

so passionately fond of Biblical studies, and which has already made such great and fruitful sacrifices for the exploration of Palestine.

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THE ROUTE OF THE EXODUS.

ON the eve of the departure of the Palestine Exploration Expedition from Egypt for the Arabah last year I sent to Major Kitchener a copy of my book, "The Hebrew Migration from Egypt" (Trübner), with a request that he would kindly note some places in the region he was about to visit as illustrative of my view of the route taken by the Israelites on their route from Egypt to the Land of Promise. I was specially anxious to learn certain particulars about the Haj route from Suez to Akabah, at the head of the eastern arm of the Red Sea, and about the region immediately to the east of Petra. The Expedition did not follow the above route, nor was time or opportunity permitted for the examination of the neighbourhood of Petra. Major Kitchener was, however, good enough to send me a list of the stations of the Haj, from Suez to Akabah, and their characteristics in respect to water supply, and after an examination of my views as to the course followed by the Hebrews, wrote to me as follows :— "I think in your book you have described the actual route taken by the Israelites, and I fully believe Mount Hor and Mount Sinai to be one." As, however, my view completely revolutionises all that has for many centuries been generally accepted, respecting not only the track of the Israelites on quitting Egypt, but the locality of Mount Sinai, it may perhaps not be uninteresting to the members of the Palestine Exploration Fund to summarise briefly the principal grounds on which I have based my conclusions.

According to the Scriptural account the following were the stages and the incidents of the journey between the Egyptian frontier and Mount Sinai. The Israelites went three days into the wilderness, and found no water; at their next stage they came to Marah, where the water was bitter. The next point mentioned is Elim, with its wells and palm-trees, where they encamped by the waters of the Red Sea; from Elim they entered the wilderness of Sin, which lay between Elim and Sinai, and whilst there received the quails, the eating of which caused so many deaths that the place was called Kibroth-hat-taavah (Numb. xi, 34). They then reached Rephidim, where there was no water for the people, and where Moses, having gone on before, caused water to flow through the riven rock. In this neighbourhood the Israelites met Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, and his people, and concluded a league with them (Exod. xviii, 12). Then follows the mention of Mount Sinai, and what occurred there. This account of the route from Egypt to Sinai is perfectly intelligible, and as I show is alone reconcilable with the assumption that the Israelites crossed the Tih by the well-known road to the Gulf of Akabah, and thence pro-

ceeded up the Arabah for some distance and entered the Idumean range by one of the valleys debouching on "the plain."

The time employed in crossing the Tih from Suez to Akabah is six days. During the first three days no water is found, and the traveller then arrives at Nakhl, the half-way house across the desert, where there is good water. The next stage is Abiar Alaina, so named by the earlier travellers, where the water is bitter; the next, the summit of the defile overlooking the Gulf of Akabah; and the final stage Akabah (Elath), known in ancient and modern times for its wells and its palm-trees, and one of the resting-places of the Egyptian Haj on its road to and from Mecca.

It is therefore easy to reconcile the incidents of a journey across the Tih with those related as marking that of the Israelites before reaching Elim. During three days they would seek in vain for water, which does not exclude the presumption that at the end of that time they obtained it; at their next stage they would reach Abiar Alaina, where the water is bitter; and the next place worthy of mention must have been Elath, with its wells and palm-trees. In the Scriptural records it is stated to have been Elim. Elim and Elath are, however, as every Hebraist knows, only different plural forms of El (as Hazarim and Hazeroth, Deut. ii, 23; i, 1, are plurals of Hazer), and have the same meaning, namely, "trees," or "palm-trees." I cannot here give in detail the many reasons, Scriptural, philological, historical, and geographical, for my identification of the Elim of Exodus xv, 27, with the Elath of Deuteronomy ii, 8, and the historical books (1 Kings ix, 26) which preserved its name until converted by the Greeks into Elana, and by the Romans into Ailah.

If the Israelites took the route I have indicated, then it will probably be admitted that Mount Sinai must have been somewhere in the Idumean range. The captives would scarcely have returned to the Tih, and they did not until a much later period march along the east "coast" of Edom. They consequently must have gone northwards up the Arabah.

I then proceed to show that if they took this route, they entered the Idumean range by one of the valleys communicating with Petra, that it was Kadesh in the vicinity of the Mount of God, and that the miraculous supply of water was obtained through the Sik, the marvellous chasm through which a stream enters Petra from the east.

The evidence supplied, not only in the Scriptural records, but elsewhere, in support of the accuracy of these conclusions is overwhelming. It is needless to say that there is not a word to be found in Holy Writ in which any allusion is made to the so-called Sinaitic peninsula.

In the blessing of Moses Sinai is placed in Seir (Deut. xxxiii, 2), and that the mountain range of Seir was in Edom is not disputed. In the song of Deborah (Judges v, 3, 4) the mother of Israel no less unmistakably indicates that to her mind Sinai was in Edom, and was one of the mountains of Seir. Habakuk sings of God coming out of Teman, and the Holy One out of Mount Paran (Hab. iii, 2), which mount is identified in the blessing of Moses with Sinai, whilst Teman is universally admitted to have formed part of Edom. The story of Elijah's journey to the Mount

of God (1 Kings xix) furnishes no great help in determining whether Sinai was in the peninsula or in Edom, but I show by Josephus's paraphrase of the story that in his opinion the prophet directed his steps to Edom. St. Paul beyond all question placed Sinai in Arabia (Gal. iv, 25), and I demonstrate by a careful examination of the earliest opinions held respecting the limits of that country, both by Arabian geographers and others, that it was not until the second century of the Christian era that Ptolemy created a new Arabia, called Arabia Petræa, which he is supposed to have extended to the west of the Arabah, comprising the Tih and the Sinaitic peninsula; but this Arabia was absolutely unknown to St. Paul and his contemporaries, and could not in the necessity of things have been referred to by him when he used the words "Mount Sinai in Arabia." Isstachri, in the tenth century, and Abulfeda at a still later date, declared that Arabia did not extend west of the Arabah, and they would never have sought for Sinai to the west of that boundary. The Tih and the peninsula were regarded in Judæa, until long after the commencement of the Christian era, as portions of Egyptian territory.

From a careful examination of the "Onomasticon," I show that Eusebius and Jerome, though evidently ignorant of the precise mountain to be regarded as Mount Sinai, were of opinion, on the strength of traditions existing in their time, and of beliefs held by their contemporaries, that some of the places which in the Pentateuch must have been in close proximity to the Mount of God were in Idumea. Thus the place where Moses caused the water to flow from the rock at Rephidim they identified with what must be the later Petra. Pharan, which must equally have been in the neighbourhood of Sinai, they declared was three days' journey from Ailah on the *east*; but following the Roman road which led from Ailah through the Wâdy-el-Yitm to the east of the range of Seir, such a journey would take the traveller to a region bordering on Petra. It is, however, clear from the writings of Eusebius and Jerome, and I may also add Josephus, that at the commencement of the Christian era, and at the end of the fourth century, there was no one in Judæa who had a knowledge of the precise locality of Sinai. All that was known of it was that it was in Arabia; but if Josephus, or Eusebius, or Jerome, had known of any mountain which in their time was called Sinai, they would undoubtedly have fixed the locality by stating its distance from some place well known to their contemporaries. For example, Mount Hor, where Aaron died, is unequivocally stated to be in the immediate neighbourhood of Petra.

It appears from the chronicles of the Monk of Chartres, and Albert of Aix, that at the commencement of the twelfth century Baldwin led two expeditions through Idumea. In the first he reached Petra and was there shown the waters which flowed from the rock when struck by the great Hebrew lawgiver, and in the adjoining Mount Hor the King and his companions were led to believe they saw Mount Sinai. In the latter expedition they proceeded as far as Ailah, at the head of the Gulf of Akabah, and were told that it was the Elin with its wells and palm-trees

mentioned in Exodus. Here they received a message from the monks living on Mount Sinai begging them not to ascend the mountain. I show that this mountain could not have been in the Sinaitic peninsula, but must have been the same to which reference is made in the record of the first expedition, as overhanging Petra, upon which was a Monastery dedicated to Aaron.

I consequently demonstrate that all the evidence at our command, whether supplied by the Scriptures or by other writings, points in one direction alone, and indicates beyond doubt that Sinai was in Edom.

We possess, however, in the Book of Deuteronomy (x, 1-6) absolute proof that Sinai was not only in Edom, but was identical with the mountain where Aaron died, the *Har-ha-har*, "the Mount of Mounts," now known as Mount Hor. I need not say Mount Hor is not a proper name: it is simply Hor-Hor—Mount-Mount.

It is there stated that Moses having descended from "the mountain" with the second set of tables of stone placed them in the Ark. That this mountain was Sinai will not be denied. But immediately afterwards follows an account of the children of Israel setting forth from the walls of the Beni Jaakan to Mosera, and that there Aaron died and was succeeded by Eleazar. But it is undisputed that Aaron died on Mount Hor—the Mount of Mounts, and it is therefore abundantly clear that to the mind of the Deuteronomist—whether Moses or a later writer—the death of Aaron took place on or in the immediate neighbourhood of Mount Sinai. On grounds into which I cannot enter here I identify the Beeroth Beni Jaakan with the Esek and Sitnah of Isaac, and the Massah and Meribah of Exodus' which are to-day represented by two streams rising a few miles to the east of Petra and uniting before they penetrate the Sik. The well from which one of these streams springs bears to-day, as it did in the time of the Crusaders, the name of Ain Mûsa—"the Well of Moses."

Kadesh I identify as Petra, not only on the testimony of Eusebius and Jerome, but on the conclusive evidence furnished by the Targumists and Josephus that Rekam was the ancient Kadesh and the then modern Petra. Of the contiguity of Kadesh to the Mount of God, the Scriptural records leave us no room for doubting.

It will possibly be objected that if Mount Sinai and Mount Hor were identical, it is almost incredible that the people of Judæa should have lost sight of that fact, and that the recollection of Aaron's death on the mountain should have survived the memory of the far more wonderful event recorded as having occurred on the Mount of God.

I meet this objection ("Hebrew Migration," pp. 330-333), as I believe successfully, though I cannot here even summarise my arguments. We must not, however, lose sight of the only too palpable fact that Sinai, wherever situated, to all appearances fell into oblivion after the settlements on the opposite sides of the Jordan. No pilgrimages were made to it, and its recollection alone survived in the poetry of the sacred bards. But if it was in the peninsula this neglect is as surprising and unaccountable as if it was in Edom, and consequently this objection presses with equal weight

against the theories of those who identify *Jebel Músa* and *Jebel Serbal* with the Mount of God as against mine.

It will also be objected that if my view of the route taken by the Israelites be correct, the wanderings in the desert become still more unintelligible. My reply is, that although a considerable period—forty years—elapsed between the departure from Egypt and the settlement in the Promised Land, there is not the faintest suggestion, either in the Pentateuch or elsewhere in the Scriptures, that the Israelites passed that time in wandering from place to place in the manner popularly assigned to them.

The issue here raised is one not only of historical interest, but of deeply religious importance. If, as the Scriptures teach us, the Israelites were Divinely led to their future home, it is impossible to overrate the mistake, if mistake it be, of alleging that during the long period which elapsed between the departure from Egypt and their arrival in the Land of Promise, they were made to stray from place to place within a region which they could have easily quitted within a week.

According to my construction of the story of the Exodus the Israelites arrived at Mount Sinai—*Hor*, within a month after quitting Egypt (*Numb. xx, 1*), having crossed the desert of the *Tih* probably by *Nakhl*, and *Abiar Alaina* (*Marah*) to *Elim—Elath*, at the head of the Gulf of *Akabah*, and thence northwards up the *Arabah*. They were there hospitably received by the *Kenites* who occupied the country adjoining Mount *Hor* (*Exod. iii, 1*). Some time after their arrival they addressed a request to the King of *Edom* to be permitted to pass through his territory in order to make their way to the trans-Jordanic region. This request was refused (*Numb. xx, 21*). *Edom* came out against Israel “with a high hand,” and the further advance of the Israelites was arrested for a period, the length of which we cannot determine with certainty, and Israel “abode in *Kadesh*” (*Judges xi, 17*). Subsequently and probably when the “forty years” were nearly exhausted, despairing of being permitted to pass through *Edom*, the Israelites re-entered the *Arabah* from *Kadesh* (*Petra*), and having “dwelt long enough upon this mount,” were commanded to “turn” (*Deut. i, 6, 7*), which they did, and “took” their journey into the wilderness “by the way of the Red Sea” (*Deut. ii, 1*), and having passed “through the way of the plain” (*Arabah*) by *Elath* and *Ezion-gaber* (*Deut. ii, 8*), at the head of the Gulf of *Akabah*, directed their steps northwards by the eastern border of *Edom* to *Moab*, and thence across the *Arnon* into the trans-Jordanic region.

This may appear a very startling version of “the forty years’ wanderings in the desert.” I cannot, however, claim for it the merit of originality. The same story was told much more succinctly nearly three thousand years ago, by one of the Judges of Israel. The authority of *Jephthah* will hardly be called in question (*Judges ii, 16–18*).

But it will then be asked, “What becomes of the famous wanderings?” My answer is that the belief in them has arisen through the misconceptions entertained in later ages of the very simple and intelligible language

contained in the Pentateuch. These misconceptions have arisen in part from misunderstanding the original story, by gratuitously assuming that the Israelites spent the forty years in moving from place to place, and in part from mistranslation of the Hebrew words which are supposed to mean "to wander."

Caleb is represented as saying that "Israel wandered in the wilderness" (Josh. xiv, 10), but the verb used, *Hah-lach*, literally means "to walk;" and it is so stated in the marginal note in the Authorised Version. The same word is used in Deuteronomy xxiii, 14, "Thy God *walketh* in the midst of thy camp," and by Jephthah when he said, "Israel walked through the wilderness to the Red Sea" (Judges xi, 16). This word is frequently employed in Hebrew to signify a state of continuance, thus resembling the French verb *aller*.

Again in Numbers xiv, 33, the word *Rah-yah* is translated "wander," though the translators admit in the margin that it also means "feed." The passage simply means that the rising generation were compelled to "feed"—that is, to live—forty years in the wilderness, until their disobedient parents had died.

In Numbers xxxii, 13, it is said that God "made them wander in the wilderness forty years," but the word so translated, *Noo-ay*, when used elsewhere does not bear this interpretation, but simply means a change of movement consequent on the non-realisation of the object originally prompting it (2 Sam. xv, 20). It would therefore be applicable to the change of route forced upon the Israelites when they failed to secure a passage through Edom, and after a long delay had to retrace their steps to Elim-Elath, and thus skirt the eastern border of Edom. The word does not mean an objectless moving from place to place, or an unreasoning straying in a region from which the strayers were presumably unable to find their way out.

The Psalmist uses (Ps. cvii, 4, 40) a word, *Tah-yah*, which has been rendered *wander*, but when it is pointed out that Abraham employs the same word when telling Abimelech that God caused him to "*wander*" from his father's house (Gen. xx, 13), it is apparent that it simply means to journey in search of an, as yet, undiscovered home.

Those who quitted Egypt, save the rising generation, never entered the Land of Promise, and as the time necessary for proceeding from that country to the land of Gilead would, under ordinary circumstances, have been but a few weeks, the conception arose in later times that the forty years were passed in "wandering"—that is, in straying—from place to place in the desert. But there was nothing in the records taken with them by the Israelites to the land of their settlement to justify that conclusion. They had passed "forty years" in the *desert*, but so they termed the entire region which intervened between Egypt and their future home, and necessarily including Kadesh with the Mount of God. The greater portion of the time was passed at Kadesh, but this fact (Judges ii, 17) was lost sight of centuries afterwards, and the belief arose that the time passed in the desert was occupied in moving objectlessly about from one place to

another. The demonstration that the Israelites did not "wander" is surely more consonant with a belief in Divine guidance than the common assumption that they acted like men who had lost their way.

It will be seen that the key to the solution of the most interesting and ancient of historical enigmas lies in the identification of Elim, the place of palm-trees, with Elath or Eloth, equally noted for its palm-trees and its wells down to the present day. The Coptic monks who settled in the Sinaitic peninsula in the third and fourth centuries chose to fancy that one of its mountains must have been the Mount of God. There were none to deny the pretensions thus set up, and in the course of centuries they became so firmly established that no one ever dreamt of calling them in question. Hence inquirers into the route taken by the Israelites have always started from the postulate that the released captives must have entered the peninsula; hence the necessity for placing Elim somewhere on the shore of the Gulf of Suez, though confessedly no place corresponds to it, and hence the final necessity of taking the Israelites from one of the so-called Sinaitic mountains up to the table-land of the Tih, and leaving them there without any attempt to trace their further progress until at some distant period they are found at Mount Hor. Let this entirely unsupported assumption of the Coptic monks be discarded—an assumption which I have shown to be wholly at variance with every allusion to the locality of Sinai in the Biblical records, and with the opinions held on the same subject by Josephus, Eusebius, Jerome, and by the Crusaders—and the story, as told in the Mosaic records, becomes perfectly simple and intelligible. I further demonstrate conclusively that the western region of the Sinaitic peninsula close to the Gulf of Suez was occupied by the Egyptians at the time of the Exodus, and that the battle between the Israelites and the Amalekites recorded in Exodus xvii could not by any possibility have been fought in that region. The Amalekites were to be found in Edom, and in that region at a subsequent period the Israelites sustained a defeat at their hands (Numb. xiv, 45; Deut. i), and it was they who barred the route of the Israelites to the Promised Land (Numb. xiii, 2). Josephus constantly identifies the Amalekites with the Edomites.

The stations of the Egyptian Haj between Suez and Akabah, as given by Major Kitchener, correspond with the Biblical account of the journey of the Israelites across the desert to Elim-Elath-Akahab:—1st day, En Nawater, no water; 2nd day, Jebel Hosu, no water; 3rd day, Nakhl, good water; 4th day, Abu Muhammed, or Er Reis, bad salt water; 5th day, Ras en Nakb; 6th day, Akabah, good water. It will thus be seen that the three days' journey without water would take the Israelites to Nakhl; the next day's journey to Abu Muhammed, evidently a modern name, which I identify in my book under the name of Abiar or Bir Alaina with Marah and its bitter water, and from thence it was two days' journey to Akabah—the Ailah of the Romans, the Elana of the Greeks, and the Elim-Elath of the Hebrews.

I may add, in conclusion, that it is singularly confirmatory of the accuracy of my conclusion in placing Kibroth-hat-taavah, "the Graves of

Lust," in the Arabah between Elim-Akabah and Mount Hor—Sinai, that in the map of the lower Arabah, prepared under the direction of Major Kitchener, a marsh with the name Taavah is placed about a day's march from the head of the gulf. On the western side of the marsh are the remains of a Bedawin cemetery. It would be curious to ascertain whether the Bedawin selected so strange a place for a burial ground in consequence of any ancient tradition still clinging to it. At all events the designation remains unchanged after 3,000 years—Kibroth-hat-Taavah, "the cemetery of Tavaah."

J. BAKER GREENE.

A PUZZLE IN JOSEPHUS: TWO GADARAS OR ONE?

EVER since I prepared my work on "Galilee in the time of Christ," which first appeared early in 1874, I have felt that there was a difficulty with regard to a certain passage in Josephus, and its solution which I subsequently arrived at may be useful to those who have not reached independently a similar result. These notes might have been published long ago, except that I hesitated to do so on the ground that I did not feel competent to criticise so celebrated an editor of Josephus as Dindorf. The difficulty to which I refer will be best represented by quoting two passages both of which are from the "History of the Jewish War."

1. "Vespasian having arrived before the city of Gadara, carried it on the first assault, having come upon it while it was destitute of an effective force. On entering the town he put to death without distinction all from youth upward, the Romans showing compassion to none of adult age, as well from hatred to the nation as in recollection of the outrages committed against Cestius. The city itself he reduced to ashes, all the hamlets and small towns around sharing its fate." (3 "Wars," vii, 1.)

2. Vespasian "broke up his encampment" at Cesarea-on-the-sea that he might proceed to Jerusalem and finish the war, but deemed it "necessary previously to reduce what remained in his way, that no external impediment might interfere with his operations. Accordingly he marched on Gadara, the capital of Perea, a place of some strength, which he entered on the 4th of the month Dystrus," corresponding to the 24th of February. No battle took place here, for by a preconceived plan that portion of the inhabitants who were disposed for peace opened the gates secretly and welcomed him to the city, while those who were for war fled, and their pursuit led at last to the engagement before Beth Eunnabrin, and to the slaughter on the east bank of the Jordan opposite Jericho. Vespasian merely placed a garrison in Gadara, and withdrew again with a large part of his army to Cesarea-on-the-sea. (4 "Wars," vii, 3, 4.)

It is commonly supposed that the Gadara referred to in these two