



thick darkness. The poet proceeds:  
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 whenever the terrible eye of the Supreme Lord looks down upon them.

The mountains, the earth, the deep and extensive sea, and the summits of the highest mountains tremble whenever the terrible eye of the Supreme Lord looks down upon them. These are very remarkable fragments, and seem all to be collected from traditions relative to the different manifestations of God to the Israelites in Egypt, and in the wilderness. Moses wished to see God, but he could behold nothing but an indescribable glory: nothing like mortals, nothing like a human body, appeared at any time to his eye, or to those of the Israelites. Ye saw no manner of similitude, said Moses, on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb, out of the midst of the Fire, Deuteronomy 4:15. But sometimes the Divine power and justice were manifested by the indescribable, formless, impetuous, consuming flame; at other times he appeared by the water which he brought out of the flinty rock; and in the thick darkness on Horeb, when the fiery law proceeded from his right hand, then the earth quaked and the mountain trembled: and when his terrible eye looked out upon the Egyptians through the pillar of cloud and fire, their chariot wheels were struck off, and confusion and dismay were spread through all the hosts of Pharaoh; Exodus 14:24, Exodus 14:25.

And the bush was not consumed - 1. An emblem of the state of Israel in its various distresses and persecutions: it was in the fire of adversity, but was not consumed. 2. An emblem also of the state of the Church of God in the wilderness, in persecutions often, in the midst of its enemies, in the region of the shadow of death - yet not consumed. 3. An emblem also of the state of every follower of Christ: cast down, but not forsaken; grievously tempted, but not destroyed; walking through the fire, but still unconsumed! Why are all these preserved in the midst of those things which have a natural tendency to destroy them! Because God Is In The Midst Of Them; it was this that preserved the bush from destruction; and it was this that preserved the Israelites; and it is this, and this alone, that preserves the Church, and holds the soul of every genuine believer in the spiritual life. He in whose heart Christ dwells not by faith, will soon be consumed by the world, the flesh, and the devil.

Verse 5

Put off thy shoes - It is likely that from this circumstance all the eastern nations have agreed to perform all the acts of their religious worship barefooted. All the Mohammedans, Brahmins, and Parsees do so still. The Jews were remarked for this in the time of Juvenal; hence he speaks of their performing their sacred rites barefooted; Sat. vi., ver. 158: Observant ubi festa mero pede sabbata reges.

The ancient Greeks did the same. Jamblichus, in the life of Pythagoras, tells us that this was one of his maxims, Offer sacrifice and worship with your shoes off. And Solinus asserts that no person was permitted to enter into the temple of Diana, in Crete, till he had taken off his shoes. Aedem Numinis (Dianae) praeterquam nudus vestigio nulles licito ingreditur. Tertullian observes, de jejunio, that in a time of drought the worshippers of Jupiter deprecated his wrath, and prayed for rain, walking barefooted. Cum stupet caelum, et aret annus, nudipedalia, denunciantur. It is probable that xaxax (nealim), in the text, signifies sandals, translated by the Chaldee xax (sandal), and xax (sandala), (see Genesis 14:23), which was the same as the Roman solea, a sole alone, strapped about the foot. As this sole must let in dust, gravel, and sand about the foot in travelling, and render it very uneasy, hence the custom of frequently washing the feet in those countries where these sandals were worn. Pulling off the shoes was, therefore, an emblem of laying aside the pollutions contracted by walking in the way of sin. Let those who name the Lord Jesus Christ depart from iniquity. In our western countries reverence is expressed by pulling off the hat; but how much more significant is the eastern custom! The natives of Bengal never go into their own houses with their shoes on, nor into the houses of others, but always leave their shoes at the door. It would be a great affront not to attend to this mark of respect when visiting; and to enter a temple without pulling off the shoes would be an unpardonable offense. - Ward.

The place whereon thou standest is holy ground - It was not particularly sanctified by the Divine presence; but if we may credit Josephus, a general opinion had prevailed that God dwelt on that mountain; and hence the shepherds, considering it as sacred ground, did not dare to feed their flocks there. Moses, however, finding the soil to be rich and the pasturage good, boldly drove his flock thither to feed on it - Antiq., b. ii., c. xii., s. 1.

Verse 6

I am the God of thy father - Though the word xax (abi), father, is here used in the singular, St Stephen,





and the God of Jacob; but when time shall be no more, he shall be Jehovah Elohim. Hence the first expression refers to his eternal existence, the latter to the discovery he should make of himself as long as time should last. See Genesis 21:33. Diodorus Siculus says, that "among the Jews, Moses is reported to have received his laws from the God named (Jao), i.e., Jeue, Jove, or Jeve; for in all these ways the word "Yehovah" may be pronounced; and in this way I have seen it on Egyptian monuments. See Diod., lib. I., c. xciv.

#### Verse 16

Elders of Israel - Though it is not likely the Hebrews were permitted to have any regular government at this time, yet there can be no doubt of their having such a government in the time of Joseph, and for some considerable time after; the elders of each tribe forming a kind of court of magistrates, by which all actions were tried, and legal decisions made, in the Israelitish community.

I have surely visited you - An exact fulfillment of the prediction of Joseph, Genesis 50:24, God will surely visit you, and in the same words too.

#### Verse 18

They shall hearken to thy voice - This assurance was necessary to encourage him in an enterprise so dangerous and important.

Three days' journey into the wilderness - Evidently intending Mount Sinai, which is reputed to be about three days' journey, the shortest way, from the land of Goshen. In ancient times, distances were computed by the time required to pass over them. Thus, instead of miles, furlongs, etc., it was said, the distance from one place to another was so many days' journey; and it continues the same in all countries where there are no regular roads or highways.

#### Verse 19

I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand - When the facts detailed in this history have been considered in connection with the assertion as it stands in our Bibles, the most palpable contradiction has appeared. That the king of Egypt did let them go, and that by a mighty hand, the book itself amply declares. We should therefore seek for another meaning of the original word (velo), which generally means and not, has sometimes the meaning of if not, unless, except, etc.; and in Becke's Bible, 1549, it is thus translated: I am sure that the kyng of Egypt wyl not let you go, Except wyth a mighty hand. This import of the negative particle, which is noticed by Noldius, Heb. Part., p. 328, was perfectly understood by the Vulgate, where it is translated nisi, unless; and the Septuagint in their  $\mu\lambda\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$ , which is of the same import; and so also the Coptic. The meaning therefore is very plain: The king of Egypt, who now profits much by your servitude, will not let you go till he sees my hand stretched out, and he and his nation be smitten with ten plagues. Hence God immediately adds, Exodus 3:20: I will stretch out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders - and after that, he will let you go.

#### Verse 22

Every woman shall borrow - This is certainly not a very correct translation: the original word (shaal) signifies simply to ask, request, demand, require, inquire, etc.; but it does not signify to borrow in the proper sense of that word, though in a very few places of Scripture it is thus used. In this and the parallel place, Exodus 12:35, the word signifies to ask or demand, and not to borrow, which is a gross mistake into which scarcely any of the versions, ancient or modern, have fallen, except our own. The Septuagint has  $\alpha\iota\tau\epsilon\iota\sigma\iota\varsigma$ , she shall ask; the Vulgate, postulabit, she shall demand; the Syriac, Chaldee, Samaritan, Samaritan Version, Coptic, and Persian, are the same as the Hebrew. The European versions are generally correct on this point; and our common English version is almost the sole transgressor: I say, the common version, which, copying the Bible published by Becke in 1549, gives us the exceptionable term borrow, for the original (shaal), which in the Geneva Bible, and Barker's Bible of 1615, and some others, is rightly translated aske. God commanded the Israelites to ask or demand a certain recompense for their past services, and he inclined the hearts of the Egyptians to give liberally; and this, far from a matter of oppression, wrong, or even charity, was no more than a very partial recompense for the long and painful services which we may say six hundred thousand Israelites had rendered to Egypt, during a considerable number of years. And there can be no doubt that while their heaviest oppression lasted, they were permitted to accumulate no kind of property, as all their gains went to their oppressors.

Our exceptionable translation of the original has given some countenance to the desperate cause of infidelity; its abettors have exultingly said: "Moses represents the just God as ordering the Israelites to borrow the goods of the Egyptians under the pretense of returning them, whereas he intended that they should march off with the booty." Let these men know that there was no borrowing in the case; and that if accounts were fairly balanced, Egypt would be found still in considerable arrears to Israel. Let it also be considered that the



Know thyself; as if, under the name . Thou Art, the Deity designed to excite men to venerate Him as eternally existing, , and to put them in mind of the frailty and mortality of their own nature.

What beautiful things have the ancient Greek philosophers stolen from the testimonies of God to enrich their own works, without any kind of acknowledgment! And, strange perversity of man! these are the very things which we so highly applaud in the heathen copies, while we neglect or pass them by in the Divine originals!