

the Greek word drachma. Yet since the Hebrew uses the word drachma it would seem reasonable to translate it drachma, if this is what is actually meant. It used to be thought extremely unlikely that in the Persian period in Palestine such a standard as the Attic drachma would be used. The American Standard Version of 1901 renders the word as "daric," which was the name of a coin made by the Persians, named after the Persian king Darius. This might seem to be a more natural interpretation, but it is not the word that the Hebrew actually uses. At Beth-zur, in a level belonging to the Persian Period, a group of coins was found that included several good examples of coins made in Palestine in imitation of the Greek drachma, showing that the Hebrew word can safely be taken exactly as it stands.

#### 4. Help in Interpretation.

Any increase in knowledge of the geographical and cultural background of Palestine is bound to make more understandable the historical and cultural statements of the Old Testament, and this is true of some of the material discussed above under general or special corroboration. One additional instance where this background was formerly completely misunderstood will be mentioned here. In 1 Samuel we find a small number of Philistines holding a much larger number of Israelites in subjection, because the Philistines had access to sources of iron and knowledge of how to work it. This gave them a great advantage over the Israelites, who had not yet entered the Iron Age, as is indicated in 1 Sam.13.19-22 which says that only Saul and Jonathan were able to secure iron weapons and therefore the Israelites were at a great disadvantage against the better-armed Philistines. However, it does state that the Israelites were able to secure iron agricultural implements. (In some of the excavations iron agricultural implements have begun to appear at a somewhat earlier time than iron weapons.) However, one statement in the English translation seemed very strange. After reading in v.20 that the