

2. If, after passing the Yam Suph, they crossed the "way of the land of the Philistines" a second time, and were again forbidden to follow it, we should have expected to find some notice of this second prohibition in Exodus xv.

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III.

WHENEVER the route of the Israelites after their encampment under Horeb is brought into notice, there spring up from many unexpected quarters questions which imperatively demand an answer. At such a time the loss occasioned by the premature deaths of men like Palmer, Holland, and Tyrwhitt Drake is sure to be felt. Just when criticism was beginning to demand greater accuracy and more methodical treatment in matters geographical and historical, their powers of observation were being trained into perfect efficiency. With them must have perished a mass of information of a special character, which had not been so thoroughly analysed and examined as to yield all the valuable metals it contained.

The journeyings of the Israelites from Egypt to Horeb have been well discussed by those who have personally examined the ground; and the survey by the English Ordnance Expedition in 1868-9 has done equally good work in settling many a disputed point, as in placing within easy reach of students a remarkably clear and accurate delineation of the country.

The superiority of the work done by travellers and inquirers of the Palmer school, in such a country as Arabia Petræa, is seen when one puts by its side the great achievements of even Burckhardt and Robinson, specially in the matter of correct nomenclature. To have secured the help of a linguist like Palmer, versed in all kinds of Arabic and Oriental literature, first in the survey of Sinai, and then in the exploration of the desert between Judæa and the Sinaitic Peninsula, was a piece of good fortune which will be appreciated more and more every day by those anxious to make more clear the Bible narrative.

In that book, what is the information given of the country and people through which the Israelites were to journey, and what is our present knowledge—or perhaps, rather, what is the value of the suggestions as yet made, as to the line which the Israelite march must have taken when they set forward to conquer the Promised Land? The land was surrounded by powerful nations, and these nations, in a state of development, were of necessity brought into contact with each other. Some day we may hope to discover Egyptian archives, which shall give a detailed account of the escape of the Israelite slaves in the time of Minepthah—just as we have now a contemporary illustrated history of the campaigns of the Egyptians, under the king who oppressed the Hebrews, against the Hittite Empire on the Orontes; or there may be a mine of Phœnician antiquities opened to us.

But what do we learn from the Hebrew book which has been so miraculously preserved to us—the Bible?

Abraham's history (Gen. xii-xxv, 10) is more full of geographical information than at first appears, while it introduces us to Hittites, Egyptians, Philistines, &c. Passing over the incidental description of Palestine contained in it, his journeyings take us to the Negeb, and so down to Egypt; to Bethel and Hebron; to Kadesh, the wilderness of Shur, Gera, and Beersheba; to Mesopotamia, Damascus, Syria, &c. The record of the raid of the combined kings from the Euphrates Valley, and the subsequent promise of the land from the river of Egypt (Wády el Arish) to the great river, the river Euphrates, makes us acquainted with the various peoples and tribes who then possessed the country which Ishmael's children and Esau's descendants subsequently received as an inheritance. Then, filling in many a little gap, we have the mission of Eliezer, his steward, to Mesopotamia, and also the incident of Hagar's wandering in the wilderness of Beersheba.

Of these records, the most important is that of the expedition of the combined kings. It was like a *Góm* of modern times, and followed possibly the very route up Wády Jeráfeh, which is known now-a-days by the name "Sikket el Gom." The allies seem to have crushed first the Rephaim at Ashteroth Karnain (possibly the "Beit el Kurin" not far from Rabbath Moab); the Zuzim, their neighbours in Ham, Ham-mat, or Ainmah; and the Emim, or Anakim, a kindred people, in the plain of Kureitun (Kiriathaim), to the south-east of Kerah. Next they attacked the Horites, the cave-dwellers of Mount Seir, pursuing them down to the edge of the wilderness, as far as a well-known spot, "the Terebinth tree of Paran." At this point the expedition turned, and, taking the line which the natural formation of the country suggests, swept along below the Negeb, in the direction of Jebel Araif, up to 'Ain Mishpat, which is Kadesh (the fountain of judgment near the "Holy City"). They smote all the country of the Amalekites, and they also smote the Amorites, who were then dwelling on the famous route of invasion which the Moabites and Ammonites used in Jehosaphat's time at Hazazon Tamar ("the Felling of the Palm trees"), "which is Engedi" (Gen. xiv, 1; 2 Chron. xx, 2).

Moses's mention in this place of the Amalekites shows that he is describing the country as it was inhabited in his time. For in the time of Chedorlaomer there could have been no Amalekites, as they were descended from *Esau's* grandson, "Amalek;" while the country (the word used is *Sádeh* = "plateau") is clearly that tract of land known in Moses's time as "the country of the Amalekites," which was bounded on the one side by the Amorite possessions, and on the other by the Horites of Mount Seir.

The story of Hagar brings us into this same country. Abraham was sojourning at Gerar, between Kadesh and Shur (probably somewhere near Jebel and Wády Maghárah, where Professor Palmer stayed on the occasion of his "great ride," at the camp of the Teyahah Sheikh Suleiman) when the ridicule of the son of the Egyptian bondwoman Hagar roused the spite and fury of Sarah. Hagar had once before run away from Sarah

into the wilderness on the way going to Shur, and had taken refuge by the fountain on the caravan route, afterwards called by the Hebrews Beer-lahai-roi, the locality being carefully given as between Kadesh and Bered, and which is supposed to be identified at the watering-place in Wády Muweileh. Her subsequent banishment with Ishmael took place in the wilderness of Beersheba. It is not likely that she went far from the encampment of Abraham, which had been moved further north than Gerar to Beersheba, seeing that the provisions supplied her by Abraham were only what she could carry. But we know that it was in the wilderness of Paran that she and Ishmael afterwards took up their abode, and that Egypt was so accessible that his mother took him a wife from among her own countrywomen. Abraham's Kadesh, and the wilderness of Kadesh, was certainly to the west of the Negeb, and was probably bounded by the rolling plain of Beersheba, and by the wilderness of Shur. I think Kadesh might be considered to be the southern boundary of the country through which Abraham pastured his flocks, as Beth-el might be placed for the northern limit. The city itself was possibly a Hittite shrine, for we know that there was a colony of Hittites settled at Hebron (Gen. xxiii), from whom Abraham bought Machpelah, and from whose daughters Esau, when he was forty years of age, took two wives, Judith and Bashemath. From a city so important the whole district round would take its name; while the boundary lines between the wastes of Paran and Kadesh would be very carelessly defined.

As to the progress of the nomad Amalekites, who seem to have been the most warlike and aggressive of the descendants of Esau: in Moses's time we find them in the great valleys surrounding Jebel Serbal, to one of which we suppose they gave the name Paran (transformed by the Arabs into Teirán), in remembrance of their former home in the hilly country beyond the Tíh range; and we find them posted with the Canaanites in the mountains which bordered, on the south and south-west, the lower part of the Promised Land—the Negeb. In David's time they invaded the Negeb of Judah and took Ziklag; while in his concluding prophecy Balaam speaks of them as "the first of the nations" (Num. xxiv, 20).

It does not seem unreasonable to suppose that at the battle of Rephidim (which lasted a whole long day, and about which there was recorded on the commemorative altar, "Jehovah will have war with Amalek from generation to generation") the Amalekites were so routed as to be forced to retire from all the valleys and pastures south of the Tíh range. Westwards they could not go, because this was the celebrated mining district held by the Egyptians, while on the east were the Midianites. They would therefore be pushed into the northern desert of the Tíh and the mountains of Magráh, Helal, &c. The *terminus ad quod* of the Israelites after Horeb was the Mount of the Amorites. Their way led through the terrible wilderness to Kadesh Barnea, while the wilderness of Paran is mentioned as the scene of their most important encampment, after the celebrated encampment in the plain Er Rahah.

Before I try to make clear a probable route for the Israelites, and

before I make any comparison between the suggestions of Professor Palmer and Mr. Holland, it may be well to take notice of any traces left in buildings or nomenclature by (1) Amorite or (2) Amalekite. The hills to the west of the plateau of Jebel Magráh are very rich in prehistoric remains of every description, as well as in those which belong to Christian and historical times. There are also strange memorials in the names of valleys, headlands, &c.

1. The vestiges of the Amorites may be noted in—

Dheigat el 'Amerín ("ravine of the Amorites"), a valley cutting through the range of hills to the north of Sebaita.

Rás 'Amir ("peak or brow of the Amorite"), a chain of low mountains fifteen miles south-west of El Meshrifeh, very conspicuous on the road from the watering-place in Wády el Muweilah, and about twelve miles north-west of the fountain in Wády Gadís.

Sheikh el 'Amirí, the name attached to the mound of stones on the slope of Wády Abyadh, between El Anjeh and Ruhaibeh.

The mountains and wádies with which such names are connected exhibit terraces laid out for cultivation, carefully constructed banks, and walls to resist the Seils, &c. In the presence of such works of so great antiquity, it may be argued that the people who raised them were either the old possessors of the land, or fancied themselves to have such hold of the land as to justify them in such expenditure of labour.

2. As to the Amalekite vestiges, note the appearance of this powerful people in the Bible. Like the Amorites they were highlanders; indeed, the term Amorite is often merely a descriptive term like Canaanite, Perizzite, or Hivite. Such a country as the Sinaitic Peninsula, the Negeb, and the hills to the west of the Negeb (the country which as yet has been so little explored), seems a natural home for them. At the time of the Exodus they occupied the Teirán Oasis, all the plain which rises from 'Ain Akhdar to Jebel et Tíh, and, as we may suppose, some part of the wild desert beyond, which was held in common possession with other tribes, termed descriptively Amorite, and must have been traversed by them when they left their home in the 'Arabah.

The prehistoric remains scattered over these districts are not all of the same character.

Professor Palmer notices a distinguishing difference between what he calls the Israelite remains at Erweis el Ebeirig, and remains in the same neighbourhood. One longs for some such clear evidence of their personality as was left by the Egyptians at Sarábít el Khádim, or Maghárah. All we have at present comes to this:—In the neighbourhood of Jebel Hadíd, a long day's journey south-east of the convent, Palmer and Holland examined the numerous remains which are seen there, and found them to be of two kinds. Suppose the beehive houses (which resemble the *bothan* of the Shetland Islands, and the *talayot* of the Balearic Islands) to have been an Amalekite village, we find others like them at the head of Wády el Biyár, where, scattered all over the rough open plain at the foot of

Jebel el Ejmeh, are also traces of dwellings in connection with the more primæval stone circles, or *dowârs*. In Wâdy Hebrán, at Teirán, and on the expanse above Wâdy Hudherah are more remains, as well as at the mouth of Wâdy Nisrín, where it joins Wâdy Teirán. Are these beehive houses Amalekite remains, or the remains of a previous people, or are we so to distinguish the one kind of village and cemetery from the other, as to say that the beehive houses belong to a people (perhaps Midianites) who occupied the land after the Israelite wave passed on northwards? Whichever way our conclusions incline, the land is found to have been capable of habitation, and to have presented some inducements to settlers.

I propose now to consider Mr. Holland's conclusions from his visit to the wilderness of Et Tîh in 1878. My own route in 1881-2 corresponded to some extent with his. At Erweis el Ebeirig, near the debouchure of Wâdy Sa'al, Mr. Holland turned north-east. Not satisfied with Palmer's identifications of Erweis el Ebeirig with Kibroth Hattaavah, and of 'Ain Hudherah with Hazeroth, he imagined for the Israelites a route which would have no inclination towards the sea, and proceeded to examine the pass Nagb Murrah, which leads over the lower range of Jebel et Tîh. He says that it is a difficult pass, and unsuitable for the passage of a large multitude. He also examined a pass leading up by Jebel Dhalal, and the pass Nagb el Múrád ("the Pass of the Watering-place"), which was first brought to notice by Drake and Palmer. This pass is not arduous, though winding and impracticable for wagons. There are some much frequented wells at El Biyár ("the wells"), about an hour from the base of Jebel Ejmeh, and there are wells in Wâdy Edeid, into which Wâdy el Biyár runs. In fact, in all this district underneath the southern and south-eastern ranges of the Tîh there is plenty of pasture and a fair amount of water.

Mr. Holland seems by chance to have come upon the Derb es Soúrah while tracing down Wâdy el Atiyeh to its junction with Wâdy Sowáin. My Arabs brought me from Wâdy el 'Ain, after I had been down from Hudherah to the Gulf of Akabah, to Wâdy Soúrah. The cave with the pool of delicious water mentioned by Mr. Holland is exceedingly picturesque, and one almost expects to see at the bend of the valley a thriving Swiss village. The road which ascends from this point into the Tîh mountains is by no means steep, and might be adapted for heavy traffic. Looking back one has a splendid view over the peninsula, and realises better the incline of the whole district, which is so well described in the expression "going down to Egypt." The route from Derb es Soúrah leads north-east to Jebel el Herte, passing by a large Arab cemetery. Some four hours further on a road falls into it from Akabah, and my cameleer pointed out a stone with figures and signs cut on it which seemed like tribe marks, though they may have been ancient. One of the wâdies I traversed in this day's journey was called Wâdy el Butmeh ("the valley of the Terebinth"), and suggested to me the "Eil Paran" of Genesis xiv, 6 (translated in our version's margin "the plain of Paran," and written "Eil Paran.") From Jebel el Herte Mr. Holland journeyed some twenty-five miles north-eastward to Wâdy Meleg, which flows towards the 'Arabah. A raid of

the Haiwát Arabs into the Maázi country, to the north-east of 'Akabah, deterred him from proceeding much further than the watering-place in this wády. My own route did not bend so much to the east, and brought me in about two days' journey to the wells of Themed, a little south of the Hajj route, and almost midway between Nakhil and 'Akabah.

A few weeks later on Mr. Holland made an expedition, under the escort of eight Haiwát Arabs, from Wády el'Ain, a wády coming down from the west side of the plateau of *Jebel Magráh* (the Negeb) to 'Ain Gadís. He tried unsuccessfully to explore the southern face of the plateau of *Jebel Magráh* towards *Jebel 'Araif* and *Wády Garaiyeh*, but he opened out an important country between *Jebel Helál* and *Ismailia*, which would be the line of traffic from the East to Egypt when Petra was a commercial centre, or when the Negeb was a thickly inhabited and well-cultivated country, as we feel sure, from the remains so visible now on the surface of the ground, it must once have been. His road brought him to the wells "Emshásh," and near to others called *El Jidy*, and through the midst of the *Jebel Maghárah* range. Between *Jebel Yeleg* and *Jebel Maghárah* runs to the north-east *Wády Dow*, the two mountain ranges stretching away to the westward. *Jebel Maghárah*, on one of whose slopes are some old round tombs, probably takes its name "Cave" from an arch (the supporting masonry still stands) which covered over the water-hole. Here are many *Nawamis*, and the remains of a square building, 30 feet by 20 feet, of roughly-hewn stones without mortar, besides twelve large watering troughs of rude masonry.

The whole surrounding country must be full of ancient remains. Mr. Holland found a number of flint-flakes, and some beautifully made arrow-heads, and says that wherever there were no sand-drifts the ancient road could be traced by these flint-flakes.

Professor Palmer's conclusions are given in chapter xi, volume ii, of "The Desert of the Exodus." The points he makes are:—

1. On leaving Sinai the children of Israel were conducted to some place whence they might make an attack on the idolatrous nations who barred their way to the Promised Land. Numbers x, 12 gives the general destination, the chapters following the detailed account of the journey.

2. The first permanent halting-place was *Kibroth Hattaavah* ("the graves of lust"). At *Erweis el Ebeirig* are seen the traces of the actual encampment, and the traveller may hear from his Arabs the tradition which gives life and meaning to those strange remains.

Hazeroth ("Enclosures") and *Hudherah* correspond in Semitic orthography, and in geographical position.

3. After *Hazeroth* we are told in Numbers xii, 16 that the people "pitched in the wilderness of Paran." In chapter xxxiii the stages of the journey are given. One of these is *Ezion Gáber*, which was at the head of the *Elanitic Gulf*. . . . "It is therefore certain that they took the route by 'Akabah, and did not enter the Tih by any of the passes in the southern edge of the plateau." (Here I cannot follow Palmer. I think it was as easy for the Israelites to get to *Ezion Gáber* by *Derb es Sofrah* and the

neighbouring passes, and then by Jebel el Hertz, and a wády like Wády Meleg, as to take the shore route, with its steep cliffs, promontories, &c. At page 514 Palmer tells us that Ezion = the Arabic "Ghadyán" = "Diana" in Latin, which is one of the stations in the Pentinger Tables on the route from 'Akabah to Jerusalem, and distant from 'Akabah fourteen and one-third English miles. But his measurement from Contellet Garaiyeh, which he proposed to identify with the Gypsaria of the Pentinger Tables, seems to be erroneous, since by the Tables the distance between Haila or 'Akabah and Gypsaria is forty-three miles, whereas on the map, in a straight line, it is about fifty-six miles. The only way to reconcile such a variation seems to be either to suppose the distances through the desert to be inaccurate on the Tables, or to put Elath or Haila some miles further north than the present fort of 'Akabah, and the Roman station Diana in Wády Ghadyán, instead of at the very spot where the port of Ezion may have stood; or, giving up the identification of Contellet Garaiyeh with Gypsaria, to place that station on the southern bank of Wády Garaiyeh.)

4. The wilderness of Zin must be the south-east corner of the desert of Et Tih, between 'Akabah and the head of Wády Garaiyeh. The name "wilderness of Kadesh," though properly applicable to the plain in front of the cliff in which 'Ain Gadís rises, might have been extended in its application to the whole district. The wilderness of Paran comprised the whole Bádiat et Tih, and Mount Paran is the lower portion of the mountain plateau in the north-east, known now as Jebel Magráh, below which, on the western side, is 'Ain Gadís, and Kadesh itself, situated on the plain by which most easily the Amorite mountains would be reached.

5. The Israelites, being encamped in the plain at the foot of the cliffs in which 'Ain Gadís takes its rise, were to march into Palestine by the easy route which skirts the western edge of the mountains. The spies were sent out from Kadesh, making a detour by way of the mountains of the Negeb, and striking into the heart of the plateau at Wády Ghamr; they were to search the land, and to return by the western route. They brought their grapes, pomegranates, and figs from some of the vineyards and gardens which one comes across in the country immediately above Wády Muweilih, and not from the valley of Hebron, some sixty miles distant.

6. In the mountain north-east of Wády Hanein, a locality where we find the Amorite name preserved in Dheigat el 'Amerín, Rás 'Amir, and Sheikh el 'Amirí, &c., the forces of the Amorites were doubtless concentrated, guarding the road to the Promised Land, *viâ* Rehoboth, as well as that which led through the centre of the mountains of the Negeb towards 'Ara'rah, the Aroer of Judah (a city to which David, after his victory over the Amalekites (1 Sam. xxx, 28), sent a share of the spoil, and towards the rich pasture country of the Canaanite, the King of Arád, marked now by Tell 'Arád.

7. In Deuteronomy i, 2, he finds a clear indication of the direction of the route of the Israelites. Moses is about to give the Israelites some account of the wanderings of "the forty years' punishment." He clears the ground at starting by saying, "There are eleven days' journey from

Horeb, *by way of Mount Seir, to Kadesh Barnea.*" Though we have been so long on the way, keep before your mind that to the ordinary traveller the route was plain and direct. To reach Mount Seir we made twenty separate encampments before Ezion Gaber was reached. Water and pasturage and open camping-grounds had to be taken into consideration, as I foresaw when I pressed Hobab the Midianite, naturally well acquainted with valleys, &c., in the eastern portion of the peninsula, to act as our guide. But ours was an exceptional case.

8. The fertile portion of the Negeb is bounded by Wády Marreh, Wády Maderah, Wády el Abyadh, &c. The mountains to the south of these wádies and the southern plateau of Jebel Magráh, through which the Israelites passed unopposed, was a sort of neutral ground between the Edomites on the east, and their kinsmen the Amalekites and other allied tribes on the west, who are spoken of in 1 Samuel xxvii, 8 as being "of old the inhabitants of the land as thou goest to Shur, even unto the land of Egypt." This land had previously been inhabited by the Avim (Deut. ii, 23), "which dwelt in Hazerim ('pastoral enclosures,' as at Hudherah, the *dowars* and stone circles so common in the district) even unto Azzah ('Gaza')." Edom proper, Mount Seir of Deuteronomy, is a narrow slip of country, for the most part mountainous, but very fertile, extending northward from the head of the Elanitic Gulf as far as Wády Kereh, the southern boundary of Moab. The eastern hills and terraces of the plateau of Et Tíh form its western boundary, and the Hajj route from Damascus to Mecca its eastern boundary.

9. There is no possibility of reconciling the passes in Deuteronomy and Numbers, either with each other or with the actual topography of the country, unless we place the wilderness of Kadesh Barnea in the desert south of the pass into the hill country round Meshrifeh and Sebaita—in the cliffs above which desert is 'Ain Gadís. Moses says (Deut. i, 7) that the mount of the Amorites is the goal of their journey from Horeb, and in verses 19 and 20 he says: "We came, having passed through the great and terrible wilderness" (words probably inapplicable to the lower Arabia when Ezion at the mouth of Wády Ghadyán was a port, and the terminus of a commercial road leading both to Egypt and to the Philistine country), "to Kadesh Barnea. And I said unto you, Ye are come unto the mountain of the Amorites, which the Lord our God doth give unto us." Kadesh, in Numbers xx, 1, is spoken of as being in the wilderness of Zin—just as Meribah Kadesh, in Deuteronomy xxxii, 51, the scene of the great transgression of Moses and Aaron, is also described as being in the wilderness of Zin. It is from that point—Kadesh of the wilderness of Paran, or of Zin (Num. xii, 16; xiii, 21, 26)—that the Israelites went up presumptuously to the hill-tops, and were smitten by the Amalekites and Canaanites.

10. Between the defeat at Hormah and the re-assembling of the people at Kadesh, the well-known sanctuary of another nation, is a gap of thirty-eight years, in which only a few incidents are recorded. They were the years of the penal wanderings of God's people, sunk now to the level of a

mere nomad tribe. But from Kadesh, in the fortieth year, they set out under God's direction, a new people, into the wilderness of the Red Sea (the route which led down to Ezion Gebir and Elath), in order to compass the territory of the Edomites, through which they had been refused passage, and to pass up by the eastern desert towards Moab and the Jordan ford. That the rallying point was Kadesh goes some way to prove that they could not have penetrated into the eastern desert before, for in that case the natural rendezvous for a nation wanting to reach the ford of Jordan would have been to the east of Edom, while had Kadesh been north of the watershed of the Arabah, there would have been a necessity for asking passage through a portion of the territory of Edom to reach it, both now and on their first visit.

11. The attack by the Canaanite, the King of Arád, is to be taken as an episode in the march of the Israelites, while they were encamped in the Arabah, near Mount Hor, and were waiting for the return of the messengers sent from Kadesh to the King of Edom,—just as the expedition against Midian (Num. xxxi, 1, 12) must have been an episode of their sojourn in the plains of Moab.

12. In Numbers xxi we have an account of the journey after the Edomite refusal was known. Its direction is first southwards to the head of the gulf, and then by Wády Ithm on to the road to Moab which runs between Edom and the limestone plateau of the Great Eastern desert.

The difficulty about the itinerary of Numbers xxxiii, if Palmer's view be adopted, that it gives the details of the various stages from Horeb to Kadesh, seems to me to consist in the minute account of the stations between Horeb and Ezion Gaber, and the omission of any between Ezion and Kadesh. The only explanations which in any way satisfy one are, that the Israelites took an unusual course to get to Ezion, or that they marched in several detachments by various routes, and so the several camping-grounds of the detachments are mentioned.

Ezion Gaber, at the head of the gulf, was geographically the most important point in their journey. Thence to Kadesh was a frequented road used by the merchant caravans. Palmer seems here to have got confused. He says that he has no doubt whatever as to the general direction of the Israelites' journey: he reminds us that the wind in Numbers xi, 31 brought the quails from the sea, as though the people were moving towards the sea rather than directly northwards to the rolling plain beyond 'Ain Akhdhar; and he believed that all, or at least a portion, of the unidentified names may be recovered in the district north-east of 'Ain Hudherah and south-west of the 'Azázimeh mountains. He then mentions Rissah as probably identical with the "Rasa" of the Pentinger Tables, sixteen Roman miles from "Diana" (Ezion); Haradah with Jebel 'Arádeh, at whose base runs the great Wády el 'Ain of the Hudherah district; Tahath with Wády El't'hí, the connecting wády between Wádies Hudherah and El 'Ain; Heshmonah with Heshmon, one of the frontier cities of Judah in the Negeb, towards the coast of Edom. These identifications *quite* throw out of gear the continuous itinerary of Numbers xxxiii, 16-36.

It is noticeable that many of these names of the stations are taken (as is the case with the Arabic names in use to-day) from features in the landscape, *e.g.*, from the strange formation of a cliff, from a conspicuous tree, from the presence of water, &c. And this would account, then as now, for the confusing recurrence of the same name in distinct, though not far off, districts. But such a record of certain journeyings as that given in Deuteronomy x, 6, 7, precludes this fact from being urged to support the theory that we are reading of two different periods of the great journey of the Israelites.

There is another view of the itinerary of Numbers xxxiii. It is set forth by Bishop Wordsworth in his Commentary. The itinerary, according to this view, is to be divided into four periods:—

First period (verses 5 to 15)—from Rameses to Horeb.

Second period (verses 16 and 17)—from Horeb to Hazaroth, and (supplying verse 16, Numbers xii) so to Kadesh Barnea.

Third period (verses 18 to 36)—from Kadesh Barnea the first time, to Kadesh Barnea the second time, a period described very briefly in Deuteronomy i, 46.

Fourth period (verses 37 to 49)—from Kadesh to the plains of Moab.

With this careful division, however, we get into confusion again with Deuteronomy x, 6, 7. *There* a journey is described with much precision. It starts from the watering-places of the great Beni-Jaakan tribe to Mosera (the well-known place—the historian says—where Aaron died and was mourned for thirty days), then to Gudgodah (Hor-hagidgad), and then to the district of Jotbath, which, after the wilderness, seemed a land of rivers of water.

In Numbers we have Mosera first, then Beni-Jaakan, then Gudgodah, then Jotbath. Of course there may be an easy way out of the difficulty, but it is hardly fair to say that in the one passage the first journey is described with its continuous and regularly appointed march, and in the other, with all the appearance (except in proper topographical sequence) of a regular succession of the proper stages of a journey, the capricious movements of a wandering people through a long stretch of years.

Such stations as Rithmah, Rimmon-Parez, Zibnah, Makheloth, Mithcah, Ebronah, might be anywhere in a district whose valleys are named merely from the existence of water, or of pasture, or of a single tree. Still, that four of the stations of this third period should be mentioned together in another record, which is describing the journeyings of another period, rather goes to negative the view that in this third period some of the stations of the penal wanderings are being given.

The prehistoric remains in the peninsula, in the Badiet et Tfih, in the Negeb, and in Jebel Magráh, furnish a proof that the whole country must have presented a very different aspect to the Israelites from what it now presents. The discovery, too, of such roads from the district under the Et Tfih range to the plateau and plains above, as Nagb el Mírád, Derb es Sofrah, and one still more to the north-east, shows that the access to the

Promised Land from the peninsula may have been easier than was supposed by Biblical students of a past generation.

Kadesh Barnea was the destination of the Israelites, and, as Palmer points out, drawing his inference from the strangely placed passage in Deuteronomy i, 2, "by the Mount Seir route." This probably meant by the 'Arabah. But if the Elanitic Gulf had its head at Ezion, near the mouth of Wády Ghadyán, it would be more natural for a large caravan bound for Ezion to make its journey inland than to take the seashore course, by striking it at the debouchure of Wády el 'Ain or Wády Wettír. I am myself convinced that such a route from Hudherah (even if it were shown that Wády El'thí, between Wádies Hudherah and El 'Ain, is not open enough for the passage of a large multitude) is quite practicable. It would make its first station at the lower water of Wády el 'Ain, and its next at the base of Jebel 'Aradeh, where is a fine open plain, rich in prehistoric remains. It would follow up the easy wádies which pass the spring water at Sou'rah, and lie near the upper waters of El 'Ain to the road—"Derb es Sou'rah"—and so to the uplands of the eastern portion of the Tíh range. Though I was bound for the well Themed (my Arabs pronounced the word "Summed") on the Hajj route from Nakh'l to Arabah, I could, from several points of view, survey the country stretching towards the 'Arabah. I imagine that no special difficulties would present themselves before reaching the western slopes of that great valley, and the point where I suppose Ezion to have been situated. A "terrible wilderness" is this portion of the country, but there are five known wells to the south of the Hajj route, and many watering-places, with much water after rain. From the numerous groups of Nawámís, and from the cairns or beacons one comes across, it is reasonable to suppose that this strange tract once possessed more life than now, and was more frequently traversed.

The route I followed from the well at Themed avoided Nakh'l altogether; and I think it pursued the line which the Roman road, whose stations are given on the Pentinger Tables, took from Elusa to Diana. Except in the want of water between Themed and Muweileh (twenty-eight hours), the route involves no excessive fatigue or hardship. Jebel Muweileh and the 'Ain, which is supposed to be Hagar's well, "between Kadesh and Bered," lie more to the west than 'Ain Gadís, but so near (about twelve miles) that the wády, which is wide and open, might be included in the wilderness of Kadesh.

In conclusion, I would observe that I don't see why Palmer lays such stress on "Hudherah" being "Hazeroth" of Numbers xi, 35. Hazeroth (Hazerim = "pastoral enclosures") was a very general term, and would apply to many of the prehistoric remains below the Tíh range. It may be a mere chance which has preserved the name in the word "Hudherah." On the other hand "Hudherah" is a beautiful oasis, and presents every attraction for the encampments of a multitude of people.

Palmer says, at the commencement of the story of his travels: "The scenes of the Exodus took place undoubtedly in that desert region—Arabia

Petræa. This includes, besides the Sinaitic Peninsula, the Bâdîet et Tîh (literally signifying 'the desert of the wanderings'), and some portion of Idumæa and Moab.

"The desert of Et Tîh is bounded on the north by the Mediterranean Sea and the mountains of Judah; on the west by the Isthmus of Suez; and on the east by the 'Arabah, that large valley or depression which runs between the Gulf of 'Akabah and the Dead Sea."

Of Jebel el Magrâh he says: "The mountain plateau in the north-east of the Tîh is full of interest. . . . It is about seventy miles in length, and from forty to fifty miles broad, commencing at Jebel 'Araif, and extending northward by a series of steps or terraces to within a short distance of Beersheba. . . . It projects into the Tîh, much in the same way as the Tîh projects into Sinai, and, like it, also terminates in steep escarpments towards the south, falling away to a lower level on the south-eastern side. On the west it is chiefly drained by two main valleys, Wâdy Garaiyeh and Wâdy el Abyadh, which ultimately combine their streams, and, flowing into Wâdy el 'Arîsh, are carried on to the Mediterranean. On the east Wâdy Ghamr and Wâdy Marreh receive the greater part of the water-supply, and bear it down to the 'Arabah into the Dead Sea. This mountain plateau is the Negeb, or "south country," of the Bible. The watershed of the 'Arabah on its eastern limit is some twenty-five or thirty miles more to the south than the southern boundary of the Magrâh plateau.

C. PICKERING CLARKE.

THORNHAM, EYE,

August 28th, 1883.

LARGE MILLSTONE ON THE SHITTIM PLAIN.

SPEAKING of certain peculiar stones in the part of Moab examined by Captain Conder he says: "The stone is yet more remarkable: it lies in the Ghor south of Kefrein, beside a thorn tree; it is 10½ feet in diameter, and 3 feet 6 inches thick, being far too large and heavy ever to have been used as a millstone. It is pierced by a cylindrical hole in the middle, 2 feet in diameter. The Arabs call it *Mensef Abu Zeid* ("the dish of Abu Zeid"), and relate that this mythical hero here sacrificed a whole camel which he gave as a feast to the local Arabs when he was about to leave the Ghor" (*Quarterly Statement*, April 1882, p. 74).

This is the same stone which I examined early in 1876, and of which I gave an account in my report to the American Society, which was published in the winter of 1876-7. In my volume "East of the Jordan," p. 231, after having spoken of the dolmens in this vicinity, which Conder has since described, I say, "about half-way between these two places (*i.e.*, Tell Ektanu and Tell el Hammam) I found an immense circular stone lying