

days of thirst they come to the bitter waters of Marah. B. C. 1491.

## II. NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

1. NO WATER, ver. 22. (1) *Into the wilderness*. SO. Literally *and*—the beginning of a new paragraph. FROM THE SEA. From the halting place where they had shouted their triumphal song, vers. 1-21. This spot is generally conceded to be the little oasis Ayun Musa, (Moses' wells,) two hours from Suez. WILDERNESS. In Num. xxxiii. 8, "wilderness of Etham" this being the south-west part of the great desert of Shur. SHUR. Literally, *wall*—referring to the wall-like mountains Er Rahah and Et Teh, which border on this desert plain. (2) *Fearful thirst*. WENT. It is about thirty-three miles between the points indicated. Recent travelers have journeyed THREE DAYS along this route and FOUND NO WATER.

It is written of the pine-tree, that if the bark be pulled off it will last a long time, else it rots. So God sees that many a man, if he had his bark upon him, if he had the wealth of the world about him, a penny in his purse, and a friend at court, it would rot him, corrupt him, and make him worse; therefore God is fain to bark him and peel him, to keep him naked and bare and poor, that his soul may prosper the better; for, indeed, many times it so falls out, and a man shall find it so, that his soul prospers best when his body prospers worst.—*Spencer*.

2. BITTER WATER, vers. 23, 24. (1) *Disappointment*. MARAH, *bitterness*. Doubtless identical with Ayun Musa. The modern name "signifies a small pool, the water of which sinks into the soil little by little, leaving the residue unfit to drink—a description eminently applicable to the spring in question." *Desert of the Exodus*. (2) *Murmuring*—AGAINST MOSES. Only three days before, their shouts of praise to God doubtless equalled the roaring of the sea; now they already forget God and his wondrous deliverance. How weak their faith; how mighty the faith of Moses, and yet both leaders and people suffered equally.

3. SWEET WATER, vers. 25, 26. (1) *Prayer for help*. CRIED UNTO THE LORD. God alone could help. Moses believed, (a) in God's willingness; (b) in God's Omnipotence. (2) *Divine interposition*. THE LORD SHOWED. Speedy answer. A TREE. Name and nature unknown. God chose to endow some ordinary plant with supernatural qualities. Thus the

springs were sweetened by Almighty power, and in answer to prayer. (3) *A Divine ordinance*. THERE. Before the miracle was forgotten. PROVED. Moses' faith stood the test; all Israel failed. IF THOU WILT. They shall be "proved" tried; in all their journeyings they shall find tests as stern as this at Marah. DO RIGHT. Wrong doing destroyed THE EGYPTIANS. Thus have many other nations been ruined. Prov. xiv. 34. Perdition is full of the disobedient. "To obey better than sacrifice." 1 Sam. xv. 22. HEALETH. Sin brings bitterness and death. God delights to turn all life's bitterness into sweetness, and to heal all our maladies. Psa. clxvii. 3. Christ is the Great Physician, Jer. viii. 22; Matt. ix. 12, 13. He is our "BRANCH," Jer. xxiii. 5; Zech. iii. 8; and "plant of renown," Ezek. xxxiv. 29. He will give us to eat of the "tree of life." Rev. ii. 7; xxii. 2.

4. WELLS OF WATER, ver. 27. (1) *The palm grove*. ELIM literally, *trees*, perhaps *palm-trees*. Probably Elim is identical with Wady Gharandel, which contains palm-trees in great numbers, and a perennial stream. (2) *Rest by the fountains*. No trials at Elim; no desert, no bitterness. On the way to the heavenly Canaan the pilgrim finds many an Elim. Believers in Jesus draw from "wells of salvation," Isa. xii. 3; they have "living waters" abundantly bestowed, John iv. 12, 14; vii. 38; and they shall dwell forever by the "river of water of life." Rev. xxii. 1.

## English Teacher's Notes.

In this short passage we have a striking contrast. The first two verses tell us of the triumphant songs and joyous dances in which Israel celebrated their great deliverance; and in the next three we see the same Israel disappointed and discontented. It is a picture of another place in the experiences of the spiritual pilgrimage.

1. Great as was the joy of the Israelites on the morning that followed the Passover night, it was surpassed by their exultation when they not only found themselves with the Red Sea between them and the land of their captivity, but also saw their relentless foes dead upon the seashore. And great as is the sinner's joy when he feels that the blood of the Lamb has been sprinkled on his heart, and his guilt been put away, it is exceeded by the indescribable sense