

place where there was poor food and no water. *Died before the Lord*; in the plague which had destroyed Korah and his followers who had mutinied against Moses (see ch. 16 : 35, 49).

Vs. 4, 5. *Why have ye brought.* The people's complaints 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 the 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.

V. 6. *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*; 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.

Vs. 7-9. *Take the rod*; Aaron's rod that budded (see ch. 17 : 1-9). *Speak ye*; to show further that the power was from God, who had pity upon His people. *Unto the rock.* 'Ain Kadis (Kadesh) lies at the base of a lofty ragged spur of limestone supposed to be the rock which gave forth its water when smitten by Moses' rod. *Water out of the rock*; and therefore clearly the gift of God. At 'Ain Kadis a great spring now empties its waters into a large well or reservoir built round with masonry, and then into a smaller one, and then it flows into the valley, making a spot of great fertility, until the water loses itself in the desert. *Rod from before the Lord*; out of the tabernacle, where it had been laid up as a memorial, Heb. 9 : 4.

III. Moses' Sin, 10-13.

Vs. 10, 11. *Ye rebels.* The Lord meant mercy towards the sinning people; Moses, as if he were in God's place, uttered the condemnation which the Lord had not spoken. *Must we, etc.* "Do you expect us to work miracles for you?" There was angry impatience in the question, and a

haughty pride, which assumed a sort of divine authority. *Smote the rock . . . twice* (Rev. Ver.); instead of merely speaking to it according to God's command. The smiting would make it appear that the power lay in Moses, whereas it depended upon God's word. The "twice" showed violent irritation. *Water . . . abundantly*; and so, in spite of Moses' failure, God's promise was fulfilled.

V. 12. *Believed not in me* (Rev. Ver.); so as to take My word, that speaking to the rock would be sufficient. *To sanctify me*; to show my holiness. The two leaders were God's representatives before the people. By their conduct they had misrepresented Him, giving the people a wrong impression of His character. *Ye shall not, etc.* As a punishment their work was to be taken from them and given into other hands.

V. 13. *Meribah*; "Strife," named, in Deut. 32 : 51, Meribah-Kadesh, to distinguish it from Meribah of Sinai, Ex. 17 : 2, 7. It is not surprising that scarcity of water should be repeatedly recorded in the history of the wilderness wanderings. *He was sanctified.* By God's treatment of Moses and Aaron the real holiness of His character was shown. *In them*; either in the waters, that is by His miracle in giving water, or, more likely in the hearts of the people, to whom His holiness was thus revealed.

Light from the East

FIRST MONTH—The Hebrew year originally began in the autumn after all the crops were gathered in and the rain was preparing the earth for fresh tillage, but was moved to the spring after the Exodus. The first month in the old Hebrew calendar was Abib, in the Babylonian Nisan, and corresponded to the latter part of our March and the first part of April. It was the vernal month in which there was much grass on ground that was a desert at other seasons, and when traveling was easiest. This was the first month of the fortieth and last year of the wandering and they assembled in the neighborhood from which they had dispersed so long before.

KADESH—The beginning and end of