



No. 2.

THE RED SEA; OR, "SAVED."

EXODUS XIV.

(Extracted from "The Gospel Messenger.")



HERE is a very striking comment in the New Testament upon this passage in Israel's history. "By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned" (Heb. xi. 29). It is the striking contrast between the pathway of faith and the pathway of nature—the pathway of the man of the world, in plain language.

God's Word always describes things exactly as they are, even in a figure like this, and an unestablished soul will find in this 14th chapter what absolutely answers to its own experience.

We learn, through these figures and types, that which God has for the blessing of our souls now in connection with the Lord Jesus Christ. You must understand that today everything is taken out of type, and all is found in a Person in glory. Nevertheless the types are all designed by God to teach us precious and wondrous truths. There are four outstanding types of the Lord Jesus in Israel's history. First, the slaying

of the lamb; secondly, the passage through the Red Sea; thirdly, the brazen serpent; and lastly, the passage through the Jordan. They are four figures of Christ's death, and they all teach totally different truths.

God is holy, hates sin perfectly, and cannot put up with it in anybody, not even when it was laid on His own blessed Son, who bore it vicariously on the cross. It must be judged. But the lesson of the Red Sea differs greatly from that of the blood upon the lintel. In that case it does not go beyond the truth that God, as a judge, is kept out. If, through grace, you have been led to trust in the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, the very holiness and the righteousness of God make it absolutely impossible for Him to judge you. I may be quite clear as to that, and know my sins are forgiven, but still encounter real soul-difficulties. What about Satan's power? Although Israel was perfectly safe as far as God was concerned, they were by no means assured as far as Pharaoh was concerned. It was a question as to whether those people really belonged to God or to Pharaoh. The Red Sea settled that point.

There is a remarkable scripture in Isaiah, where it speaks of Israel in a day to come, when God will again deliver them. "For 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. lii. 2). In Exodus xii. they were like a lot of timid, frightened creatures, flying from an angry foe. Being "thrust out of Egypt" (xii. 39), they went out with haste, and "it was told the king of Egypt that the people fled" (xiv. 5). They went out for what I may call dear life. They fled for refuge, fearing the pursuing foe. By-

and-by it will not be in haste, for they will have learned then, that it is not a question between themselves and Pharaoh, but a question between God and Pharaoh as to whom they belong.

Perhaps some one is saying: "I thought I was converted, but now I do not think I can be, for I get into a state of fear and doubt at times." You will find great comfort in the way in which the truth is brought out in this chapter. The moment a believer is under the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, he is sheltered. And the same blood that shelters him sets him apart to God. Hence you belong to God, spirit, soul, and body. You are not your own, for you are bought with a price (1 Cor. vi. 9, 20). You belong to the Lord, but you are still in the world, and God would lead you out, as He led Israel out of Egypt. "He led them forth by the right way" (Ps. cvii. 7). "It came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, *although that was near*; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt: but God led the people about, through the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea. And the children of Israel went up five in a rank out of the land of Egypt" (xiii. 7, 8).

They might have got up to the land in eleven days' journey or thereabout (Deut. i. 2). But why were they not led that way? They were not yet fit for war, and the Lord said, If they meet the Philistines on the road, and see war, they will return to Egypt, so He led them round by the wilderness. They had never seen war, nor did they see it till they had seen God's power. I will tell you what they did see. They saw "the salvation of the Lord." He loves to teach you first, what

the triumph of Christ is, how completely and absolutely the enemy's power has been broken. You have to learn this, that you cannot deliver yourself. Weakness marks us, and weakness was confessed by them as "they went up by five in a rank" (xiii. 18, *margin*). Do you know how—forty years afterwards—they went into Canaan? It was "marshalled by five" there too (Josh. i. 14, iv. 12).

What is the meaning of five? In Scripture five is the numeral that is always connected with weakness, *e. g.*, "Five barley loaves, and two small fishes but what are they among so many?" (John vi. 9). What good were five? I do not doubt that five is the expression of weakness. And what God has to teach us is, that in ourselves we are the expression of utter weakness. We have no strength either in the commencement or end of our journeyings, but we do not learn that all in a day. When they were just going into the heavenly land, they got in by fives. You have no strength either to get out of Egypt, or to go into Canaan. God must be our strength, and is so when we are consciously weak. "When I am weak, then am I strong" (2 Cor. xii. 10).

This statement as to the five comes up first when they were to go through the Red Sea, with crystal walls on either side—their lateral defense from the foe. When they come to Jordan, what do I find? The "five in a rank" is maintained, though, as you know, there was not a drop of water within thirty miles of them (Josh. iii. 1. 6). As they went through the Red Sea the waters were a wall on the right hand and on the left. Who could go in there? Nothing but faith. Nature might attempt it, and did, but only to meet judgment.

It is a very serious thing to try, in the power of nature, the path of faith.

But we read that Pharaoh "made ready his chariot, and took his people with him: and he took six hundred chosen chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt, and captains over every one of them, . . . and he pursued after the children of Israel" (xiv. 6-8). The whole power of the enemy is in exercise to hinder their escape, but every single bit of that power was broken by God in the moment of the deliverance of His beloved people. God led them on, and "brought them forth also with silver and gold; and there was not one feeble among their tribes" (Ps. cv. 37). Look how secure they were. "The Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night he took not away the pillar of the cloud my day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people" (xiii. 21, 22). Have not you too heard him say, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. xxviii. 20)? He led His people then, and He leads His people now, if only they will let Him.

God first brings them down to the edge of the sea (chap. xiv. 1, 2). He must teach us, as a practical thing, our own weakness. You ask, What is the meaning of the figure of the Red Sea? It is the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ for us, and our sins. I never shall be clear of the enemy until I know a risen Christ. Many a believer goes all his days saying, "O wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. vii. 24). You will never be delivered till you get your eye upon a risen Christ, and know that in His death and resurrection you are connected with Him. That is, that what

is true of Christ is now true for you. By grace I am united to Christ. In figure I learn that the death and resurrection of Christ was for me. If He died, I died. If He is risen, I am risen. I must accept death, as the judgment of God upon man. But what liberty, what blessing for your soul, when you see all this true of yourself in Christ's death and resurrection.

We do not learn that all in a minute, but if we do learn it we can truly say, Oh, happy man that I am, for I have learned through grace, what the love of the Lord is, and what the victory which He has gained for me. Romans vii. is the experience of many a person, who is really a believer, and hence a child of God, but it is the experience of an undelivered soul. The delivered soul says, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." "Who shall deliver me?" is the piteous query of the undelivered, and no doubt there is many a person who is going through that experience. I quite admit it is experimental. You must know it in your own soul. And you are not delivered till you are delivered. Do you understand that? When are you delivered? When you give up trying to deliver yourself. .

Israel went through the Red Sea on dry land. Dry land is where Christ is. Christ in resurrection, Christ in acceptance, and life, and glory before God. Christ the Victor. That is dry land for a Christian today. I am in Christ. I am not in Adam. That is what I understand by "dry land." Every hindrance is gone, and all the power of the enemy is broken.

And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they turn and encamp before Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, and

against Baal-Zephon: before it shall ye encamp by the sea. For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, they are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in" (xiv. 1-3).

Pi-hahiroth is part of God's ways with us, to teach us the utter uselessness of the flesh. A young convert often says, "Now I am going to do good, and I shall be a different person, and I shall live a different life." There is a great deal of self-confidence about us until we learn we can do nothing, and that God must do everything. It is a very remarkable thing that the meaning of the word Pi-hahiroth is "The gate of liberty." When you have the sense, I have not one bit of strength to deliver myself, it will be all right with you. So was it here. Pharaoh's servants told him that the people fled; he thereupon made ready his chariots, and went after them with a high hand (vers. 5-8). So the devil is determined to follow and overtake you. He is not going to let you be the devoted servant of the Lord Jesus, if he can help it.

We read in verse 9 that Pharaoh overtook them, "And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them; and they were sore afraid" (ver. 10). The condition of Israel much resembles the doubts and fears that have gone through our souls, and their next words show that their hearts and ours are exactly alike. Do you know that you have a heart that could actually take you back into the world, even supposing you are converted? "And they said unto Moses, Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? Wherefore hast thou dealt with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? Is not this the word 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" (vers. 11, 12). When they were on the road to Canaan, what unbelieving language. Could we so speak? Did your heart never say in hours of pressure and temptation, After all it is a pity I professed Christ? If so, my friend, you will yet be sorry that you indulged in such unbelief.

I think God let Israel pass by Pi-hahiroth that they might learn how He can open "a gate of liberty," and that they might taste the triumph of His deliverance. God, and God only, could deliver them. That was the point (ver. 13). Moses' answer is splendid. Hear what he says: "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will show to you today; for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more for ever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace" (vers. 13, 14). They were to see God's salvation that day. What is God's salvation? The blood of the Lamb has met all His claims, His power has crushed the power of the enemy absolutely, and His people are brought to Himself, just to enjoy Him. That is salvation!

"Stand still," was the word heard that day. "The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace." Get into your soul the wonderful fact that Christ has gone into death, and tasted death as the judgment of God upon man, on the cross. He has gone into death, and come up out of it, and there He is alive before God, and by faith now walking in His footsteps, you go through on "dry ground" into resurrection scenes. There is no death or judgment for you. It was all exhausted by God's beloved Son.

But to know this you must "go forward" as Israel

was bidden to do (ver. 15). They obey, the "pillar of fire" forming their rearguard, for "the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them and it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and 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" (vers. 19, 20). As they started the light was before them, and the light drew them on. But what is the next thing? They have a backward look for a moment, and they find that between themselves and the foe, God has put Himself. He seemed to say—Come on, Pharaoh, you may touch them if you can, you may put your hand upon them if you can. And were they safe? Indeed were they. They were safe under the shelter of the blood, but now they are to learn that they are *saved*. I am *safe* when under the shelter of the blood of the Lamb, I am *saved* when the power of the enemy is broken, and I learn that I am before God in all the value of the work of His beloved Son.

The angel going behind them was most gracious. If the light had been in the front the rear would have been in terror. Fancy six hundred thousand of them, and only five abreast. The first five would be saying, We are all right, but the last five are not very safe. But God comes in between the last five and the enemy, and oh, how safe were all, as the light of God beamed over their heads. The electric light of our day is dim to the light God's host had that night. Everybody saw the pathway perfectly plain. That is clear.

Young Christian, this is your God, the God that loves you. That is the kind of Saviour who has come to take

up your case, and to carry you out of this world right into glory. Do you think there is any chance of Satan getting you? No, no! See what follows. "And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea *dry land*, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the *dry ground*; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left" (vers. 21, 22). Their way is opened. What lay before them? I see them marching forward, and what is it to? Apparently to certain death. Another step, and they go into these black dark waters of death. They accept death, and find it to be life and liberty. You must accept death. The waters of the Red Sea, or Marah, or Jordan, all tell one truth. There is only one way for my soul getting to God, and that is through death. I have to accept the death of the blessed Lord Jesus Christ for me.

What a wonderful sight as they step out now; they hear the word "Go forward," and lift their foot to put it down on what seemed impossible to bear them—water. It is the acceptance of the sentence of death. Now for us the wonderful truth is that Christ has gone into death, and utterly annulled it. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb. ii. 14, 15).

And now you ask me, How can I apply this truth to myself? Well, they were to go in, every one of them. There was not one of them that had not got the sense,

I will have to go into that sea. But when they came to the spot, what was it? "Dry ground." The step was taken in the energy of faith, for we read, "By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land; which the Egyptians assaying to do, were drowned" (Heb. xi. 29). The latter clause of that verse is very striking. You will find there are people who seek to occupy the place of the children of God. We live in a day of great imitation. All unreal souls should remember that every Egyptian was drowned in that sea. It is only faith that can tread that pathway, and faith went into the midst of the sea upon dry ground. I doubt not Pharaoh thought, I shall now get at them. His great object was to overtake and to destroy, God's to deliver and save, and how safe they were as they went through these immense walls—crystal walls—reared by God. Just so we taste the wonderful love that let His Son pass through death and judgment for us. And now He is risen, and we are risen in Him.

I do not doubt that the truth unfolded in type in this chapter finds its New Testament answer in Romans vi. and vii. "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus" (vi. 10). It is our privilege to reckon that which the Lord Jesus passed through as ours. It is all ours. His death and resurrection were ours, and His victory over every enemy was for us.

In our chapter the way God checks and overcomes the enemy is very interesting. Pharaoh gets a solemn warning as the lynch-pins of his wheels all fly out, and receives an unexpected check by the taking off of his chariot wheels. The effect is electric. "The Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of 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 the Lord fighteth for them against the Egyptians" (vers. 24, 25). The tables are completely turned. It is not God's people fleeing now, but their enemies who fly. The former are on resurrection ground really, while death and judgment overwhelm all their foes, for "the Lord 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; there remained *not so much as one of them*" (vers. 26-28).

Some of our learned infidel friends would fain believe, and try and persuade us to think that Pharaoh was not there personally. The 136th Psalm clears away that fog of infidelity, for it says, the Lord "*overthrew Pharaoh* and his host in the Red Sea; for His mercy endureth for ever" (ver. 15). Let all doubters look at that lovely little commentary, or summary of God's ways in mercy with Israel. It is all God, you see. I believe that proud king came to his end there. I love to think how completely Satan has been overthrown, because Pharaoh is the type of Satan. God's thought is to bring His people out of this world. If you are a worldly Christian, do you think you will have the enjoyment of the Lord? No! you may have the sense that God will never judge you, but you are not clear of Satan, and you will have doubts and fears, because you have never cleared out of Satan's territory—the world.

What God wants is that you should give up the world. There were two men that gave up Egypt in this chapter, Moses and Pharaoh. Moses gave up Egypt

voluntarily, "By faith he *forsook* Egypt" (Heb. xi. 24-27). Pharaoh gave it up because he could not help it. He came under God's judgment, like many another sinner who has had to give up the world by death cutting him off from it, and having nothing for eternity, he has lost all—his own soul included. Where are you and I in this matter? Are our hearts clear of the world, and set on Christ, and on the things of Christ? That is where they ought to be.

The next thing we read here is, "Thus the Lord **SAVED** Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea-shore. And Israel saw the great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians, and the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and His servant Moses" (vers. 30, 31). Salvation is a very big word in Scripture. When I am "*saved*" I am clear of the enemy, and I am out of this scene in spirit and heart. I am a delivered man, in resurrection surroundings. When Israel looked, and saw all their enemies dead, they doubtless said, There is no road back to Egypt. The road was closed in. And my dear fellow-Christian, if you fancy you have found a road back, you are a very wretched man. You are not really back, you can never belong to it again, and you must come under God's judgment—governmentally. You are a person to be pitied. Oh, learn what it is to be with Christ on the sunny banks of resurrection.

Of the Christian it is said, "And ye are complete in him, who is the head of all principality and power" (Col. ii. 10). It is a fine thing for the Christian to see this, up far above the angels there sits a Man, and I am in Him, and He is the delight of the Father's heart. He is in a sphere of heavenly joy and blessed-

ness, and I am complete in Him. It is only faith that touches that sphere. He has died, and He has risen, but He has died and risen for me, and now He has taken, as Man, this new place before God, and that is my place.

Oh, how freely must Israel have breathed that morning! How prepared, too, were they to sing a song that morning, when they saw all their enemies dead on the sea-shore. God loves us to sing. A Christian is looked upon as a person who sings. And we may well sing. They saw that morning every enemy gone, and deep, rich, solid peace filled their souls. Now where were they? In the wilderness. What had they there? Two things. They had God, and the sand. There was not even water or bread. They were to learn God, in that wilderness. And that is what we have to do. We have to learn the grace, the love, and the sustaining help of the Lord, while withal we have to learn what we are ourselves. They began with God, and God was everything to them. So is He to us if we will only let Him be what He is.

I have no doubt whatever that the Red Sea—the passage of the children of Israel through the Red Sea—in a figure of the death and resurrection of Christ for His people, for us, *i. e.*, that He died for our sins, and was raised again for our justification.

The moment Israel got through the Red Sea they began to sing. While they were in Egypt there was no song. What were they doing? Sighing, crying, weeping, groaning—they were miserable slaves. Even when they were at Pi-hahiroth (Exod. xiv. 2, 9) what were they doing? Fearing and trembling; they were in dread, and distress of soul. But the moment they

had gone through the Red Sea, by the path which God had opened for them—the moment typically they had accepted death, and got into resurrection—what do I find? They began to sing; they sing a triumphant song to the Lord. And what is the burden of the song? “The Lord is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation’ (Exod xv. 2). It is what the Lord is and what the Lord has done. Well might they sing, because, from the sunny heights of resurrection, they look down and see all their foes dead on the seashore, not one of them left. They are brought now to have to do with God, and to know God as their Saviour, and they can sing with happiness and truth, “The Lord is become my salvation.” They are *saved*, and they *know* they are saved.

I meet a great many people nowadays who are hoping, trying, and longing to be saved, but I do not meet many who are bold enough to say, “Thank God, I AM SAVED, for *He* has saved me.” Can you say that yet? Come, honestly, my friend, can you say, “I have obtained God’s salvation, I am a saved soul by divine grace”? Is it presumption to say so? No, it is not presumption to boast in what God does. It would be great presumption if it were something in which you and I had any hand. But you will observe here that the people of Israel *stand still*, and the Lord *does everything*, and, when *He* has done everything, what do they do? They turn and exalt, and praise Him, and give Him glory. We read, “Thus the Lord *saved* Israel” (Exod. xiv. 30). Why do not you let Him save you, and then you could likewise sing to Him, as the Author and Source of your salvation?

There are many souls today who are desiring salvation, and would like to have it, but they have not got

it, because they have never learnt what this precious Scripture unfolds, in figure, viz., that Christ not only died for our sins, but that He rose again for our justification, and that consequently the one who believes in Him who has died and been raised again, is linked with Him in the place where He now is—in resurrection. And as a result, there is peace and joy and gladness in the soul.

Now, I will tell you where hosts of people are spiritually. Being a doctor, I go into the houses of all classes, and in numbers of them I find a picture, to which people are uncommonly attached. It depicts a stone cross standing in a wild sea, a fearful storm raging, and a poor, wretched, unhappy looking woman clinging to this cross, with despair printed on her face. And people think this is Christianity. Christianity! It is an utter travesty of Christianity. Oh, you say, do you make light of the cross? God forbid. With the apostle Paul, I say, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." But does that picture teach me Christianity? Not at all. And why? Because the truth of Christianity is that the storm has gone by, the Saviour has passed through it, and risen out of it, and faith leads the soul, not to the foot of an empty cross, but to the feet of the ascended Saviour, where there is "neither enemy nor evil occurrent." The storm is over, the forces of evil have dealt with and overcome, and the soul, instead of being in fear, anxiety, and distress, is in the possession of solid, divinely-given peace—in the assurance that it is saved, because connected with the risen Saviour, who has passed through death and judgment, and is now at God's right hand.

Many a poor soul nowadays carries about a cross,

with or without a figure of Christ upon it. The idea is to remember the death of Christ. But Christ is not on the cross now, nor is He in the grave. Where is He? He is risen. Here the glad tidings. I declare to you a risen Saviour, a Saviour triumphant over death and the grave. He went into death, and met the judgment of God in the moment of His death; He bore the whole weight of the wrath and vengeance of God against man's sin and guilt. He atoned for that guilt when He died; when He tasted death He annulled it; in His passage through death, He met him who had the power of death, that is the devil, and destroyed him. But, now, what has happened? He is alive from the dead, He has risen, and ascended.

It is a risen, triumphant and glorified Saviour at God's right hand that I preach to you, and the believer is entitled to know that Christ is his Saviour, that Christ is his peace, that his sins are forgiven, and that he belongs now to that Saviour. He is absolutely saved, and he is entitled to give thanks. His doubts and fears are for ever gone; he knows that his sins have been swept away by the blood of Jesus, and that the power of the enemy has been broken by His death. The day of doubt, fear, distress, and anxiety is gone by for ever; and if you have the picture I have described in your house, I advise you, before you go to bed to-night, to put it in the fire. Why? Because if any one came into my house, I should not like to give him a false impression of what Christianity is, and I conclude you will feel similarly. Christianity tells me of a victorious, triumphant Man, at the right hand of God, who has dashed in pieces the power of the enemy; who has been exalted, a Prince and a Saviour, to give re-

pentance, and remission of sins, to all who believe in His name. It is resurrection you must know.

I do not wonder that the devil made a great noise in Acts iv., when the apostles preached and taught the people the truth. What did they preach? They "preached through Jesus the resurrection from among the dead" (ver. 2). If they had only preached Jesus having lived on the earth, the devil would have said, You may go on and preach that as much as you like, because He died. But, said the apostles, God has raised Him from the dead. One has gone into death, on whom death had no claim; and He has annulled it, and now He is alive from the dead in righteousness at God's right hand. He is the life, the righteousness, the sanctification, and the redemption of every soul that simply believes in Him. I do not wonder that the devil sought that day to put the apostles in prison, because the resurrection, which they preached, was the absolute proof of his utter defeat by Christ, and of the abolition of the power of death. Death, which was the wages of man's sin, being annulled, Christ's resurrection proved that sin had been put away. It is freely granted that our sins took Him into death, but who took Him out of it? God, in righteousness, took Him out of death, and set Him at His own right hand in glory, and the consequence is that the one who believes in Christ is associated with Him where He is.

The blessed truth of the gospel is this (and unless you know it, you have not really tasted God's salvation—you have not got peace and solid rest in your soul), that He, who was ever the Father's delight, came down into this scene, that He became a man, and as a man was so sinless, spotless, and perfect, that death had no claim upon Him, and that then the Man on

whom death had no claim went in grace into death for me—for the man upon whom death *had* a claim. Further, He who knew no sin, was made sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. He has taken *our* place in death, and God, having raised Him from the dead, through grace now gives us *His* place, when we believe on Him. It is a wonderful thing to be able to say, Christ took my place in shame, sorrow, suffering, death, and judgment, and I, who believe in Him, get His place in life, acceptance, peace, and righteousness before God.

But you say, What has all that to do with Exodus xiv.? It is just exactly what the chapter teaches in figure. When the enemy is coming after Israel to overtake, and to destroy them, God says, "Go forward" (ver. 14). And where do they go? They go upon "dry land" through that, which would, without the intervention of God, have been overwhelming destruction for them. They go right through the Red Sea, God Himself having opened a pathway for them through the waters, which form a wall on their right hand, and on their left, as the passage tells us twice over. And now we find them on the other side, brought to God, the power of the enemy broken. They are saved, they know it, and they rejoice in the Lord accordingly.

Have you ever travelled that road. If not, I pray God you may learn what it is to travel it. The Lord give you to hear His own word, "Go forward." If you think it is right to be in a condition of doubt, and fear, and uncertainty, this scripture ought to undeceive you. Nay, nay, the Christian is now entitled to be in a place of nearness to God, in blessing and favour, identified with Him who died and rose again.

In Exodus xii. we see that the blood put on the lintel preserved the first-born, in the household that was obedient to God's command, from God's judgment. But the blood does much more than that. Not only does the blood of the Lamb screen us from the righteous judgment of God, not only does the blood of Jesus shelter us from God's righteous judgment upon us as sinners, but it sets us apart to God. "The wages of sin is death," but that is met by the blood of the Lamb, for "As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation" (Heb. ix. 27, 28). I beg you to observe the "*as*" and the "*so*." As it was appointed to you and me to die, and then to be judged, so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many. He took the sinner's place in blessed grace, as Anne Steel's lines charmingly put it:—

"He took the guilty culprit's place,
He suffered in our stead:
For man, O miracle of grace,
For man the Saviour bled."

Faith can say, "For *me* the Saviour bled." That is chapter xii., but in Exodus xiii. I find that the same blood of the Lamb, which shelters me from judgment, sets me apart at the same moment to God. As soon as the people are sheltered the Lord says, They are mine. "Sanctify unto me all the first-born, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: *it is mine*" (ver. 2). God claims the soul that is sheltered by the blood of the lamb as belonging to Him. If any one can say truthfully, "I do rest on Jesus, and I am trusting in His work," even

though you have doubts and fears, let me tell you this, If you believe in Jesus, and are resting on His precious blood alone for salvation, you belong to God, and He will never give you up. And more than that, He would give you to know personally, how full, and rich, and perfect is the salvation He makes yours through the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the end of chap. xiii. the Lord comes down, and gives the people the sign of His presence, in the pillar of cloud and of fire. He makes it manifest that they belong to Him. "And the Lord 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" (ver. 21). Who would not be a Christian? I have the Lord not only for my life, and my shelter, but also for my guide. If God's people wanted light by night, His presence was their light, in the pillar of fire; if they wanted shade by day, He spread His cloud over them.

What is the next thing? Pharaoh having learned that the people are on their way out of his dominions, of course makes a final effort to keep them back, and God now comes in to deliver them from his power. The knowledge that I am sheltered by the blood of the Lamb from God's judgment does not give me the knowledge of deliverance from Satan's power. Therefore in chap. xiv. God brings the people to Pi-hahiroth, which means, "The gate of liberty." The Lord brings His people to a spot where He shows them what real liberty is. They must get clean out of Egypt, and so must you, beloved fellow-believer, get delivered out of the world. You say to me, Can you bring a man out of the world? I cannot, but the gospel can. When the gospel really gets into a man's heart, he gets the

knowledge of the heavenly sphere, and of heavenly blessing and joy, and his heart is turned from the world. He gets out of Egypt. In what way? Through the knowledge of the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, whereby his sins have been all blotted out, and he himself brought to God, through the work the Saviour has accomplished.

Satan of course will not let any soul go easily, he will try to hold it back if he can. So in our chapter Pharaoh comes out with all his forces after Israel, and the people are terrified. It is after people are converted, after they have made the first start, and turned round to serve the Lord, desiring to be for Him, that they learn the evil of their own hearts, and it is then that Satan brings pressure to bear upon them,, to keep them from being for the Lord absolutely, and entirely. Pharaoh gathers together all his hosts to pursue them, and the people find themselves in a terrible fix. They look behind them and there are Pharaoh and his hosts; they look before them and there is death—the Red Sea—and on either hand mountains rise to the skies. Hence, Pharaoh thinks he will certainly overtake them and enslave them again.

Similarly Satan comes after the young believer to-day, with the thought that he is going to get him under his power again. But do not you be frightened: he never will. Once under the shelter of the blood, you are brought to God in all the value of the Saviour's finished work, and that place you can never lose. You are like the sheep in Luke xv. The shepherd went after it, and when he found it, he put it on his shoulders. I once heard some one say, May not the sheep drop off on the road? Well, I do not read that it did. I read that He brought it home. No doubt if it de-

pended on the sheep, it would slip off, but all depends on the shepherd. I have sometimes seen a man carrying a sheep on his shoulder in an awkward way, and the sheep almost falling off, but I read that the shepherd of Luke xv. put the sheep on his *shoulders*, and there he held the sheep. My safety depends on my Saviour, not on me.

I quite admit that there is faith on my part, and that salvation is through faith. But the point is this, it is the Saviour who sought me and found me, and carries me. And here it is God who comes and says to Israel, I want you out of Egypt, and I mean to have you for myself. With great difficulty Pharaoh is made to let them go, but afterwards he tries to get hold of them again. And this is where unestablished souls are so often frightened. Perhaps after all, they say, I may go back, I may fall away.

What about that scripture in Peter which says, "The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire"? (2 Pet. ii. 22). Well, why does the dog return to his vomit? Because he is a dog. And why does the sow return to wallowing in the mire? Because she is a sow, and nothing else. You may wash a sow as much as you like, you cannot make a sheep of her. The point of the figure is that the sow has an unclean nature, and delights in the mire. You never saw a sheep wallowing in the mire. You may have seen a poor sheep fall into a ditch and bleat to be taken out. And that is the case of a backslider. But a child of God is never called a dog or a sow. Those of whom Peter speaks never had been born again, never had received a new life or nature; they had been merely outwardly reformed. Before the sow was washed she was a dirty

sow; after she was washed she was a clean sow, but a sow still, no matter what she was washed in. The devil has manufactured all sorts of things in which to wash people.

But when the grace of God gets into a man's heart, that man is new-born, he has a new life and nature, with new tastes, and a new object, with heavenly hopes and aspirations. He is set up in this world a new man in the power of the Holy Ghost. He may fail, he may stumble and fall, but "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance" (Rom. xi. 29). The Lord Jesus Christ says "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." It is really *no one*—angel, man, or devil—can pluck them out of His hand. And why? "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no one is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand" (John x. 27-29). The Lord Jesus looks upon the sheep as the precious gift of the Father to Him. You do not know how precious you are to Christ. Dear young believer, and old one too, would that you knew better the love of the Saviour's heart, and what a price He sets upon you. And is He going to let us go after He has bought us, and washed us in His blood? Nay, nay.

It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? Is it Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us?" (Rom. viii. 33, 34). Will He condemn those for whom He died? Never!

W. T. P. W.