

able to overcome it?" When the Greeks at the commencement of this century threw off the Turkish yoke, it was not by their own strength, but by the intervention of their allies. Alone they never could have won their freedom. Weak, incapable Israel had a mighty Ally who had promised to go before them. He who obeys the call of Christ has the same Ally. Of the youngest and feeblest who has accepted Christ it is true that "greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world" (1 John 4. 4), and "the people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits." Dan. 11. 32.

### The Lesson Council.

#### 22. Where was Kadesh?

Kadesh was manifestly both a region and a place. Geographical considerations as well as earlier and later traditions lend much favor to Stanley's view that Kadesh-barnea, "the holy place," was in the neighborhood of the remarkable ancient city of Edom, known as Petra. *Ain Kadis*, fifty five miles west by north of Petra, so stoutly contended for by Trumbull, Holland, and other scholars, though identical in name and character with Kadesh, fails, we think, to satisfy the conditions of the general narrative. In our judgment the precise locality yet awaits discovery.—*Rev. J. E. Price, Ph. D.*

Biblical sites have given rise to more controversy. The preponderance of evidence favors a point called Qadis, the Arabic equivalent of the Hebrew Kadesh, located in an oasis about ninety miles south of Hebron. Scripture references indicate that Kadesh was a rallying center for the Israelites during their wanderings (Gen. 14. 7; Deut. 1. 46); that there was a wilderness about it which bore its name (Psa. 29. 8); that a mountain was just north of it toward Canaan (Num. 13. 17); and that it was distant from Mount Sinai an eleven days' journey. Deut. 1. 2. These and other scriptural conditions are perhaps best met in Qadis, which, according to Trumbull and other authorities, is in the midst of an extensive hill-enclosed region, where springs of rare abundance and sweetness flow from under rocky cliffs.—*Rev. James H. Potts, D. D.*

It is not definitely known. It must have been on the "south-eastern border of the promised land, toward Edom," probably on the edge of the Arabah opposite Mount Hor. So located, there will be no real need to suppose there were two cities by the name of Kadesh, though the term is probably used both to indicate a region of country as well as a city.—*W. L. Hoagland.*

#### 23. Was Palestine more fertile in ancient times than at present?

Palestine was more fertile in ancient times. The cisterns and reservoirs mentioned in the Bible show that water was scarce then. But the country was better wooded then than now. This caused a larger rainfall, and especially a more even distribution of the water throughout the year. A larger proportion of the soil was cultivated, and the cultivation in Palestine was upon the whole better then than at present. See *McClintock and Strong's Cyclopaedia*, article, Agriculture, page 107; *Forest*, page 620; *Palestine*, page 569. *Schaff-Herzog Encyclopaedia*, article, Palestine, page 1725; *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, article, Palestine, page 174.—*Rev. J. H. Bushford, D. D.*

All accounts agree that Palestine was much more fertile in ancient times than at present. Not only did "the valleys laugh with fertility," but "culture climbed the hills," for they were often terraced with vineyards to the very top. Antiquarians are finding that ruin almost touches ruin over a large part of the land, showing a very dense population in ancient times. But bad government has cursed agriculture. The forests have been cut away, and the rains have washed the hill-sides bare, so that Palestine is now pronounced a waste "where once it was a garden."—*Rev. W. L. Hoagland.*

The whole country of Palestine was once well timbered and splendidly watered. There were sixteen perennial streams, fed by mountain springs and melting snows, which wended their way through the shaded valleys and fertile plains to the lakes and seas now famous in sacred story. Moses described this country as "a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills." Delicious fruits, fragrant flowers, and hardy plants were cultivated in great abundance, and it was a land almost literally flowing with milk and honey. The population became dense, and the cities numerous and great. Then followed repeated wars and conquests, and dreary centuries of bad government, which broke up the industrious habits of the people, until the country was stripped and desolate, and became a naked, dreary waste.—*Rev. James H. Potts, D. D.*

Doubtless in consequence of war, of civil and ecclesiastical misuse, and, to a limited extent, the action of geological causes, the general productivity of the land has been diminished. But the climate, rain-fall, and natural fertility of Palestine have probably undergone no serious modifications. At a favorable season the traveler is even now often impressed that it is "a land flowing with milk and honey." A railway system has been recently proposed which shall avail itself of the wonderful fertility of "the rich basaltic loam" that now lies waste. The ancient populations—probably four or five times as great as at present—prove that the soil was better cultivated, but not necessarily more fertile, than to-day.—*Rev. J. E. Price, Ph. D.*

### Cambridge Notes.

BY REV. JAMES HOPE MOULTON, M. A.

Num. 13. 17-33.

Compare carefully Moses's own account of this event in Deut. 1. 19. *egg*. We learn there that the initiative came from the people, not improbably veiling a failure of faith. Moses, however, accepted the proposal fully, feeling assured that the result could only encourage the host for their task. Hence it is given here as his plan. **VER. 17.** *The South.* That is, the *Negeb*, or "dry country," a tract of land lying south of Judah and extending from the Dead Sea to the Mediterranean. *Mountains.* The hill country contained mainly within Judah and Ephraim. **Josh. 15. 48; Luke 1. 39.** **VER. 19.** We need not suppose that Moses himself had any doubts as to the character of the land of promise. **VER. 20.** The bringing of the fruits would need "conrage" because likely to raise suspicion. *Time.* August: sometimes grapes began to ripen in July. **VER. 21. Zin.** The north-east part of the Paran desert, a sandy wa-te forming the southern boundary of Palestine. *Rehob.* Is the northern boundary. *Comp. Judg. 18. 28.* It was near Dan-Laiash and on the southern frontier of the kingdom of Hamath. **VER. 22. Came.** Hebrew, "he came," that is, Caleb, but prob-

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