of Jethro.

The imperial hour in the history of jurisprudence—the date of the revealing and the statement of those deepest and most fundamental laws which assure the success of the noble experiment of civilization, the opening moment of the era wherein justice itself became sufficiently just in human thought to be fearlessly trusted—this had almost come. As Israel drew near to it, the very approach of the revelation began to promise that specialization of Israel's life by granting to them a unique vision of God's ideal and thus imposing upon the Hebrew people a task so august and determinative in civilization that Jehovah said to them, in many ways, "Ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation."<sup>1</sup> This utterance was a stride toward the revelation of the ideal contained in Christianity. It was definitely to place the foundations of all civilization *in man*—not in things, not even in institutions, save as man's servants and helpers. It was also to

<sup>1</sup> Exodus xviii, 21.

<sup>2</sup> Exodus xviii, 19.

<sup>3</sup> Exodus xix, 16.

<sup>1</sup> Exodus xix, 5.

intimate the sacredness of all humanity — "The earth is mine."<sup>1</sup> It was to create a fervor of patriotism, accentuating in the Jew the gift of his genius and its particular visions, as not only royal, but priestly: not alone was he to rule, but to minister; and he was to rule, not primarily by might of institution, or by grant of invaluable territory, but by the sovereignty of organizing ideas and the gift of their realm of power. So was their kingdom to be priestly — "a kingdom of priests."<sup>2</sup>

Every nation has failed of genuine kingship which has failed to exercise such priestly functions as these. In quite another manner, as characteristic of God's providence, as truly emphasizing the gift of the genius of the Greek, did Jehovah call the Greek to a royal priesthood. Hellenic kingship did not vanish at the approach of Roman strength; for the Greek had made it a true priesthood unto all men. His life's inherent ideas were at once regulations, legislations, and ministrations to the life of the race. The Greek really separated himself from the barbarians, as truly as did the Hebrew from the Gentile world; not by a protest of words against barbarism, but by the force of his ideals. Discriminations founded on any other assumption than the possession of spiritual or intellectual treasures which they held in trust, always failed with both peoples. Ideas entering tasks as distinct as are the characters of nations alone preserve national individuality. God called the Greek to be an intellectual aristocracy, as he called the Hebrew to be a spiritual aristocracy, and both did he call to minister to all humanity. In each case, the unique and precious stream flowed between firm banks of patriotic conviction. The Greek was called to be an artistic nation — his Sinai revealed the law of beauty; God called the Hebrew, as we have seen, to be "an holy nation" — his Sinai revealed the laws of righteousness. Because holiness is the highest concern of all life, Jehovah has said, not alone in that hour, but as well in all history, before and after Sinai: "Ye shall be a peculiar treasure to me above *all* people."<sup>3</sup> We never so truly appreciate the divine distinctions in the charac-

ter and tasks of great peoples as at such places as this in the geography of the soul. "The great truth known to Israel," says Rothe, "is that *God* — the great truths known to the Greeks is that *man* — is a moral, an ethical being; therefore, either cycle of historical development belongs essentially to the other, and that, too, because both form an essential preparation for Christianity." "What the new idea of God and the new notion of religion have done for man," says Principal Fairbairn, "we may not attempt to tell. They have changed him within and without, strengthened all his moral qualities, created in him a nobler and sterner ethical spirit, exalted his ideal of manhood, brought elements into his social and collective life that have enormously enriched his civilization. Our order is not the Greek cosmos — the beautiful but merciless harmony that man could not but admire, that yet crushed without pity the man who touched it. Our order is the moral, the reign of the living and righteous will, which never spares guilt, but is ever merciful to the guilty. Our conception of the universe, of providence, of the law that is supreme over man and his destiny, is penetrated through and through with moral ideas.

. . . Jehovah called Israel out of Egypt to serve him, and Israel's service of Jehovah has been in the noblest sense service of man." Eloquently, indeed, does Gladstone also utter this truth: "Palestine was weak and despised, always obscure, oftentimes and long trodden down beneath the feet of imperious masters. On the other hand, Greece, for a thousand years, repelled every invader from her shores. Fostering her strength in the keen air of freedom, she defied, and at length overthrew, the mightiest of existing empires; and when, finally, she felt the resistless grasp of the masters of all the world, them, too, at the very moment of her subjugation, she herself subdued to her literature, language, arts, and manners. Palestine, in a word, had no share of the glories of our race: while they blaze on every page of the history of Greece with an overpowering splendor. Greece had valor, policy, renown, genius, wisdom, wit — she had all, in a word, that this world could give her; but the flowers of Paradise, which blossom at the best but thinly, blossomed in Palestine alone."

<sup>1</sup> Exodus xix, 5.      <sup>2</sup> Exodus xix, 6.

<sup>3</sup> Exodus xix, 5.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE GIVING OF THE LAW.

NOW Israel trembled on the edge of a new era. "And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke because the Lord descended upon it in fire. And the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly."<sup>1</sup> For many wondrous hours, in the awe-inspiring atmosphere of the promise and command of Jehovah, the whole congregation had listened to its own echoed pledge made by its leader. "All that Jehovah hath spoken will we do."<sup>2</sup> Three days of solemn preparation had passed. Amidst all these hours of purification and sanctification, they had mused upon God's goodness. "I bare you on eagles' wings," said Jehovah, "and brought you unto myself."<sup>3</sup> At length, having gone up to the top of the first elevation, Moses had asked Jehovah's command. It was at once a covenant and a revelation—every newly discovered truth is a covenant between God and man, exacting the performance of the higher duties which it discloses; and it is also a revelation of God's conception of man's capabilities as well as a revelation of God himself. The bounds had been sacredly observed, and not an Israelite sought to "break through to touch the mount that burned with fire."<sup>4</sup> Moses had already taken the pledge of Hebrewdom up to the mysterious height. To-day, "in the sight of all the people,"<sup>5</sup> Jehovah will come down again. The "thick cloud"<sup>6</sup> covered the mount. Thunders shook the crags and lightnings flamed and vanished above the awful place. Jehovah called his servant, and the eyes of Israel followed him up into the cloud. But lest any Israelite might transgress beyond the bound, he was sent down again. Moses and Aaron alone might come up into the presence chamber of Jehovah. Then over the mighty host, standing as one expectant man upon the plain, the voice of Jehovah sounded forth. Even Israel, exalted by sublime events, had not been trained to endure the grandeur of such a moment. At the utterance of the "Ten Words," the proclamation of Israel's constitution, the publishing of that Jewish code each of whose words establishes a principle for the whole race, "the people reeled backward and stood afar off." "And they said unto Moses: Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die. And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God

is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not. And the people stood afar off. And Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was."<sup>1</sup>

It is to be noticed that the penetrative soul of Moses was not hesitant in saying that all the sublime accompaniment to the issuing of this song-theme of civilization had not been given to inspire or foster fear in Israel's heart. It had all come, that they might learn the supreme grandeur of holiness. The organic ordinances had been spoken in the "Ten Words." Now that the foundations were laid and the constitutive principles enshrined in these commandments, the structure of civil law and judicial procedure might fitly rise upon them. As the people tremblingly had asked for the mediatorship of Moses, they made prophecy of that clearer demand which prophets and psalmists would discover in the human soul beseeching the mediatorship of the Christ of God. In this expressed desire for mediation, they were only going deeper still into the true conception of that almighty power whom they had called *Jehovah*. Indeed, the "Ten Words" were and are the complete utterance of that profound idea of God. They simply open up and restate that distinctive conception, as its behests and the hopes it enkindles reveal themselves in the life and conduct of man. They are the interpretation of the memorial name, just as the colors and tints of grasses and flowers are the loyal and logical explication of the sunlight, revealing itself in the life which it touches and influences. The memorial name is not only the soul and reason of the "Ten Words," but it involves all that vast collection of ordinances, laws, codes, procedures, precedents, prohibitions, rules, and judicial statutes which their application to human life has furnished in the flight of more than thirty centuries. In their simplest form, they appear as follows:

"I am Jehovah, thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage."<sup>2</sup>

TABLE I.

Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.  
 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.  
 Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God  
     in vain.  
 Thou shalt remember the Sabbath day, to keep it  
     holy.  
 Thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother.

<sup>1</sup>Exodus xix, 18.

<sup>2</sup>Exodus xxiv, 3 (Revised Version).

<sup>3</sup>Exodus xix, 4.

<sup>4</sup>Exodus xix, 21.

<sup>5</sup>Exodus xix, 11.

<sup>6</sup>Exodus xix, 16.

<sup>1</sup>Exodus xx, 19-21.

<sup>2</sup>Exodus xx, 2.

TABLE II.

Thou shalt do no murder.  
 Thou shalt not commit adultery.  
 Thou shalt not steal.  
 Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.  
 Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house.<sup>1</sup>

Upon these, the whole system of worship and civil economy rose, and, naturally enough, these commands are inspirational to the civilizations inspired and guided by the most progressive and constructive forces, for they are fundamental; they appeal to the depths of human possibility and to the heights of divine providence. They also created a new era. For, in these "Ten Words," closest sympathy is revealed between religion—man's attitude and action toward God—and morality—man's attitude and action toward his fellow-man.

It may be permitted here, briefly, to pause with these ideas and their new expression in the Jewish constitution. The prefatory declaration: "*I am Jehovah, thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage,*" is itself a statement of the fact that stable and just social organization has its genesis and birth in God. Such a background of history is an abundant and, indeed, indispensable resource and inspiration. It constantly invests a people with the presence of divine ideals—greater than they alone have been, or are; and it bids them march under the inspiration of a theory of government which summons every possibility within them into harmony with Jehovah's infinite plan. Thus this early declaration was the expression of that noblest Puritanism which has made the State one with the Church of God, in aim and achievement. Back of all human schemes or purposes, to give dignity and nobility to all their own ideals and movements, was the divine will, which, once at least, and in the nation's very birth-hour, had proven itself the soul of victory. To this will all their policies and ambitions, if they be worthy, *must* make appeal.

One by one, the five majestic commands of the first table unfold the true notion of Jehovah, and indicate the kind of worship due unto him. Monotheism had never so grandly uttered itself, as in that first command, "*Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*"<sup>2</sup> Jehovah must be unique and alone in Israel's life, or Israel's life would vanish; besides this, the fact abided: Only the Jehovah of their worship is the "I AM THAT I AM,"<sup>3</sup> in the whole universe. The second word was a divine provision for the spirituality of religion; and thus it was a plea for man's higher self. It does both of these services by its attack upon idolatry. Egypt had concealed the Eternal One in a multitude

of symbols. Images of the infinite had not only failed to represent God; they had positively left the higher regions of man's thought, and aspiration, and faith without a God worthy of worship. Sense had cheated spirit in creating countless images. "*Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image,*" said Jehovah; and then only had the idea of God in the word an infinite future within the mind of man.

With such a new vision of the real significance of the memorial name *Jehovah*, in human thought and life, how natural and, indeed, consequential, is the third of these "Ten Words," enforcing the duty of reverence for the all-sacred and all-supreme. "*Thou shalt not lift up the name of the Lord thy God to a vanity.*" This laid the foundation for the noble and ennobling awe in the presence of the divine, which has uplifted humanity as nothing else ever has exalted, or may exalt, man's mind from low and vulgar associations. It was not alone a command against the profanity of a curse with God's sacred name; it was an effort of Jehovah to guard humanity against the desecration of that which is sacred anywhere and at any time. It makes man's soul sacred to live with awe in the presence of that which is truly majestic and awe-inspiring. Maurice was not less a statesman than a theologian when he said: "I hold no commandment to be more permanent, or more necessary for my nation and for me, than this one." Quite as logical was the next utterance and quite as consequential is its command: "*Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.*" No more truly gracious does this word of God seem than when, ages later, we hear Jesus of Nazareth say: "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath." For this word of Jehovah, concerning his sabbaths, was to provide a mainstay for a nation of slaves, in their effort to realize the ideal of Jehovah, amidst the countless needs, and cares, and discouragements of their life. One day was set amongst the rest, to make man surer of his divine pedigree, to thrill him with divine hopes, to bring him up again out of life's commonplaces into sympathy with divine plans and make him able to look forward to his loftier self when the whole earth shall be the sabbath of the Lord God. "Rest"—that one word, spoken at that time, held infinite treasures for man; it has poured its fragrance of peace into all time. It was the bloom of this command. This law was not a whim of Jehovah; it sounded the depths of human nature and builded on their foundations. As no true civilization then was possible without the sabbath, so to-day without it no apparently strong civilization is safe. The sabbath belongs to all time, so long as man endures.

<sup>1</sup> Exodus xx.    <sup>2</sup> Exodus xx, 3.    <sup>3</sup> Exodus iii, 14.



Naturally, out of all this reverence for what is essentially sacred, came the command for the revering of the foundation stones underlying family life; and the last duty unto God is thus mentioned: "*Honor thy father and thy mother.*" There is no reverence for Jehovah, or for anything that sanctifies life and exalts man, where there is no reverence for parents. This is a duty to Jehovah; for they alone stand for Jehovah in the opening life of Jehovah's human children. The family is the dearest and noblest organism in human civilization. It is the splendid distinction of Hebrewdom that, in Israel's life and in this command, progressive mankind escaped the baneful immorality of the old religions, learned the love of children, and made the household the source of a life so enduring and resilient as to leave this people unmatched in all human history.

On the second table were inscribed, in a very brief and rudimentary manner, that series of obligations constituting a code which for all time has bound religion with morality, and has taught mankind that the duties toward God are never performed except along with the duties toward man. Jehovah is behind *all* life. There is no "looking up" without "lifting up." The first of these obligations touches humanity at those crises in life when the relations of man and man produce friction, and the first impulse following opposition is to avenge a wrong done, or satisfy the demands of anger. "*Thou shalt not kill*"—this was the divine announcement of the fact that human life is always sacred. Protection for man's existence here, to work out his destiny, to fulfill his right to be and to be free on this earth—reverence for such a rich and divine gift as human life—these are all enjoined by this commandment.

How naturally, with that divine idea of the place of the household and family to which reference has already been made, proceeded the next commandment: "*Thou shalt not commit adultery.*" The home had its inviolable foundations made secure in this word of Jehovah. The future of human society could not have been guaranteed otherwise. All relationships of human beings, all the precious outflow of what is best and fairest in human life, all that is truest and sweetest in human memory or hope, were made sacred, guarded by a divine utterance, in his command. Out of pure households rises the loved golden age.

Next to this must be established the sanctity of property. In an age like our own, we appreciate the statesmanship which uttered this commandment. Civil society, even after these other questions are settled by the command-

ments of Jehovah, has no future, except when this foundation is placed beneath property: "*Thou shalt not steal.*"

But there is something besides a man's possessions to be kept. Dear, indeed, to all human society is truth; and justice is the bulwark of civilized life. "*Thou shalt not bear false witness,*" said Jehovah. Public righteousness is private reverence for truth and justice. A lie is the foe of social unity. Untruth in men makes the organism of civil economy untrue. Truth in every man as to every other man makes any man's life and honor safe.

At last, the law touched the very soul of all true life and social well-being. Selfishness had made and still was making Paradise a lost Eden. Only the noblest regard for others' lives, others' possessions, others' rights, may be able to make society worthy of its hopes and existence. "*Thou shalt not covet,*" said the Jehovah of Israel. Benevolence in every citizen is the atmosphere of a safe and stable social state; greed is its poison and death. Besides this, no soul may reach its rich and full power, with the evil demon of covetousness in the bosom; and it is the mission of society to bring out all there is of a man. From murder, the most brutal, to covetousness, the least rude—the law of Jehovah swept the scale. In the law's attitude toward this last sin, it touched the heart of man's moral life: Judaism had almost reached Christianity. It forbade even the feeling that would appropriate anything of any man's goods. It struck at the very intents of the heart. It prophesied a human society which is stable and glorious, only because man's heart is right.

Thus did the significance of the new and memorial name unfold itself to the genius of Moses on the sacred mount. God was no longer a name, but a power of righteousness in man's life. Jehovah was henceforth the living foe of iniquity, the reason of universal order, the pledge of ultimate and just civilization. His people's business in the world, ever after that moment, as they moved against the dark background of contemporary religiosity and pompous superstition, was to "make for righteousness." Standing for this, Israel was the sublimest spectacle in all the world. Israel possessed the ideals for both the Church and the State. These inhered in the law which was to be

"Sovereign law, that state's collected will,  
\* \* \* \* \*

Sits empress, crowning good, repressing ill.  
Smit by her sacred frown

The fiend dissension like a vapor sinks,  
And e'en the all-dazzling crown

Hides his faint rays and at her bidding shrinks."

## CHAPTER XI.

### ISRAEL'S SIN AND THE RENEWAL OF THE CODE.

**E**NGRAVED, as these "Ten Words" were to be, on tables of stone, this body of law was also to be kept in the sacred ark, while into the many-sided life of Israel their regnant influence should proceed through the subordinate laws, or ordinances, founded upon them. Elsewhere, in this work, these and the suggestive illustration they have are treated more at length. But we may be permitted, here, to say that these statutes, given by the hand of Moses, were really the terms of the covenant which Jehovah made. This covenant had its inauguration in solemn sacrifice, the renewal to their minds of that passover night in Egypt, and the meal of sacrifice. Moses himself sprinkled the altar with half of the blood, read the laws and ordinances, and the people answered: "All that Jehovah hath commanded will we do, and be obedient."<sup>1</sup> Then the rest of the blood was sprinkled over the representatives of the tribes. Truly it was "the blood of the covenant which God hath made"<sup>2</sup> with them.

Back to the sacred mount the great leader went with Aaron, his nephews Nadab and Abihu, and the seventy tribal representatives. The glory of God now revealed itself. Where a little time before was thick darkness, it now seemed "a paved work of sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in its clearness."<sup>3</sup> "They saw God, and did eat and drink."<sup>4</sup> Sending Aaron and Hur back to the people, Moses took Joshua and approached the presence chamber of Jehovah. Then, alone, the lawgiver of Israel entered the cloud that covered the mount, and there he remained for forty days. Those forty days of absence put an intense strain upon Israel's spirituality and faith. It is easy to see them looking at the altar at the foot of the mountain, remembering the covenant made with Jehovah, counting the twelve pillars, while now and then the o'erstrained eye searches the distant cloud for a glimpse of Moses. All that heathenism possessed of charm, or dignity, now swept in upon the trembling heart of Hebrewdom. In the solitude and splendor of yonder cloud, Jehovah was giving to Moses and his people two tables of stone on which the law was written by the finger of God, and there Moses was beholding the pattern of the tabernacle. Here, below, thronged the memories and enchantments of Egyptian worship; and, having lost their mediator, the defenses of their souls were eas-

ily overcome; the visions of the old idolatry ruled; God must be made visible; and so did circumstances and panic, loneliness and desire flow into one another that it seemed that a golden calf came of itself to their fancied need. Aaron shows how unconsciously he himself yielded to the pressure of the stream, when he answered Moses and said: "They gave me gold. I cast it into the fire and there came out this calf."<sup>1</sup>

He had at first resisted. In vain had Aaron thought Israel would halt at the point where their golden ornaments were to be melted. But Israel only cried out in a riot of joy, when the form of the Egyptian god came forth: "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt."<sup>2</sup> It was a fateful compromise, in which they were glad to worship Jehovah under the idolatrous Egyptian symbol. Even Aaron was willing to say of the feast which accompanied the event: "Tomorrow is a feast to Jehovah."<sup>3</sup>

As Moses descended from the mount, though he held in his soul the pattern of the tabernacle, its priesthood and services and the divinely graven decalogue, all seemed lost. He would not wait to consider that it had perhaps been asking too much that a throng of Hebrew slaves, who, until recently, had blindly worshiped Apis and Mnevis, should so soon become a nation steadily enwrapt with its vision of the Invisible. Truly, the leader had himself alone been close enough to the fiery cloud to keep its meaning clear. He looked with pitiful dismay and holy wrath upon the orgies which followed the feast presented to the calf. He had come down from the solitude of Jehovah, with a hint which Jehovah gave him of their peril, to behold this shameless din of idolatrous humanity. It was an awful distance spiritually—but it is traveled by every true lawgiver and reformer—from God's presence, where the source of law and the tabernacle of hope are, to the presence and condition of that disappointing humanity which they are to rule and to redeem. Even the mind of Moses was not comprehensive enough—only the mind of Jehovah as revealed in Christ has proved to be comprehensive enough—to hold in one faith and hope both the law and the lawless. Moses hurled from his arms the two tables of stone and broke them to pieces on the earth. It was an hour for righteous indignation. He approached the detestable golden

<sup>1</sup> Exodus xxiv, 7.

<sup>2</sup> Exodus xxiv, 8.

<sup>3</sup> Exodus xxiv, 10.

<sup>4</sup> Exodus xxiv, 11.

<sup>1</sup> Exodus xxxii, 24.

<sup>2</sup> Exodus xxxii, 4.

<sup>3</sup> Exodus xxxii, 5.

calf and "burned it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and strewed it upon the water and made the children of Israel drink of it."<sup>1</sup> Always do we, in returning to our idols, repeat this ancient history. The circumstances *seem* to create the calf. Our religion becomes a low feast. We make our very lust devout and it utters pious phrases. Then the ashes of our idol are cast, as these were, into the brook that flows out of Sinai. We *must* get back to Sinai. The law we break is to be reckoned with. Law itself is full of grace. Each bears his sin's consequences: we drink of the water of that brook where the ruined idols are thrown.

But more than this must the stern lawgiver and emancipator, in that stern crisis, accomplish. He called the faithful ones; the sons of Levi responded with their naked swords. Justice is to be done. Here was a trial for the tender heart; but authority has gone. Government has perished. It must be restored and the rebellion crushed. That these were done, instantly, was testified in the 3,000 dead men at the camp of Israel, and the ascent of Moses, pleading, as he made his way up Sinai again, for the pardon of Israel and Aaron. Only a great nation can slay its real foes and then forgive. Again, God had said—and this time he "waxed hot against them":<sup>2</sup> "I will make of thee a *great nation*."<sup>3</sup> He would bind them once more to the cost of a great idea.

Israel was now in grief. Jehovah would not approach them, even for their own sakes; the glory would have consumed them. Loud lamentations were uttered and habiliments of sorrowful penitence were worn; and from Horeb even to Canaan, there were no ornaments upon them. Moses' tent was now more remote from the camp. Still salvation was at "the tent of meeting." The cloud was no longer in their midst; it was graciously in sight.

It is the story of a leader of which the soul is unworthy, an ideal in which for an hour the heart has lost its trust. Joshua was in charge of the leader's tent. At last, the pardon was granted. The old covenant was again full of vital forces and gracious influences. Once more Moses was ready to lead on; and, as though Jehovah would start him anew, with something like the encouraging impulse given aforetime at the bush that burned and was not consumed, he was placed in a crevice of the mountain of God. More and more did his penetrative mind and full heart say: "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence."<sup>4</sup> He was where he had been when he saw that his personal victory over Pharaoh was not worth having. He knew that Pharaoh must acknowledge *Jehovah*; it must be *Jehovah's* triumph; and

<sup>1</sup> Exodus xxxii, 20.<sup>2</sup> Exodus xxxii, 10.<sup>3</sup> Exodus xxxii, 10.<sup>4</sup> Exodus xxxiii, 15.

Moses must now be sure that Jehovah is the soul of the advance; he knows that otherwise it is not progress at all. "I beseech thee, show me thy glory,"<sup>1</sup> prayed the leader. The divine answer came: "I will make all my *goodness* pass before thee; and I will proclaim the name of Jehovah before thee."<sup>2</sup> Hidden in the cleft of the rock, Moses saw the "back parts"<sup>3</sup> of him, just as always the goodness that comes to us is the testimony that God *is* and is gone, to leave *goodness* elsewhere. God's glory is his goodness—not his power, not his wisdom, not even his justice, not even his truth, related as these are in character; but his *goodness* is the deepest, truest reflection of Jehovah. Moses was leading to Christ, in whom "God is love."<sup>4</sup>

Just as, at the hour of the burning bush, *El-Shaddai, God Almighty*, became to a great soul in a crisis, *Jehovah*, "I AM THAT I AM," and as the evolution of the idea of God came nearer to that full conception and description of him contained in his Son's saying: "*Our Father which art in heaven*,"<sup>5</sup> so here, at a new crisis in the faith of Moses and Israel, indeed, of mankind—a crisis quite as serious as the former—there came another forward impulse and movement toward the conception of Jesus Christ, for here the *goodness* of God was shown to be his real glory. It marks a stage in the race's theology. The test of a theology—which is man's view of the power that is supreme in the universe, the power with which, or with whom, he has to reckon—here and forever—is found in the morality, the conduct, which it inspires and establishes. Up to this later hour, the morality of Israel was not satisfactory even in such an essential point as worship; it had broken down amidst a glorious, though a trying series of events. For Israel had not yet answered to Israel's own heart the question: "O Jehovah, what is thy real glory?" Other nations before had made the *power*, or the *wisdom*, or the *justice*, or the *truth* of the Supreme One, to be its, or his, glory. No Sinai code could enforce itself in human nature, trained toward some better idea of their own life, as Israel had been, if human nature felt nothing better behind that law as authority, than *power*, or *wisdom*, or *justice*, or *truth*. Israel, through Israel's loftiest and deepest soul, had felt the influence of *goodness* in Jehovah, the covenanting God. The law alone was impotent, for there was, as yet, not enough of the Christly element—*goodness*—shining through it, to command and win loyalty. "All law," says Burke, "is *benevolence* acting by rule." That is to say, as history proves, Sinai's utterances are successful in producing morality by sympathetically attaching

<sup>1</sup> Exodus xxxiii, 18.<sup>2</sup> Exodus xxxiii, 19.<sup>3</sup> Exodus xxxiii, 23.<sup>4</sup> I. John iv, 8.<sup>5</sup> Matthew vi, 9.

the governed to the energy behind the law. Thus this whole event is a Christian triumph, before Christianity was born. The law here, in its failure, is a tutor leading to Christ—goodness embodied—Jehovah incarnate. Moses had led the race's theology and theodicy to a loftier discovery. Behind the law of Sinai was infinite *power, wisdom, justice, truth*, with what is dearer and greater, for it included them all—*goodness*. Henceforth, as Moses descended from Sinai again with the law, again written on two tables of stone, his face did shine, and the decalogue had fortunes in human nature which it had not possessed before.

It does not belong to this part of this work to speak at length of the tabernacle, whose pattern Moses saw in the Mount of God. Its very building was such an atonement as bound Israel unto Jehovah. On the first day of the second year from the date of their departure it stood in the camp. The fiery cloud abided upon it; Jehovah was near. A special class of Hebrews was, of course, necessarily set apart, at once, for the performance of the duties consequent upon this new and important procedure. Moses had been the mediator; but his face had been covered, as he spake to Israel. Now steps were taken toward that day when the veil was to be "done away in Christ."<sup>1</sup> The glory of Jehovah had "filled the tabernacle."<sup>2</sup> We may almost hear the triumphant saying of John: "The tabernacle of God is with men."<sup>3</sup> The whole Book of Leviticus has been called the code of Hebrewdom; it certainly represents the most wise and profound statesmanship, along with the truest religious spirit.

<sup>1</sup> II. Corinthians iii, 14.

<sup>2</sup> Exodus xl, 34.   <sup>3</sup> Revelation xxi, 3.

It was almost inevitable that even the priest should fail, at times, to illustrate this high spiritual economy. We soon find Nadab and Abihu, Aaron's sons, attempting to offer "strange fire before Jehovah."<sup>1</sup> Even these of the tribe of Levi had faltered. Seven days of ceremonial at their consecration had not averted this awful event. Swift was the flame of Jehovah upon them, and Nadab and Abihu were no more. "Can it be," says Geikie, "that the prohibition of the priesthood from tasting wine, or strong drink, before entering the tabernacle, which immediately follows the mention of the catastrophe, is a hint as to its cause?"

Another sorrowful event occurred before they left Sinai. The throng had included those who were gathered in the camp of Dan. One of the women, Shelomith, had a son whose father was a man of Egypt. Grown up and a member of the camp, at this time, he blasphemed the Name, and cursed. It was a shocking profanity, and—as if forever to show us that we are not ourselves to profane Jehovah in creating *ex post facto* law without ascertaining his will, thus making our ideas only human law without a divine sanction—the people, in the absence of any ordinance on the subject, appealed to Jehovah through Moses. The answer came; the blasphemer was taken out from the camp and stoned by the congregation. To profane the supreme power which is above all life *is*, even now, treason to any government: it ultimately makes authority impossible. And, as though this were to be recognized by Israelite and foreigner alike, it was proclaimed that this punishment would come to any blasphemer.

<sup>1</sup> Leviticus x, 1.

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE CENSUS—THE WILDERNESS OF PARAN—THE SPIES.

THE annual feast of the Passover had come, and it was duly celebrated. A census of those constituting the host of Israel was taken, and the number reached 603,550. This would certainly indicate a total population of at least 2,000,000. Edersheim compares this census with that taken just before entering Canaan, as follows:

	First Census. <sup>1</sup>		Second Census. <sup>2</sup>
Reuben .....	46,500	(Prince Elizur, "My God the Rock") .....	43,730
Simeon .....	59,300	(Prince Shelumial, "God My Salvation") .....	22,200
Gad .....	45,650	(Prince Eliasaph, "My God that Gathers") .....	40,500
Judah .....	74,600	(Prince Nahshon, "The Diviner") .....	76,500
Issachar .....	54,400	(Prince Nethaneel, "God the Giver") .....	64,300
Zebulun .....	57,400	(Prince Eliab, "My God the Father") .....	60,500
Ephraim .....	40,500	(Prince Elishama, "My God the Hearer") .....	32,500
Manasseh .....	32,200	(Prince Gamaliel, "My God the Rewarder") .....	52,700
Benjamin .....	35,400	(Prince Abidan, "My Father is Judge") .....	45,600
Dan .....	62,700	(Prince Ahiezer, "My Brother is Help") .....	64,400
Asher .....	41,500	(Prince Pagiel, either "My Fate is God" or "My Prayer-God") ..	53,400
Naphtali .....	53,400	(Prince Ahira, "My Brother is Friend") .....	45,400
	603,550		601,730

The firstborn, 22,273, were hallowed. The Levites were separately numbered, and became the helpers of Aaron in the tabernacle service. One family, the Gershomites, took charge of the tabernacle; the Merarites attended to the tent and its belongings; the contents and sanctuary vessels were looked after by the Kohathites. Moses had found a true friend in Hobab. The princes of Israel had offered rich gifts. The branched candlestick had been lit; the Levites were set apart. The twentieth day of the second month had come. The cloud of God's presence and the silver trumpets of Aaron were ready to give the command to march. The Ark was on the shoulders of the sons of Kohath.

"Arise, O Jehovah, let thine enemies be scattered!  
Let them also that hate thee flee before thee."<sup>2</sup>

This song, sung ages later by Savonarola in his cell at Florence, and, later still, by Oliver Cromwell as he mounted the heights of Dunbar, poured its melody forth from the lips of Moses, and Israel was again on the march.

So great was the deposit of ideas which Jehovah had granted to Hebrewdom, and so rich were the treasures which Israel was to put in current coin, for all the social, political, and religious future of the race, that Jehovah counted upon thirty-eight years of their wandering, under his guidance, before Canaan should be theirs. So much does Jehovah depend upon the realization of ideas and aspira-

tions to make "a great nation"<sup>1</sup> that, when any Canaan comes in sight, it is only a rich incident: the making of the *nation* is the essential thing. At most, a large and fair country is only an opportunity to be met and used by intellectual and moral power. Thirty-eight years have a short chronicle in comparison with that which recites the conception, birth,

and culture of the power to meet that opportunity which Israel now but half possessed. They had become a nation; they had hold of the theocracy. All these years could do was but to teach them what it meant to humanity, and still means. Only thus could they truly *possess* Canaan.

They moved toward the wilderness of Paran. Three days, and the pillar halted. They were murmuring, not in ignorance, as aforetime, as at Marah and Sin: better things ought now to have come from them; and a conflagration broke out in one of the encampments. Again they cried unto Moses; again Moses cried unto Jehovah. The fire was quenched; but from its embers was lit the hateful spirit of mutiny; and now they were to pay the penalty for such associations as they had permitted with the mixed multitude which had come along. These adventurers demanded flesh to eat. They pictured the garden they had left to the hungry Hebrews. It was contagious; and the cry for flesh to eat came to the discouraged Moses. At length he said to Jehovah: "I am not able to bear all this people alone. If thou deal thus with me, kill me."<sup>3</sup> Such men as Moses, and only such large souls, cast such heavy shadows, and have to look through them, when the sun is at their backs. Moses' mediatorship was not that of Christ. Its very breakdown, as its success, led to Christ. Necessities like these are the mother of governmental inventions. The senate of seventy, with Hur

<sup>1</sup> Exodus xxx; Numbers i.    <sup>2</sup> Numbers x, 35.

<sup>1</sup> Genesis xii, 2.    <sup>2</sup> Numbers xxvi.    <sup>3</sup> Numbers xi, 15.

at the head, had been chosen by the people. It was a sublime step. Already the theocracy had shown itself to be the pledge of all thorough and safe democracy. But the people were crying for meat. The Edomites were on one side; the Amalekites were on the other; the Amorites were in front; behind was Sinai and—Egypt's garden of plenty. They were on a chalky plain, waterless, save for a few springs; flinty, also, and alive with scorpions and serpents. Their previous history, quoted and explained by Moses, did not feed them. In their semicircle, sat the senate of seventy; and lo, the spirit of prophecy came upon them, and upon Eldad and Medad, who had been designated, but had not been chosen. Even Joshua himself missed Jehovah's meaning, for he came to Moses with a scheme to forbid them to prophesy. Then, as a jewel which was hardened by this dreadful experience but was worth all that it cost, came the magnanimous utterance of Moses, opposing all jealousy. "Enviest thou for my sake? Would to God," said he, "that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them."<sup>1</sup> A really great man is never jealous. And now the bread question was settled. The quail came in flocks; and, so truly did lust become its own punishment, that Israelite and Egyptian gained a pestilence from their surfeit of food. The place was called Kibroth-Hattaavah—"Graves of Greediness."<sup>2</sup> Verily, it is a long way to any true Canaan. "He gave them their request, but he sent leanness into their soul."

Only our loved ones are able to hurt our hearts. Yet it is never far, for any Moses, from Kibroth-Hattaavah to Hazeroth—the name of Israel's next station. Probably Moses had been married a second time; and, if so, his wife, an Egyptian, was no more satisfactory to his sister Miriam than Zipporah, his first wife, had been helpful to the leader of the Hebrews. Miriam began to talk against her brother, on his wife's account, and soon Aaron joined his utterances to the abominable scandal. They had lost something of their interest in worthy themes, as persons always do when they begin to look out after the family matters of their friends and relatives. The prophetic gift had not made them humble; and a not unusual method was adopted to discredit the unique character of the person criticised. "Hath not the Lord spoken, also, by us?"<sup>3</sup> they said. Older than Moses, of the same family, his importance they could not bear. Their action stung the modest, chivalrous soul of the man who had always avoided preëminence. They were his foes. On the other hand, he had made them all they were.

Moses was silent; but Jehovah spoke to them from the pillar of cloud: "Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold; wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?"<sup>1</sup> But more than speech, when the cloud removed, Miriam was white with leprosy. Such a spirit, in anyone's leprosy—loathsome, contagious; and, as here, Aaron, who shares it, is usually doomed, as was he to declare Miriam leprous. The only thing to do, in such cases, is to follow this example, and put Miriam out of the camp. Then love and pity worked. The great-hearted Moses interceded, and, seven days after, Miriam came back restored.

Then followed an event which marks a turning point in Hebrew history. They were in the Wilderness of Paran, *Kadesh-Barnea*. Every step of their advance has been followed by modern travelers. It was "the stronghold of the Amorites," and a little north of it begins the Negeb, or the "south country" of Palestine, which reaches nearly to "Beersheba, where the Promised Land really begins." There is even yet every witness that it was then fertile and fruitful. Out of a rough and mountainous district they had come to this series of plateaus. Every eye strained Canaanward, as they came to the wady famous from Abraham's day to ours, where they rallied the host. Moses had not yet become used to disappointment, even though he found its value through his year's stay at Sinai; and he now anticipated projecting an invasion straight through to the goal. But before giving the order to advance to Canaan, he concluded with the people to send spies from Kadesh—a picked band of chiefs from the twelve tribes. They were duly instructed and clothed with all the dignity of the hour and purpose. Every item of information as to land and water, roads and peoples, was to be obtained. The embassy started. Avoiding the warriors of Canaan, making a detour by leaving Ain Gadis to the north, entering the mountain district, Caleb and Joshua led "unto Rehob, as men come to Hamath."<sup>2</sup> Descending by Hebron, they reached the route to the Negeb; and lo, the vine-clad country was luscious with grapes. Forty days had elapsed, and they returned, laden with the enormous clusters of Eshcol. Before Israel's joy uttered all its excitement, the commissioners, who had been sent forth solely because the Israelites

<sup>1</sup> Numbers xi, 29.<sup>2</sup> Numbers xi, 34, 35.<sup>3</sup> Numbers xii, 2.<sup>1</sup> Numbers xii, 6-8.<sup>2</sup> Numbers xiii, 22.

were not courageous enough to make the invasion in Jehovah's name, related to them a series of facts which showed Israel's lack of true valor and faith. "Only the people is strong which occupieth the land, and the cities fortified, very great, and also descendants of the Anak have we seen there"<sup>1</sup>—this was their hesitant message to timid Hebrews. Caleb and Joshua, faithful to the idea that Jehovah is all and in all, did their utmost to stay their panic; but, so great was the general despair, that "the congregation lifted up their voice and cried"<sup>2</sup> the whole night long. It was the old pitiful unbelief that again put Canaan far away, though its edge might have been seen from yonder mountain tops. They moaned for the low securities and safeties of Egypt's slavery. Their fear of death at the hands of Canaanites made them wish they had met death under Pharaoh—so strange is the introversion of doubt. They proposed to choose another general, that they might return. Moses and Aaron could only prostrate themselves, dumb before Jehovah, almost disheartened by the din of mutiny about them. When Caleb and Joshua ventured to speak words of faith in Jehovah and his power to lead them against all foes whatsoever, Israel demanded that they should be stoned. It was a rejection of the Almighty One which outraged Jehovah's forbearance. He declared he would smite them with a pestilence; and, faithful still to his promise that "a great nation" should be made, he proposed to make it out of Moses—"a minority of one with God." Quality, not quantity, makes greatness rather than bigness. This roused the mediator, and brought out his real greatness. "The glory of Jehovah appeared in the tent of meeting to all Israel."<sup>3</sup> Moses pleaded, and his argument before Jehovah—a prayer of eager faith, shot through and through with javelins of doubt—is an heroic appeal. It goes deep into the nature of Jehovah—the God of the covenant. It claims all the resources of goodness, which is Jehovah's glory; and it claims them for disobedient Israel. The answer was: "Jehovah will preserve the nation"; but not a man of age, save Caleb and Joshua, will be permitted to enter Canaan; and, according to the number of the days which the spies spent in searching, shall be the number of their years of wandering. The old stock must die off. A more valiant nation must grow up to enter Canaan. The other ten spies were smitten by the plague.<sup>4</sup> Jehovah's judgments are not arbitrary; they coinhere with the nature of truth, and man and God. Responsible and rebellious belief *cannot* enter any Canaan. The impossibilities rise out of the nature of the mind it-

self. Doubt is a death-laden plague to all souls that have already been at Sinai and heard the law.

Now the pendulum swung from this utter faithlessness to audacious, unguided presumption. They leaped at the Amalekites and were sorely repulsed. Moses and the Ark of the Covenant of Jehovah had not gone with them, in this attack. First, they had forgotten Jehovah in the faithless weakness which feared such as were the Amalekites; now they had forgotten Jehovah in their self-willed assertion of power. The result was, Canaan was theirs but yesterday; to-day it is thirty-eight years away.

Of that thirty and eight years we have but the slightest chronicle; but the events which have come to us from the hands of the historian are all determinative and character-making in the life of Israel and Moses. From Kadesh, "after many days," they moved "by the way to the Red Sea."<sup>1</sup> Across this great series of plains, broken with chains of hills and many wadies, the loftiest plain being about 2,000 feet above the sea, the vast procession marched, slowly learning the nature and cost of freedom. Modern travelers have found how easily this wilderness could have sustained the multitude of Israel and their flocks and herds. Water is easily obtained, reservoirs were doubtless made in the torrent-beds, and Egypt had taught Hebrewdom the practice of irrigation. Doves flew thick through the summer air; and herds of camels, goats, sheep and asses fed along the uplands and valleys. Here they would not utterly perish, although they must wait long to learn that the freedom and self-government, which, with Jehovah, is not heroic enough to overcome the Anak-children of passion and sordid ambition, and the Canaanite prejudices and hostilities which every truth encounters, *as well as* to enjoy the Eshcol clusters of blessing, is not worth having even as an unearned gift.

Two rebellions—each of which deepened the character of the loyalists of Israel and helped to exemplify the real nature of just government—occurred in the wilderness. A man was caught gathering sticks on the sabbath day. Amidst our contemporary sabbath breaking, little knowing how surely the life of man grows unsacred with the decay of such institutions, and that, in consequence, much of the anarchy of the day may be its product, we are amazed at the instant and awful punishment which came upon the offender. The law was inexorable. There it stood on the statute books of Israel. The sinner suffered the punishment of death. Perhaps soon, either by

<sup>1</sup> Numbers xiii, 28.

<sup>2</sup> Numbers xiv, 1.

<sup>3</sup> Numbers xiv, 10.

<sup>4</sup> Numbers xiv, 20-38.

<sup>1</sup> Deuteronomy i, 40.

revolution in society, or by the evolution of a true social morality, we may see that such punishment is merciful, as compared with the

slaughter of men and hope consequent upon our forgetting man's right to a day of rest and his duty to use it as God ordained.

### CHAPTER XIII.

#### KORAH'S REBELLION—MOSES' SIN—DEATH OF MIRIAM AND AARON—BALAAM.

THE government of Israel under Moses was to meet a fresh peril. Korah, a Levite, was a full cousin of Moses. It was almost natural that he should claim priestly rights and privileges. Other firstborn Israelites made like demands. Soon, 250 like-minded men, chiefs from the tribes, joined him in conspiracy. Dothan and Abiram, and, for a while, On, who were of the tribe of Reuben (first son of Jacob), added their power to the movement against Moses and Aaron. It was hateful envy uttering its criticism, when the conspiracy spake to the leaders of Israel. They paraded their conservatism, and asked for the old ways. Moses was unshaken in his trust of Jehovah. Next day, according to his arranging, the contumacious rebels were made silent. Before the altar of Jehovah, Korah and his troop assembled, and taking their censers, made the attempt to prove before Jehovah their right to the priesthood. The censers were ready; Jehovah spoke to Moses and Aaron: "Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment."<sup>1</sup> The magnanimous Moses could only beg in intercession. Aaron joined in the prayer. The congregation was saved; but Dothan and Abiram were swallowed up as the earth opened beneath them; Korah was destroyed; and the 250 chiefs of Israel were consumed before Jehovah's tabernacle. The entire camp had waited, in sympathy with the revolt. They cried out upon Moses and Aaron: "Ye have killed the people of Jehovah!"<sup>2</sup> Jehovah answered their disloyalty with a plague, and, as if to picture for us One who is even now our High Priest and Savior, Aaron himself, with a censer filled from the altar, ran "into the midst of the congregation"<sup>3</sup> "and put on incense, and made atonement for the people."<sup>4</sup> Nearly 15,000 had perished, but the plague was stayed.

Peace after storm! Up in the most holy place, in the ark of the covenant with Jehovah, were laid the rods of rulership. Each rod was an emblem of government, and tribal unity, and hope. Each bore the name of the prince of that people. Dawn had come after the day of death, and "behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi had budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded

almonds."<sup>1</sup> True priesthood is always full of unsuspected vitality; and history, like Israel, preserves Aaron's budding rod in the ark of the covenant with the pot of manna.

The weary-footed years came and went, as this pilgrim throng met the perpetually new demands of social life, compelling them to add to the statute book the laws accordant with the "Ten Words." They were thus giving fresh illustration of the vitality of those principles, as their life developed unforeseen crises in the commonweal. Thirty-seven years of wandering did nothing to create an antidote for old age, as Moses journeyed with them; and in the assertion of Jehovah that a new generation must come to enter Canaan, with Caleb and Joshua, even the great emancipator's hope was swept away. As yet, there seems to have been no realization of this. But his heart-fiber had been most cruelly worn by the people unresponsive to the call of Jehovah. They had, at length, swung round through these thirty-seven years, and again they camped in the region of Kadesh. A new generation had come; the old was nearly gone. Only five remained to talk over the memories and hopes of that first footstep taken toward freedom—Moses, Aaron, Miriam, Caleb, and Joshua. Miriam's voice had led their exultation and song for the last time. Now, with solemn pageant and general lamentation, the brothers joined the procession which bore her dust to the tomb. The cords which bound the aged lawgiver to earth were breaking; and yet it was as though Jehovah had imposed upon him a new task, to lead this younger band to Canaan. Kadesh, years ago, as we have seen, had been the place of God's judgment against Israel's unbelief; just there Israel's new faith must now begin its militant career. The belief with which we finally triumph has its birthplace where the unbelief by which we failed was smitten down.

At such places, even a Moses is in peril. The people are again thirsty; springs had vanished, and the torrent-beds were dry. The old cry of disappointment, reproach and censure came to the strained and tired leader. What could be done? Was not the rock struck at Rephidim? But Moses and Aaron are commanded this time

<sup>1</sup> Numbers xvi, 21.

<sup>2</sup> Numbers xvi, 41.

<sup>3</sup> Numbers xvi, 47.

<sup>4</sup> Numbers xvi, 47.

<sup>1</sup> Numbers xvii, 8.



to *speak*, not to *strike*—first the natural; afterward and *now*, the spiritual. The people seemed so rebellious that the temper of Moses was lost. "He spake unadvisedly with his lips"<sup>1</sup> to the stupid, faithless throng. In this, he showed his lack of faith in Jehovah; and more, he exemplified a strange doubt by declining to command the crag. He struck it, as aforetime, with his rod. The water came, but Moses had lost a more valuable treasure. He had struck it; and he had struck it twice. It was a defeat of Jehovah's purpose in the heart of his servant Moses. Jehovah had a right to a faith, upon the part of Moses, that had grown to perfectly trust the Infinite, in method and result. Anger with men is, at root, infidelity with God.

Canaan was far away from the noble leader: only so majestic a character could have made so vast and limitless a distance between himself and his goal. The consequence came; Moses and Aaron were excluded from entering Canaan. At length, the mediatorship of Moses has drawn toward its end, as human mediatorship must. It is with the aid of such a single dark moment of his faltering faith that we behold the grandeur of his life.

Again he proves his kingliness of soul and the fact that Jehovah uses the humanity which has once failed, as he asks the kings of Edom and Moab to allow Israel to pass through these dominions. It was the easiest and nearest way to the entrance of Palestine. Moses pleaded kinship with them and God's providence to a suffering people, but in vain. He promised, also, to use only the great roadway. Esau's children were stubborn to Jacob's descendants, and they gathered their warriors. But while the commissioners of Israel tarried, Israel moved eastward through Wady Murreh to Moserah, or Mount Hor. Here the roads opened for them. But, before they advance farther, the breaking of a still more tender cord was to prepare Moses for his own departure. Here Aaron died. The picture is pathetic and sublime. Two old men ascend the height with a young man; they are Moses and Aaron with Eleazar. Afar below them is Hebrewdom; beyond is the land of hope. Slowly and solemnly the great priest is unclothed; the sacred garments of his august office one by one are taken from Aaron, the man who is to die, and presented to Eleazar, his son and successor, who is to live. The splendid past is passing into the hands of the glorious present. At last his soul has gone to Jehovah's presence. "And when all the congregation saw that Aaron was dead, they mourned for Aaron thirty days, even all the house of Israel."<sup>2</sup>

Meantime the messengers returned, and hostile Edom was upon them. The foe was so situated that Israel must retreat. A detour was made which took the Hebrew army far to the south, by Gudgodah and Jotbath. Here at a turn in the route, the Canaanitish "king of Arad, which dwelt in the South, fought against Israel and took some of them prisoners."<sup>1</sup> This dreadful fate rankled in the hearts of the Hebrews; and there the vow was made, to be kept in bloody history after many years, that the cities of Canaan should be utterly destroyed.

They now moved along the head of the gulf of Akaba, north of Ezion-Geber, toward Moab. It was in this region that, once again, the hosts of Hebrews knew the horrors of thirst. Again they failed to rely on Jehovah; and the bitter reproaches rose to heaven. It is a land where travelers of to-day encounter multitudes of red and fiery spotted serpents. At that hour these venomous creatures fell upon the helpless army, wounding them to death. Moses was here commanded to make a brazen serpent—perhaps more nearly copper-colored—and place it upon a pole; and Jehovah promised that whoever looked upon it should be healed. Christianity has found in this a richly suggestive prophecy of Christ—human as sin, healing quickly and perfectly, the one freely-offered remedy for sin. Surely, the seed of the woman has bruised the serpent's head, though the serpent has stung his heel.

On toward the goal the throng advanced, probably along the very track which is still the path of commerce from the city associated with the conversion of Saul of Tarsus to the city associated with the prophet of Islam. Crossing Zered, a brook, they found pastures in Moab. Rejoicing in the luscious green along the banks of Arnon, they could see Engedi; and, as they advanced from well to well, they filled the ravines with echoes of their singing. As out of the triumphant feeling which swelled in Israel's breast when the Red Sea was passed, there came their national anthem: so here, in Moab, where the wells were crystal fountains, some of the finest of the Hebrew lyrics were born. Commanded to leave Moab unharmed and the descendants of Lot unhurt, they besought Moab and the land of Ammon for a peaceful passage, but in vain. The Ammonites were in no condition for war. Sihon of the Amorites had just despoiled them of a large territory. They asked safe passage of him, also in vain. From their camp at Kedemoth they were compelled to go as hostiles. Sihon was defeated. Israel was supreme over a large area between the Arnon and Jabbok, and the

<sup>1</sup> Psalm cvi, 33.

<sup>2</sup> Numbers xx, 29.

<sup>1</sup> Numbers xxi, 1.



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HILL OF THE CANAANITES.

height of Hesbon was theirs. Songs broke forth, to echo through the poetry of all time. Another invasion followed to the north. Og of Gilead and Bashan, the ruler over a rich pasture and woodland, fell before the men of Reuben, and Gad, and Manasseh, who had leagued themselves with Ammon. At last, the capital, Edrei, fell: and even Kenath—yielding to the hornets (a common plague) and Israel—succumbed with sixty fallen cities, which, one by one, made it possible for the Hebrews to claim the whole of the land east of the Jordan. The camp was pitched near the junction of the Jordan with the Dead Sea; and it appeared that a complete conquest was only a question of a short time.

At this moment, terrorized Moab employed the weird and magic arts which only such a man as Balak, "the Spoiler," might summon. The darksome art and artifices were potent, at least in the fancy of the age. A hundred incantations and imprecations have drifted down to us from that credulous and fearful time. The last energy of Moses was to be employed against this fascinating superstition and the genius of one of its masters. Balak, king of Moab, sent for Balaam, the subtlest and most acute of soothsayers. He came from the old land of Abraham. He had abundance of orthodox phraseology, and a clear title to the realm of divination. God had not, even in Balaam's section of humanity, left himself unwitnessed. He had every quality and aspect, habit and method, of a real prophet of Jehovah. He was as much an enigma to Israel as he is to the scholar of to-day. He behaved entirely and heroically faithful to Jehovah, for only what Jehovah gave him to say, would he say. He seemed, even when he would, to be unable to charm or bewilder Israel by enchantments. His life and its outflow was a mixture, like his character, of paganism and true religion. He was ready for any sacrifice to Jehovah; yet he actually sacrificed to idols and ate their feasts. He said piously enough to the messenger of Balak: "Get you into your land: for

the Lord refuseth to give me leave to go with you;"<sup>1</sup> and yet his evident desire to go bore fruit finally, for the heathen anger suggested the means of injuring the people of Jehovah. When he refused to join his forces to Balak's scheme, the Midianitish sheiks came to the latter's help. Israel was to be seduced by their obedient women. The abomination was awfully effective. It was a frightfully dark moment for Moses; for nameless iniquity through impure and shameful rites threatened again to place Canaan farther away. The ugly evil imperiled Israel's hope; time was short for the old statesman; it was the hour for the surgeon's knife, and Moses commanded the hanging of their heads before the sun. A dreadful plague came also and left 24,000 Hebrew corpses. It was stayed only by Phinehas, the high priest, a grandson of Aaron, who slew two of the sinners in their riot of evil. Midian also was humbled, all her male population being made a sacrifice. Kings and princes fell; and the most significant death of all was that of Balaam the soothsayer. Unable any longer to remain both pagan and believer, magician and servant of Jehovah, he perished with the royal house of Midian. Clear-headed and courageous indeed were the sagacity and statesmanship of the man who dealt thus with such a man and such a crisis. Yet Balaam must be called a prophet, if ever the foregleams that describe future events of supreme meaning may be said to indicate the prophetic power. As he falls, his lips tremble with the foreseen fate of Israel made captive by Assyria; and we of this nineteenth century of Christianity find him increasingly eloquent, as time moves on, saying: "There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Scepter shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth."<sup>2</sup> Any less comprehensive and self-poised soul than was Moses would have been amazed into powerlessness or dazzled into unfaithfulness; but the situation and the foe were grasped by the hand of trained power.

<sup>1</sup> Numbers xxii, 13.

<sup>2</sup> Numbers xxiv, 17.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### A GREAT CAREER CLOSING—THE CHARACTER OF MOSES.

THE Hebrew chieftain had met his last distinguished foe. These last years had deepened and exalted him; and nothing in all their flight did more to make him receptive of Jehovah's call to final judgment than that event, so dark and yet so flooded with light, which had prevented his entering Canaan, before entering heaven. Moses sinned, yet Moses was a man of genuine sainthood. Not until the experience of victory over sin and a triumph over the consequences of some special sin, like that of the Hebrew leader at the Rock of Kadesh, have come to a soul, has that soul met and found the real meaning of human life. Such men as Moses are of those who at last walk upon "the sea of glass mingled with fire."<sup>1</sup> Principle is so permeated with passion, passion is so clarified and crystallized by principle, that such a character is at once the most perilous and the most safe of God's creations.

The last intimation given to Moses by God that the prophet would not be permitted to enter Canaan, on account of this sin, was met by that loyalty which besought God to appoint his successor. Joshua was set apart, by Moses laying on his hands. He was to be the captain of Israel, but directed in all his larger activity by Urim and Thummim. This direction of the younger general made Moses all the more lonely and sublime. He had been on such terms with Jehovah as to speak with him face to face. His work, however, was done. Pathetic indeed is the entreaty of Moses to "see the good land."<sup>2</sup> Like many others—the greatest of the sons of men—the inspirers of progress, the workers in invention, the heralds of discoveries, the searchers for truth, the foes of evil, the lovers of righteousness—he could not have Canaan; but Pisgah—beneath whose height the landscapes stretched from memory to hope, from history to prophecy—Pisgah was his. From the summit, looking westward, he saw far away the regions about the sacred city; yonder was Bethlehem, to be known as the birthplace of Jesus; and, resting his eye on a nearer spot, he beheld the heights of Hebron. Yonder, on the south, rose Mount Hor, and from the adjacent valley came voiceful memories. Toward the east, there unfolded a boundless meadow and harvest field. On the north were the plains and mountains, Esdrael, Gerizim, Tabor, Gilboa, to be remembered, or to be hallowed, by the prophets, singers, kings, and saints of Israel; and everywhere,

from the far-off mists hanging over Arabia to the summits of Benjamin, and from the purple line of Bozrah to the frowning bastions of Mount Seir, there was for the eye of the old warrior-statesman, who now sat on Pisgah, a vision of the land which must have suggested to him the future opportunities of the race, as Israel might lead and inspire it. His ascent had been slow. The people below had followed him, every eye straining to behold him through the tears of an orphaned nation. They had already been echoing in their hearts the wondrous song which the leader of Israel had uttered—a song which makes prophecy out of history, completing its harmony with such melodies of nature and life as 120 years of life had given to the singer. They felt the air trembling still with the farewell address of the father of his country—an address unequalled by any Washington, filled with that comprehensive statesmanship and holy hope which made Charlemagnes, Alfreds, and Washingtons possible. But now he vanished from Pisgah. He had died "at the mouth of Jehovah," or, as Hebrew story has said, "by the kiss of the Lord." "And no man knoweth the place of his burial unto this day."<sup>1</sup>

At the edge of that unknown grave, the man of ideas, devoted to their championship and fearless in their supremacy, stands at this day to count over the names of earth's true idealists, and to find Moses' stature growing more sublime, as glittering errors fade, outgrown institutions crumble, prejudices retreat, and truth finds her throne. Hither come and camp on heroic ground the soldiers of earth, and, losing nothing of admiration for the resolute sagacity of Alexander, the sober accuracy joined with intuitive power of calculation in Cæsar, the calm contempt for foes which rose from the religious faith of Oliver Cromwell, the constant energy and unfailing readiness of Frederick the Great, the splendid audacity which throbbed from the unequalled egotism of Bonaparte, they agree that a man who, at the Red Sea, at Marah, and Horeb, having gathered a formless and untrained mass of men, to whose hands hundreds of thousands of women and children were clinging, and having transformed them into a sword to crush Egyptian despotism, created a path over deserts and mountain ranges, through the Amalekites, Edomites and Canaanites, unto the goal of his hopes, must have possessed the highest qualities of a great captain. To that unmarked

<sup>1</sup> Revelation xv, 2.

<sup>2</sup> Deuteronomy i, 35.

<sup>1</sup> Deuteronomy xxxiv, 6.

sepulcher journey the souls whose fiber has been made for freedom, and whose instinct is liberty; and, surveying the relics of empires whose law was only an arbitrary commandment, studying the chaos that hurtles on to ruin with the anarchy which eulogizes license, they consider that figure at Sinai the noblest in the history of jurisprudence and civil liberty, that mountain the tallest of earth's heights spiritually, until there were revealed the figure of One whose love is law, and that mountain, named Calvary, where equal rights and an ideal of perfect freedom began to write the state papers of Christendom. Our common manhood rears in that valley, where God buried Moses, its memorial, more enduring than brass, more white than marble, more rich than gold. He had sublime self-restraint with mighty passions. He was jealous for God, and he rebuked jealousy for himself. He was modest without losing his self-respect, humble without fearing the face of armies, or of men. He was kingly in the hours when most men are commonplace, and sympathetic with weakness when most men are irresponsive and unapproachable. His dignity was the result of that self-command which is the result of being commanded by the Almighty alone. His intellect lay so close to his conscience that his insight into moral problems was unerring, and its judgment was the voice of Jehovah. His will was so enfolded with a will diviner than his own, that it made its appeal to the Infinite Resource and rested on Omnipotence. With majestic tread, he entered on the path to spiritual discoveries; and the weight of his character and the importance of the need of constantly greater supplies from God, as he advanced, were answered by such unfoldings of the divine nature and such gifts of hitherto unrevealed truth, as furnished in-

spirations and sanctions to the laws which have guided humanity for 3,000 years. His personal disinterestedness was that which proceeds from a life fixed upon the interests of mankind and Jehovah. His patience was no unthinking, nerveless consent to the slow progress of dumb and blind events: it was the peace of power counting on a force which made every event the manifestation of God and all Hebrew history his revelation. In him were blended the poetical and the practical; indeed, in his life, so did the poetical and practical relate themselves in duty, that the dreamer was always lifting the doer to his vision and the doer was always receiving the dreamer's vision into his work.

"And now beneath the sky the watchers all,  
Angels that keep the homes of Israel,  
Or on high purpose wander o'er the world  
Leading the Gentiles, felt a dark eclipse:  
The greatest ruler among men was gone.  
And from the westward sea was heard a wail,  
A dirge as from the isles of Javanim,  
Crying, 'Who now is left upon the earth  
Like him to teach the right and smite the wrong?'  
And from the East, far o'er the Syrian waste,  
Came slower, sadder the answering dirge:  
'No prophet like him lives or shall arise  
In Israel or the world forevermore.'

"But Israel waited, looking toward the mount,  
Till with the deepening eve the elders came  
Saying, 'His burial is hid with God.  
We stood far off and saw the angels lift  
His corpse aloft until they seemed a star  
That burnt itself away within the sky.'

"The people answered with mute orphaned gaze,  
Looking for what had vanished evermore.  
Then through the gloom without them and within  
The spirit's shaping light, mysterious speech,  
Invisible Will wrought clear in sculptured sound,  
The thought-begotten daughter of the voice,  
Thrilled on their listening sense: 'He has no tomb,  
He dwells not with you dead, but lives as law.'"