

## CRITICAL NOTES.

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**Verse 17. Moses sent them.** Twelve men, one out of every tribe—Levi excepted—were sent from Kadesh-barnea, modern Ain Gadiis, in the wilderness of Paran (verses 3 and 26), in accordance with the command of God (verse 2) and at the urgent request of the people (Deut. 1. 22), to explore Canaan. The names of these twelve men are given in verses 4-15. Only two of them were men of faith and became famous—Caleb and Joshua. This was about fifteen months after leaving Egypt; and though within fifty miles of the southern end of Palestine, they lingered in the wilderness for more than thirty-eight years. **The land of Canaan.** Canaan signifies "lowland." It was the name given to the less hilly portions of the country extending along the Mediterranean from Gaza to Sidon, including Philistia and Phœnicia, as well as to certain tracts in the valley of the Jordan. Compare verse 23. The word "Canaan" was also used in a broader sense for the entire country west of the Jordan and Dead Sea, while the territory east of this river was called Gilead. **Get you up this way by the South.** Better, "into the South." Negeb, translated "South," is a proper name; the Authorized Version is therefore clearly wrong in translating it southward. It was a barren tract of land in the extreme south of Canaan, belonging to the tribe of Judah. The land south of the border line, extending to Kadesh, or even to Egypt, was known by the same name. **And go up into the mountains.** That is, the highlands or mountainous regions, the places inhabited, at that time, by the Hittites, Jebusites, and the Amorites (verse 29). This appellation is sometimes given to the mountain districts of Judah and Ephraim (Josh. 15. 48<sup>f</sup>).

**18. And see the land, what it is.** Satisfy yourselves by a careful inspection. The details enumerated make their duty clear and explicit. **Strong or weak.** The word translated weak may also be rendered inactive or faint-hearted.

**19. In camps.** Not tents, as in the Authorized Version, but rather an encampment of tents. That is, living the unsettled life of nomads, like the modern Bedouin, not intrenched in fortified places or strongholds.

**20. Be ye of good courage.** The dangers will be many, but remember that you are on an errand for Jehovah. **Bring of the fruit of the land.** In order to convince your brethren here in the desert of the fertility of the land which is to be their heritage. **The time of the first ripe grapes.** Depending upon the locality, but some time in July or August. It is difficult to see why the intervening verses have been omitted

by the committee. No scholar should omit studying them, map in hand.

**23. Unto the valley of Eshcol.** Eshcol means a bunch or cluster (of grapes). See verse 24. The Authorized Version has "brook." *Nahal* is often rendered brook, though the real meaning is a ravine or a valley, what the Arabs call "wady." The two terms are easily confounded, since most every ravine had its little stream. The valley of Eshcol, supposed to be a little north of Be'er-sheva, is noted to this day for its large and luscious grapes, as well as for many other kinds of fruits. **They bare it upon a staff between two.** This was on the return of the spies, since it would be unreasonable to think that they carried it as far north as Rehob (verse 21). This method was adopted to avoid bruising the grapes. Commentators on this verse mention clusters weighing from ten to twenty-three pounds, some clusters measuring over "two feet four inches in length, and three feet across the shoulders." **Pomegranates.** A very delicious fruit of the size of an orange, with hard rind and soft pulp with many seeds, hence the name, "grained apple," or apple full of seeds.

**25. Forty days.** This would afford ample time to explore the land thoroughly, even though they did not travel more than twelve miles a day. It cannot be said in what capacity or how they journeyed; perhaps two by two, as traveling merchants.

**26. Wilderness of Paran.** The great desert land south of Kadesh. **Kadesh** was identified beyond doubt by Dr. Trumbull with Ain Kadis or Qadees. It is fifty miles directly south of Beersheba, remarkable for its fertility, luscious fruits, and splendid water.

**27. Surely it floweth with milk and honey.** This phrase is a Hebraism for superabundance, for extraordinary fertility of soil, and prosperity in general. It may also be stated that honey was very plentiful in Palestine. The Greek poets also speak of lands flowing with milk and honey.

**28. Howbeit the people that dwell in the land are strong.** The position of the words in Hebrew is such as to make this clause very emphatic. It is seldom that we meet such an accumulation of adjectives. The spies willingly grant the fertility of the land, but, alas! its inhabitants are too strong for poor Israel to subdue. From the Tel-el-Amarna tablets and the inscriptions on the walls of the temple at Karnak we learn that the cities of Canaan were so well built as to defy the attacks of the great world powers of the period. **The children of Anak.** These were giants (verse 33), descendants of Arba (Josh. 15. 13), and