

Lesson IV.

THE SIN OF MOSES AND AARON

October 26, 1913

BETWEEN THE LESSONS—Ch. 14: 26-39 tells how all the Israelites, over twenty years old, except Caleb and Joshua, were condemned to wander for forty years, including the two years since the departure from Egypt, and at last die in the wilderness, while the ten spies died by plague. In vs. 40-45, the people, trying to regain God's favor, march up to the hills in the Negeb, but are defeated by the Amalekites. The Lesson takes up the story at the end of the forty years' wandering.

GOLDEN TEXT—Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my rock, and my redeemer.—Psalm 19: 14 (Rev. Ver.).

Memorize vs. 11, 12. **THE LESSON PASSAGE**—Numbers 20: 1-13. Read Numbers, chs. 17-20.

1 Then came the children of Israel, even the whole congregation, ² into the desert of Zin in the first month: and the people abode in Ka'desh; and Mir'iam died there, and was buried there.

2 And there was no water for the congregation: and they ³ gathered themselves together against Mo'ses and against Aa'ron.

3 And the people ⁴ chode with Mo'ses, and spake, saying, Would God that we had died when our brethren died before the Lord!

4 And why have ye ⁵ brought up the congregation of the Lord into this wilderness, that we and our cattle should die there?

5 And wherefore have ye made us to come up out of Egypt, to bring us in unto this evil place? it is no place of seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of pomegranates; neither is there any water to drink.

6 And Mo'ses and Aa'ron went from the presence of the assembly unto the door of the ⁷ tabernacle of the congregation, and ⁸ they fell upon their faces: and the glory of the Lord appeared unto them.

7 And the Lord spake unto Mo'ses, saying,

8 Take the rod, and ⁹ gather thou the assembly to-

Revised Version—1 And the; ² came into the wilderness; ³ assembled; ⁴ strove; ⁵ brought the assembly; ⁶ tent of meeting; ⁷ Omit they; ⁸ assemble the congregation; ⁹ that it give forth its water; ¹⁰ cattle; ¹¹ assembly; ¹² shall we bring you forth; ¹³ smote the rock with his rod; ¹⁴ Omit the; ¹⁵ forth abundantly; ¹⁶ Omit also; ¹⁷ said; ¹⁸ not in me; ¹⁹ These are the waters.

Daily Readings—(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association, Mr. S. C. Bailey, Secretary, 56 Old Bailey, London, England.)—M.—The sin of Moses and Aaron, Num. 20: 1-13. T.—A reasoning God, Isa. 48: 16-22. W.—Murmuring at Marah, Ex. 15: 22-27. Th.—The never-failing well, John 4: 5-14. F.—Unguarded speech, Ps. 106: 24-33. S.—Aaron's punishment, Num. 20: 22-29. S.—The Divine invitation, Isa. 55.

THE LESSON EXPLAINED

I. THE PEOPLE'S COMPLAINT.—1-3. The whole congregation; a frequent name for Israel as an organized religious community or "church." Wilderness of Zin (Rev. Ver.); a part of the southern boundary of Judah, at its eastern end towards the Red Sea. First month (Abib, our March-April); in the fortieth year since leaving Canaan. Kadesh (see last Lesson); situated in the wilderness of Zin. Mir'iam died there; nearly 130 years old if she was ten in Ex. 2: 4. No water. It was in the dry season, and the springs of Kadesh proved insufficient for the great multitude. Assembled (Rev. Ver.); in a formal meeting. Strove with Moses (Rev. Ver.); bitterly reproached him for leading them from Egypt with its plenty to this place where there was poor food and no water. Died before the Lord; in the plague which followed the mutiny of Korah, (see ch. 10: 35, 49).

4, 5. Why have ye brought. The people's com-



SCENE AT KADESH-BARNEA

plaints and reproaches heaped upon Moses became a cloud shutting out God from their sight. The congregation; Rev. Ver. "assembly." The Hebrew word is different from that translated "congregation" in v. 3, and means Israel as gathered together for business. No place of seed . . . figs . . . vines . . . pomegranates. In spite of all that had been promised them, here they were on the very borders of the Promised Land perishing of thirst.

II. THE LORD'S ANSWER.—6-9. Moses and Aaron went from . . . the assembly; to seek help from God, who alone could give it. Unto the . . . tent of meeting (Rev. Ver.); the tabernacle pitched outside the camp (see ch. 12: 4). Fell upon their faces; in prayer to God. The glory of the Lord; a brilliant flash of light from the cloud resting on the tabernacle, the token that God had heard the prayer. Take the rod; Aaron's rod that budded (see ch. 17: 1-9). Speak ye; to show further that the power was from God