

Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for Chorazin and Bethsaida, in which he had wrought such mighty works (Luke x 14.) "The Hivites" seem to have been a scattered people in the land of Canaan. Mount Lebanon stands to the north of Palestine, and is famous for the goodly cedars it once reared. Hermon is a mountain south of Lebanon, and "Baal Hermon" was a city in the valley between the two.

"The entering in of Hamath," is understood to mean "the narrow pass leading from the land of Canaan into Syria, which constitutes the northern boundary of Palestine." Hamath, between Palestine and Lebanon, had its own kings, being a distinct province from either Syria or the kingdom of the Ten Tribes of Israel.

Verses 6th and 7th show us that the children of Israel, when proved by these nations, were found wanting, and narrates the particulars of their trespass. They intermarried with the heathen; did evil; forgot God; "and served Baalim and the groves." Baalim is the same as *Baal* in all his representations. It is the plural of Baal, and the worship of Baal was the worship of the sun and sundry idols.

Verse 8th tells us the necessary consequence of such apostacy. Mesopotamia was a country far to the east of Palestine, as it lay between the two great rivers Tigris and Euphrates. Jehovah had brought Israel out of bondage when in Egypt, and as Israel casts Him off and worships Baal instead of Him, he sends Israel back to bondage again, but now under the king of another nation, until Israel leaves off Baal-worship and returns to Him.

Verse 9th. This they did after having been servants for eight years under Cushan-rishathaim; and God sends them a deliverer in Othniel, the nephew of Caleb. This man's name, being interpreted, is "Lion of God;" and he had before this shown himself very brave by taking the city of Debir to obtain the hand of Caleb's daughter (Judges i. 13.) It was by the Spirit of the Lord that he was made bold, wise, and resolute enough to deliver the land from Cushan-rishathaim, and to judge it afterwards. God's Spirit can make one man chase a thousand and two put ten thousand to flight (Judg. xv. 14, 15). "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit," saith the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain" (Zech. xi. 6, 7). The Spirit of the Lord makes a man lion-hearted, and disposes him to follow the Lord fully, as did Caleb, Othniel's uncle, whose name as fitly signifies "a dog" as Othniel's does 'lion-

hearted." He followed the Lord as a dog, his master, which, though it may run away at times to a little distance, ever and anon returns: and in times of danger, instead of slinking back, goes growling on before to defend its master, if possible, from even the necessity of combat. You remember how nobly Caleb stood up for God when all Israel, with the exception of but a very few, were coming to the fearful resolution of demanding a captain to lead them back to Egypt (Num. xiv. 6-9). The land rested five times as long as it had been disturbed. God is very gracious, but men despise his mercy; and so, after this long rest, Israel again did evil, and had to be chastised for a much longer time.

Othniel is the first person noticed as judge of Israel after the death of Joshua. A series of judges succeeded him, until at last Israel, wholly forgetting that they had a King in Jehovah, refused to have Samuel's sons for their judges, and demanded a king to be like other nations. This they got in the person of Saul, a Benjamite, whom God gave them for a king in His anger.

Learn to continue in God's fear and service—to call upon Him with all hope in times of trouble—to go on in the strength of His Spirit against any spiritual foe, and when delivered out of evil to "sin no more lest a worse thing come unto thee" (John v. 14).

THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

Read John x. 1-18.

Connection.—Christ's spirit was roused against the Jewish Rulers who had cast out the poor and once blind man, chap. ix. 34. Evidently the verses of this lesson are a continuation of the thoughts excited by that incident. See ver. 21.

I. The Sheep.

The Jews knew the habits of sheep well. Their country was pastoral even near Jerusalem, the temple-sacrifices requiring a continual supply of sheep; flocks, and folds to keep them in, were common. Ver. 3.—*By name—leadeth them out.* In Palestine, the sheep have each their own name, and the shepherd goes before his flock, which willingly follows his voice. *The thief—the wolf.* Shepherds had frequently in these countries to resist the attacks of both wandering Arab robbers and wolves. The servants of Job and of Nabal knew this, *Folds.* They were