

ISRAEL'S EXODUS: PAST AND FUTURE.

GOD'S dealings with the children of Israel in the past, in bringing them out of the land of bondage into the land of promise, were, as we know from 1 Cor. 10, given to us in the Word of God as types, or examples, to teach us how He still deals with His redeemed in delivering them from a worse bondage than that of Egypt. This is the present teaching of the types, but as we have seen on several occasions there is also a future meaning, a prophetic line of teaching, which is full of interest as we study the other prophetic Scriptures.

We have ample warrant for studying in this way the Exodus and the wilderness journeyings, for this part of Israel's history is often compared by the prophets with events in the future, when they will be delivered from their oppressors, brought out, not merely from one country, Egypt, but from the many lands to which they have been driven, and finally restored to their own land.

In these wonderful days when all eyes are turned towards Palestine and the Jews, and when we see active preparations for the fulfilment of prophecy, we could not have a more appropriate subject for our morning's consideration.

The Exodus of the future will be a much greater event than that of the past, and the prophet Jeremiah twice speaks of the contrast, "Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, The Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, The Lord liveth, that

brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither He had driven them : and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers" (Jer. 16. 14, 15 ; 23. 7, 8).

It is an interesting study to trace the parallels between these two great epochs in their history ; for though the order of the details may not be the same, there are many striking points of resemblance and contrast.*

The Oppression.—The oppression in Egypt is in Isaiah 52. 4, 5, compared with the oppression preceding their final deliverance. “ For thus saith the Lord God, My people went down aforetime into Egypt to sojourn there ; and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause. Now therefore, what have I here, saith the Lord, that My people is taken away for nought ? they that rule over them make them to howl, saith the Lord ; and My name continually every day is blasphemed.”

The Covenant Remembered.—At the darkest hour of the night in Egypt, God heard their cry and remembered His covenant with Abraham, “ and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them ” (Ex. 2. 23-25). “ 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 task-masters ; for I know their sorrows ; and I am come down to deliver them ” (Ex. 3. 7-9). “ And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage ; and I have remembered My covenant ” (Ex. 6. 5).

* The parallels are here considered in the historic and not in the prophetic order.

Just as surely as He heard their cry then, so He has heard their cry through these years of sorrow. He says, “I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus” (Jer. 31. 18) ; and when the time has come to deliver them, when their eyes are opened to see something of the reason why they have been thus scattered and oppressed, then God will again remember them in mercy.

We read in Lev. 26. 40-42, when they acknowledge “that also they have walked contrary unto Me ; And that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies ; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity : Then will I remember My covenant with Jacob, and also My covenant with Isaac, and also My covenant with Abraham will I remember ; and I will remember the land.”

His First-born.—He told Moses to “say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord, Israel is My son, even My firstborn” (Ex. 4. 22) ; and He will again give this as a reason for bringing them back to their land. “Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, . . . a great company shall return thither. They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them : I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble : for I am a Father to Israel, and Ephraim is My first-born” (Jer. 31. 8, 9).

Increased greatly.—Just before He was about to bring them out of Egypt “He increased His people greatly” (Psa. 105. 24) ; and “the more they afflicted them the more they multiplied and grew” (Ex. 1. 12). On account of their unbelief and disobedience afterwards they were scattered among the nations and “left few in number” (Deut. 28. 62) : but they will again be multiplied. “And I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and

will bring them again to their folds ; and they shall be fruitful and increase" (Jer. 23. 3). "Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered" (Hos. 1. 10). "I will hiss for them, and gather them ; for I have redeemed them : and they shall increase as they have increased" (Zech. 10. 8). This word "hiss" is the same as that used in Judges 5. 16, and translated in the R.V. "pipings for the flocks." Before the Shepherd of Israel leads His flock back to their own pasture-land He will wonderfully increase their number. Of recent years, we are told that the number of Jews has enormously increased. They have multiplied rapidly, so that in spite of persecutions their numbers are vastly greater than fifty or sixty years ago.

A Burden.—The children of Israel were a cause of anxiety to Pharaoh on account of their having become "stronger than their enemies," and this was the cause of his oppression ; but finally the Egyptians were eager to get rid of them. "Egypt was glad when they departed : for the fear of them fell upon them" (Psa. 105. 38). "And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste ; for they said, We be all dead men" (Ex. 12. 33).

Before they are restored to their own land Israel will have become a burden and a source of danger to the nations, so that they will be glad to be rid of them. We know that this has already been the case in some countries. They are compared to "a lion amongst the beasts of the forest," and "a young lion among the flocks of sheep" (Mic. 5. 8) ; to a "hearth of fire among the wood," and "a torch of fire in a sheaf" (Zech. 12. 6).

Bowing Down.—The Egyptians came and bowed down themselves to Moses (Ex. 11. 8), and it is said in Isa. 60. 14, "The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee ;

and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet."

None Left Behind.—Moses refused to leave any of the people or their possessions in Egypt. He said, "There shall not an hoof be left behind" (Ex. 10. 26) ; and when God gathers them once more out of the midst of the nations, He will have "left none of them any more there" (Ezek. 39. 28).

With Great Substance.—Although in Egypt Israel had been a nation of slaves, they came out "with great substance," as prophesied in Gen. 15. 14 (see Ex. 3. 21, 22 ; 12. 35, 36). "He brought them forth also with silver and gold" (Psa. 105. 37) ; and when the nations combine to bring Israel back to their land we read, "Surely the isles shall wait for Me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them" (Isa. 60. 9).

"Let My People Go."—Again and again Moses and Aaron delivered God's message to Pharaoh, "Let My people go" ; and the same proclamation will again go forth. (Might we not almost say it *has* gone forth?) "I will say to the north, Give up ; and to the south, Keep not back : bring My sons from far, and My daughters from the ends of the earth" (Isa. 43. 6). But "Pharaoh hardened his heart, . . . neither would he let them go" (Ex. 8. 32) ; and so has it been hitherto with Israel, "All that took them captives held them fast ; they refused to let them go" (Jer. 50. 33).

Judgments.—It was only after great judgments had fallen upon Pharaoh and his land (Ex. 6. 6 ; 7. 4), that Israel was finally delivered ; and when they are restored to their own land, God says, "they shall dwell with confidence, when I have executed judgments upon all those that despise them round about them ; and they shall know that I am the Lord their God" (Ezek. 28. 26). "Therefore all they that devour thee shall be de-

voured ; and all thine adversaries, every one of them, shall go into captivity ; and they that spoil thee shall be a spoil, and all that prey upon thee will I give for a prey" (Jer. 30. 16).

In Micah 7. 15, we read, "According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I show unto him marvellous things." The judgments past and future, both those which fall on Israel and on their enemies, may therefore be compared. The greater number of these judgments evidently fall when Israel is restored to the land, during the time that they are under the terrible oppression of Antichrist, and before they are delivered from their enemies at the coming of the Lord in His glory ; for after they have been allowed to return, the nations headed by Antichrist will make war against them and try to exterminate them. Just as Pharaoh said, "I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil" (Ex. 15. 9) ; so the enemies of Israel at the last will say, "Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation ; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance" (Psa. 83. 4).

A Furnace.—The sufferings through which they passed were compared to a furnace, "The Lord hath taken you, and brought you forth out of the iron furnace, even out of Egypt" (Deut. 4. 20) ; and Israel will again have to pass through the fire, "I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried" (Zech. 13. 9). This is probably the fire referred to in Matt. 3. 11. "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire"—two separate baptisms—the fire, as explained in the following verse, being that of judgment. While rejoicing in the thought of their return, we cannot forget that "the time of Jacob's trouble" is still before them.

The Plagues.—The descriptions in Revelation remind us of many of the plagues of Egypt. Water is turned into blood in Rev. 8. 8, 9, and this corresponds with the first plague. There is

one verse in the Psalms which seems to suggest that the Egyptian plagues were brought about by the agency of evil spirits. “He cast upon them the fierceness of His anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending evil angels among them” (Psa. 78. 49). If rightly translated “evil angels,” the parallel is still more striking. Evil spirits, like frogs, are seen in Rev. 16. 13, 14 ; and others, like locusts, are described in chapter 9. 2-11, reminding us of the second and eighth plagues. Hail and fire, as in the seventh plague, are sent in Rev. 8. 7 ; and hail also in chapter 16. 21. Darkness, the ninth plague, is mentioned in Rev. 6. 12 ; 8. 12 ; 16. 10 ; while the boils and blains of the sixth plague are repeated at the outpouring of the first vial in chapter 16. 2.

Before God sends the hail of judgment upon the earth during the great Tribulation, He will gather out of the field all His own people of this dispensation. There is a beautiful expression in connection with the seventh plague in Ex. 9. 19. God says, through Moses, “Send therefore now and gather . . . all that thou hast in the field, for upon every man and beast which shall be found in the field and shall not be brought home, the hail shall come down upon them.” This is what God Himself will do. We shall have been “brought Home” first, out of the field of the world before these things take place.

Pharaoh’s heart was not softened by the plagues ; though he said, “I have sinned,” he went on and “sinned yet more”; and finally, when the children of Israel had gone forth, he got ready his chariot, summoned his army, and pursued them. When the judgments described in Revelation are poured upon the earth men will grow more and more rebellious against God. At first we read they “hid themselves” (Rev. 6. 15-17) ; then that they “repented not” (chap. 9. 20, 21) ; then that they blasphemed the name of God (chap. 16. 9, 11) ; and lastly, all combine together

“to make war against Him that sat on the horse, and against His army” (chapter 19. 19).

When the plagues fell upon Egypt, God's hand was over Israel, so that neither flies nor pestilence, hail nor darkness, came upon the land of Goshen (Ex. 8. 22 ; 9. 4, 26 ; 10. 23 ; 11. 7) ; and so we read in Rev. 7., before the opening of the seventh seal, the 144,000 from all the tribes of Israel were to be sealed in their foreheads before the earth, or the sea, or the trees were hurt.

Redemption.—God put “a division” between His people and Pharaoh's (Ex. 8. 23) ; or, as it is in the margin, “redemption” ; and the Lord said to His disciples, concerning the last days, “And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads ; for your redemption draweth nigh” (Luke 21. 28). As of old, Moses exhorted them to remember that they were bondmen in Egypt, and the Lord their God redeemed them thence (Deut. 24. 18) ; so again it will be said, “For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he” (Jer. 31. 11).

The Two Witnesses.—God sent two messengers to Pharaoh, “He sent Moses His servant ; and Aaron whom He had chosen. They shewed His signs among them, and wonders in the land of Ham” (Psa. 105. 26, 27) ; and during the great Tribulation He will again send two witnesses, one of whom, like Moses, will “have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will” (Rev. 11. 6).

As Moses and Aaron were opposed by Jannes and Jambres (2 Tim. 3. 8), so the beast and the false prophet will withstand the two witnesses. These magicians of Egypt tried to imitate the plagues ; and the false prophet will also imitate the miracles of the two witnesses. “And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men” (like the other great witness of Elijah cha-

racter) “And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast” (Rev. 13. 13, 14).

The Crossing of the Red Sea.—The journey of the people to the land is compared in Isa. 11. to the crossing of the Red Sea ; for we read, “The Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea ; and with His mighty wind shall He shake His hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make men go over dryshod. And there shall be an highway for the remnant of His people, which shall be left, from Assyria ; like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt” (vers. 15, 16).

The Song of Moses.—Immediately following this comparison we have, in the 12th chapter, the record of their song, “In that day thou shalt say, . . . Behold, God is my salvation ; I will trust, and not be afraid : for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song ; He also is become my salvation” (Isa. 12. 2). The very words that Moses and the children of Israel sang when they stood triumphant on the shores of the Red Sea. We find them also in the 118th Psalm, where they are evidently the language of Israel, as they joyfully recognise their Messiah who has delivered them out of the hands of Antichrist. Once more, in Rev. 15, we have a reference to the song of Moses, “And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire : and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand” (not on the shores of the Red Sea but) “on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb” (verses 2, 3).

When the remnant sings this song there will be no wilderness between them and the land, as when Israel came out of Egypt and crossed the Red Sea. Their wanderings will be over, and they will be safe in the heavenly land.

The Wilderness Experience.—But Israel will have had her wilderness experience, for we read in Hosea 2. 14, 15, “Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her . . . and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt.” God’s dealings with Israel in the wilderness are again compared with His future dealings in Ezek. 20. 34-36, “And I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out. And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face. Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord God.”

Before and Behind.—They were safely guided all the way. As Moses reminded them at the close of their journey, “The Lord thy God is He, which goeth over before thee”; and when their enemies threatened them, “the angel of God which went before the camp of Israel removed and went behind them” (Ex. 14. 19); and so will it be in their final journey. “Ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight, for the Lord will go before you ; and the God of Israel will be your rereward” (Isa. 52. 12).

The Pillar of Cloud.—The pillar of cloud that rested over the camp will once more be seen. “Pillars of smoke” will be amongst the “wonders in the heavens, and in the earth” (Joel 2. 30) : “And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night : for upon all the glory shall be a defence. And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain” (Isa. 4. 5, 6).

A Sanctuary.—This passage links the pillar of cloud with the Tabernacle. He who said to Moses, “Let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them,” promises that He will then set His “sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore ; My tabernacle also shall be with them” (Ezek. 37. 26-28).

Nourished in the Wilderness.—They were nourished in the wilderness by manna from heaven and by water from the rock, and when the Jews flee from the wrath of Antichrist into another wilderness, God has promised that they will again be nourished. “And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent” (Rev. 12. 14).

The Rebels.—When the children of Israel murmured against God in the wilderness, judgment fell upon them and the word went forth, “Your carcases shall fall in this wilderness ; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, . . . which have murmured against Me” (Num. 14. 29). It will again be so when at the Lord’s coming all the tribes of Israel are summoned to return to the land, for He says in Ezek. 20. 38, “And I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against Me : I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and they shall not enter into the land of Israel : and ye shall know that I am the Lord.”

The King and the False Prophet.—It was during the wilderness days that the children of Israel were confronted by the great plot of Balak and Balaam ; and these two, the king and the soothsayer, are a striking type of the beast and the false prophet who will try to destroy the nation in the last days. Antichrist and his prophet will do their utmost to frustrate God’s purposes for Israel, and having failed to curse them will endeavour to cause them to deny their God

by worshipping the beast and his image. Both Balaam and Balak are referred to in the letter to the church at Pergamos ; and though this is a picture of church declension, may it not also have reference to Israel's history in days still future when the Church has been taken away ? “But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication” (Rev. 2. 14).

Nations that Refuse Help.—Special condemnation was pronounced against those nations who would not help Israel on their journey, the Amalekites, Ammonites, and Moabites (Deut. 25. 17, 19 ; 23. 3, 4) ; and when the children of Israel are restored to their land, the Lord says, “The nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish : yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted” (Isa. 60. 12). He brought them “forth out of the land of Egypt, in the sight of the heathen” (Lev. 26. 45), and He will again be “sanctified in them in the sight of the heathen” (Ezek. 28. 25).

Forty Years.—More than once in their history Israel passed through an all important forty years, the number forty standing for a time of full probation. The words in Psalm 95, quoted in Hebrews, “Forty years was I grieved with this generation,” seem to have a double application, first to the wilderness days, then to the last forty years of their history as a nation in the past, beginning with the Lord's public rejection by Israel and ending with the destruction of Jerusalem, A.D. 70. Though the sentence had gone forth the Lord did not destroy them at once. He patiently waited and gave them one opportunity after another, as pictured in the parable of the fig-tree (Luke 13, 6-9), and recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. This second forty years began with the three and a half years of the Lord's ministry. It has been thought by some that there will probably be another forty years at the

end, closing with the three and a half years of the great Tribulation. This is only conjecture. We cannot say that it will be so, but it may be that there will be a gap between the coming of the Lord to the air for His people, and the seven years of the last “week” of Daniel.

The Covenants.—The covenant made with Israel in the wilderness is contrasted in Jer. 31. 31-34, with the new covenant. “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which My covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord.” This new covenant will be written not on tables of stone. “But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts.”

Brought In.—The children of Israel were brought out of Egypt for one purpose, that they might be brought into the land which the Lord had promised. “He brought us out from thence, that He might bring us in, to give us the land which He sware unto our fathers” (Deut. 6. 23). He was about to give it them as “a heritage” (Ex. 6. 8). So, when He brings them back it will be with the same purpose. The land will once more become their inheritance (Ezek. 47. 14), and it will be the same land about which He sware to Abraham. “And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall bring you into the land of Israel, into the country for the which I lifted up Mine hand to give it to your fathers” (Ezek. 20. 42; Jer. 30. 3). They sang in triumph at the Red Sea of His purpose of planting them in the mountain of His inheritance (Ex. 15. 17); but they were only planted there for a time. Though He brought the vine out of Egypt and planted it and prepared room before it, the vine was cut

down (Psa. 80) ; but He says in Isa. 65. 8, 9) : “Thus saith the Lord, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not ; for a blessing is in it : so will I do for My servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all. And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah, an inheritor of My mountains : and Mine elect shall inherit it, and My servants shall dwell there.” And in Jer. 32. 41, “I will plant them in this land assuredly with My whole heart and with My whole soul.”

Moses' song tells us that there was an object in thus planting the people in the land. It was this : “The Lord shall reign for ever” (Ex. 15. 18). But it was not long before He had to say to Samuel : “They have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them.” When He came in person they said, “We will not have this Man to reign over us”; but when they are brought back to their land they will not again reject their King. “The Lord shall reign over them in Mount Zion ; from henceforth, even for ever” (Mic. 4. 7).

Similar Expressions.—Many expressions are repeated in connection with the Exodus past and the Exodus future. For instance He will bring them forth as of old “with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm” (Deut. 26. 8 ; with Ezek. 20. 34). He will again break “the bands of their yoke” (Lev. 26. 13 ; with Ezek. 34. 27). “I am the Lord your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that ye should not be their bondmen ; and I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you go upright.” “They shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I am the Lord, when I have broken the bands of their yoke, and delivered them out of the hand of those that served themselves of them.” As He led Israel through the wilderness “He kept him as the apple of His eye” (Deut. 32. 10), and still Israel is dear to Him, so that the prophet can say, “He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of His eye” (Zech. 2. 8). He “made His own people to

go forth like sheep, and guided them in the wilderness like a flock" (Psa. 78. 52); and once more He will show Himself to be the "Shepherd of Israel" (Psa. 80. 1), when "He that scattered Israel will gather him and keep him as a shepherd doth his flock" (Jer. 31. 10).

"My People," "Your God."—In Ex. 6. 7, the Lord says to Moses, "I will take you to Me for a people, and I will be to you a God," and He renews this promise in Jer. 30. 22, "And ye shall be My people, and I will be your God."

"That ye may know."—His own glory will be the reason for His again remembering His people, just as it was in the past. These are the words He spake by Moses "That ye (Israel) may know that I am the Lord." "In this thou (Pharaoh) shalt know that I am the Lord" (Ex. 10. 2; 7. 17). He will first teach Israel to know him (Ezek. 39, 28), and then, by means of Israel the nations will learn (Ezek. 36. 23; 38. 16).

In Ezek. 20 the past and the future are compared, and this expression, "that ye may know that I am the Lord," is again and again repeated in connection with both (see verses 12, 20 as to the past, and verses 38, 42, 44 as to the future). When He brought them out of Egypt "He saved them for His name's sake, that He might make His mighty power known" (Psa. 106. 8; Ex. 9. 16), and this expression also occurs several times in Ezek. 20 as to the past in vers. 9 and 22, and as to the future in ver. 44. Another reason given in Exodus was that Pharaoh might know "that I am the Lord in the midst of the earth" (chap. 8. 22), and again, "that thou mayest know how that the earth is the Lord's" (chap. 9. 29). And by and by all will learn, through Israel, that He is indeed "in the midst of the earth," and that "the earth is the Lord's."

Prophetic Wilderness Ritual.—When studying the Feasts of the Lord, at our meeting in May, 1916, we were impressed with the fact that much, if not all, of the Levitical ritual had a prophetic

as well as a typical meaning. I should like to call your attention to one group of three types which seem to have special reference to the events of which we have been speaking to-day. Linked with the first Exodus they were evidently ordained with a view to the last Exodus, for they tell us of God's great provision for Israel's deep need at the end of their long wilderness wandering, before He can once more dwell amongst them. They need to be cleansed from the defilement caused by the murder of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The keeping of the passover in the second month, in Num. 9. 6-11, has already been mentioned by us in connection with the first of the feasts. The law enjoined that those who were "unclean by reason of a dead body, or in a journey afar off," were to keep the passover a month later than the ordained time—in the second instead of the first month. We saw that this was a double picture of the nation of Israel. The Jews are defiled by reason of the dead body of the Lord Jesus, and the scattered tribes are on a journey afar off.

God's great inquest over the death of His Son is described in Deut. 21. If a dead body were found "lying in the field," careful measurements were to be made, and the city "next unto the slain man" was to be accounted guilty. The dead body of the Lord Jesus was one day seen by God "lying in the field." "The field is the world." Who was guilty? He took His measuring line and Jerusalem was proved to be the city next to the slain Man. The inhabitants could not say as the elders did in this chapter, "Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it." They did not pray: "Lay not innocent blood unto Thy people Israel's charge;" for in their blind ignorance of what it meant they cried instead, "His blood be on us and on our children." In this chapter we have the double

type. The Lord Jesus was not only the One found slain in the field, but He was typified by the heifer whose death put away the guilt of the murderer, so that the city next to Him might be forgiven.

There is one more wilderness type which seems to have reference to Israel's need of this special cleansing. It is the ritual described in Numbers 19, connected with the water of separation and the ashes of the red heifer, the one ordinance in the Book of the wilderness wanderings. Two or three references in the later prophets seem to indicate clearly the great prophetic meaning underlying the type. While there is deep spiritual teaching in the chapter for God's people of the present dispensation, as to the holiness of God, and His hatred of defilement, there is important teaching as to His provision for Israel's need in the day of their restoration. I do not believe that we can understand the chapter without seeing this prophetic significance. The cleansing by means of the water of separation and the ashes of the heifer was for defilement caused by contact with a dead body, and this is a picture of Israel's condition, as we see by a striking reference in Haggai. They are defiled by a dead body. "Then said Haggai, If one that is unclean by a dead body touch any of these, shall it be unclean? And the priests answered and said, It shall be unclean. Then answered Haggai, and said, So is this people, and so is this nation before Me, saith the Lord; and so is every work of their hands; and that which they offer there is unclean" (Hag. 2. 13, 14). And when Israel is brought back the true meaning of the wilderness type of Num. 19 will be seen. The water of separation will be sprinkled upon them to cleanse them from their defilement, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean" (Ezek. 36. 25). It is to this type that Zechariah refers, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabit-

ants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness" (Zech. 13. 1).

What the Law could not do.—When the children of Israel had reached the end of the forty years' wilderness wandering Moses died. He who typified the law could not take them into the land. "Moses My servant is dead." He could take them no further, but he handed them over to Joshua—God's Salvation. This is all that the law can do. It is powerless to bring Israel into the place of blessing. None but their Joshua and ours can do this. When the face of Moses shone from his sight of the glory of God, he put a veil on his face "WHEN he had done speaking with the people" (not "TILL" as in the A.V.), so that they might not see the fading of the glory (Ex. 34. 33-35 R.V.) ; or as we read in 2 Cor. 3, in order "that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished." The apostle adds, "for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament." "The same veil" still hangs between Israel and Moses, so that they have never learned that the ancient glory has faded from the face of Moses, the law. "Which veil is done away in Christ. Nevertheless when it (Israel) shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away," and they will see that instead of the law given by Moses, to which they still cling, "grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Then "they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced," they will acknowledge Him as their Joshua, God's Salvation ; and will gladly follow Him like the leaders of Israel who "answered Joshua saying, All that thou commandest us we will do, and whithersoever thou sendest us we will go" (Josh. 1. 16).

Has the Second Exodus begun?—As we study these wonderful histories and prophecies we naturally ask ourselves such questions as these:—Has the second Exodus begun? Is God again remembering the people in mercy? Are they just about to be brought through the wilder-

ness of nations to the promised land? Is the land already being prepared for them?

Since writing these words a very remarkable answer to some of these questions has been afforded during the last few days. On Friday we read in the morning papers the following thrilling statement:—

“THE JEWS AND PALESTINE.

“Mr. Balfour has sent the following letter to Lord Rothschild:—

Foreign Office,

Nov. 2, 1917.

“Dear Lord Rothschild,—I have much pleasure in conveying to you, on behalf of His Majesty’s Government, the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations which has been submitted to, and approved by, the Cabinet:—

‘His Majesty’s Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object,’ ” etc.

May we not say that this is the most remarkable indication of the speedy fulfilment of prophecy concerning Israel’s restoration that has taken place from the day when they were cut off, indeed the Jews themselves say from the days of Cyrus? Nothing like it has happened before. And it is not merely a question of words. British troops are fighting on the sacred soil of Palestine, endeavouring to clear it of Turkish domination.

For nearly 2,000 years Israel, as a nation, has been exiled from the land. Year by year they have ended their passover celebration with the words, “Next year in Jerusalem”! It almost takes our breath away to think that at last “the set time” seems almost to have come.*

* It has been objected that this proposed return would be but a prelude to great sorrows, and that therefore we ought not to rejoice. But in so doing we are like travellers who have climbed a lofty hill and so can look beyond the dark valley of “Jacob’s trouble,” and see afar the sun-lit mountain top of Israel’s glory: just as our Lord Jesus, in John 17, looked, not at the Cross, but at the coming glory.

We need not wonder that, as *The Jewish World* (Nov. 14th) expresses it, the Jewish people "are just now welcoming with bounding hearts the opportunity which is presenting itself for their becoming free once again as a people."

Commenting on the letter, it describes it as "marking for all time an epoch in Jewish history," and continues:—

· "This historic letter is assuredly one of the most memorable documents in the archives of Israel. By this declaration the latent nationhood of the race is formally recognised by the greatest Empire in the world as a political fact which should become part of the political constitution of mankind. . . . An ideal so fortified, so consecrated, has ceased to be a dream. It stands in the forefront of practical politics.

"ENDING OUR EXILE.

"It means that at last the long years of the Exile are perceptibly drawing to a close! We look back on those dark epochs, passed behind Ghetto gates, and illumined by the flames of the stake, with feelings of pain, qualified by a satisfaction at the endurance and heroism of our people. If ever a nation earned its right to survive the Jewish nation has earned it in its two thousand years of martyrdom. But now the long, dark night is to pass away, and the homeless, buffeted Jew appears destined for his ancient home once again. No longer is he to hang his head as an intruder and an outcast among the nations. No more need he be a suppliant in every Court and Chancellery. Jewry is to take its place again in its own land, and speak in the ears of the world with the proud mien of a people that is working out its own destiny and does not shrink from its burdens and responsibilities. There is not a Jew in the world to-day who ought not to feel his moral stature growing and a new spirit, a

new hope, a new resolution—aye, and a new task—entering into his life.

“GRATITUDE TO BRITAIN.

“In this joyous hour we English Jews turn with feelings of deepest pride and reverence to great and glorious Britain, mother of free nations and protectress of the oppressed, who has thus taken the lead in the Jewish restoration. The friend of our people for generations, who has raised her voice times out of number for our suffering martyrs, never was she truer to her noble traditions than to-day—never more England than now! In the time to come, when Jewry, free and prosperous, lives a contented and, as we all hope, a lofty life in Palestine, it will look with never-failing gratitude to the Power which crowned its centuries of humanitarianism by a grand act that linked Jewish destinies with those of the freest democracy in the world. . . .

“Here, indeed, is the answer, the encouraging and heartening response, to the prayer of all Israel throughout the ages—‘ and bring us back speedily to our own land.’ For it is ‘ our own land ’ that is now denominated to become the centrum of world-Jewry, because round our regathered people in Palestine will spin the future destiny of Israel the world over.”

The leader in *The Jewish Chronicle* (Nov. 9th) is headed—

“A JEWISH TRIUMPH.

“With one step the Jewish cause has made a great bound forward. . . . Amidst all that is so dark and dismal and tragic throughout the world, there has thus arisen for the Jews a great light. It is the perceptible lifting of the cloud of centuries, the palpable sign that the Jew—condemned for two thousand years to unparalleled wrong—is at last coming to his right. The prospect has

at last definitely opened of a rectification of the Jew's anomalous position among the nations of the earth. He is to be given the opportunity and the means whereby, in place of being a hyphe-nation, he can become a nation. Instead of, as Jew, filling a place at best equivocal and doubtful, even to himself and always with an apologetic cringing inseparable from his position, he can—as Jew—stand proud and erect, endowed with national being. In place of being a wanderer in every clime, there is to be a Home for him in his ancient land. The day of his exile is to be ended. . . . Questions of religion, of race and all others which to-day are set up and tend to confuse Jewish issues, will have no significance in face of the fact that the world will have recognised Jews as a nation.”

Perhaps the most striking paragraph, in view of our subject this morning, is the following extract from the same paper :—

“ANNUS MIRABILIS.

“The year 1917 will always stand out as one of the most wonderful in all the long Jewish annals. In this amazing twelve-month two events of surpassing importance to Jews have occurred. The race has witnessed the greatest act of emanicipation in its history, and, for the first time since the days of Cyrus, a great Government has hailed the Jews as one among the family of nations. The Egyptian exodus—eternal theme that it is—freed six hundred thousand Jews ; the Russian emanicipation liberated six millions. For two thousand years the Jews have wandered over the face of the globe—the ‘fugitive and vagabond’ among the peoples. The peace promises to end at a stroke that monumental tale of homelessness. . . . At this great time it is also well to bear in mind that . . . the resettling of the Jewish people in

Palestine; while it ends a struggle of ages, opens a new chapter of profoundest consequences."

Another paragraph in *The Jewish World* is headed:—

"WHAT IT MEANS TO THE WORLD.

"... The liberation of the Jewish nation has its meaning for the world. A people that has withstood oppression for 2,000 years, and clung persistently to its ideals, is not a force with which the world can dispense. When the destruction that rages to-day ceases, and the era of re-construction sets in, mankind will have need of the moral and spiritual power and impulse of the Jewish people. The people who gave the moral law to the world will proclaim it afresh assuredly. The accents of Sinai will be heard again addressed to all peoples of all creeds. That is something of what Jewish emancipation will mean to humanity as a whole."

We see by these closing sentences that "the same veil" is yet upon their eyes. Their ears have not yet been opened to hear the accents of Calvary.

Turning from these most interesting Jewish comments we ask ourselves "with bounding hearts,"

What does it mean for us?—Some of us have, for a long time, been eagerly scanning the horizon for signs of the approaching Day, and now it seems to us as though we could actually discover the first tints of dawn. And our hearts are thrilled with joy, for we know that if this be so indeed, then we may confidently expect that the Morning Star will very soon be seen. For before the Lord appears for Israel as "the Sun of Righteousness with healing in His wings" He will appear for His people as the bright and the Morning Star.

It is no wonder that Christians on all sides are beginning to believe that the Lord's coming for His Church must be very near.

As Mrs. Walton has so sweetly expressed it :—

“ When we were little children, and heard of Jesu's love,

We often wished that He would come, and take us all above,

But the Day is nearer now,

Far nearer—

And the signs of His approach

Far clearer !

And oft with childish fancy, at the closing of the day,

We hoped that in those golden clouds the King was on His way ;

But the Day is nearer now,

Far nearer—

And the signs of His approach

Far clearer !

Lord, we are growing older, those days and years are fled ;

And time and change have done their work ; and some we love are dead ;

But the Day is nearer now,

Far nearer—

And the signs of Thine approach

Far clearer !

Lord, make us ever ready, as each day hurries by,

To raise the welcome shout of joy—‘ The Lord our King is nigh !’

But the day is nearer now,

Far nearer—

And the signs of Thine approach

Far clearer !”

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