

THIRD SABBATH.

SUBJECT:—*Caleb's Inheritance*, Joshua 14: 6—15. • *Golden text*, John 12: 26. Read also the 14th chapter of Numbers.

Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, and one prince of each tribe were chosen to divide the land by inheritance. Of the tribe of Judah Caleb the son of Jephunneh was selected.

Vv. 6.—Before the work of division commenced, Caleb came to Joshua and reminded him of what God had said concerning the future ownership of the district visited by the spies. (See Numb. 14: 24.) It is well for us to remember God's promises, and expect their fulfilment. Forty-five years had elapsed and yet Caleb had not forgotten the promise.

Vv. 8.—Caleb wholly followed the Lord his God. He was not half-hearted. He was not unbelieving. His faith was strong, and his expectation high, notwithstanding the difficulties in the way. And the Lord honoured him, honored him in recording his steadfastness, in sparing him and Joshua alone of all the people over 20 years of age to enter the promised land, and in giving him a goodly heritage in a green old age. Here then is an important lesson for the young. They should follow the Lord *wholly*. They may at one time be laughed at, and at another threatened, for their piety. But let them cling to the Lord in all simplicity of faith; and should they be spared to an old age, it will be pleasant to review the past, and for them the future can have no dread.

Vv. 12.—Caleb asked for a tract possessed by the Anakim, a powerful people who had fenced cities. Look at this man's faith. God promised him this district, and these Anakim are as nothing. Look, too, at his humble dependence upon God—"if so be the Lord will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out as the Lord said." He was not dis-appointed in leaning on Jehovah's arm.

Let our faith like Caleb's be strong. Has God promised anything? Let us expect it. We should never say, "The Anakim are there," "There is a lion in the way," &c. But at the same time let us be humble. Should we ever in our own strength go against Anakim, we must fall.

Vv. 14.—Great emphasis is put upon Caleb's following the Lord *wholly*. Compare Numb. 14: 24. Because he followed the Lord wholly he obtained Hebron. We should attach great importance to a life of steadfast faith.

The city of Hebron itself was given to the priests and was made one of the cities of refuge, but "the fields of the city, and the villages thereof," were given to Caleb. Hebron is one of the most ancient cities existing, (Numbers 13: 12,) and its historical associations are most interesting. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob spent much of their time in its neighborhood, where they were all entombed. But so long as it lasts the name of Caleb the son of Jephunneh who wholly followed the Lord God of Israel shall not be forgotten.

FOURTH SABBATH.

SUBJECT:—*The land divided*, Joshua 13: 1—10; *Golden text*, Psalm 16: 6.

In previous lessons we had studied the conquest of the land of Palestine, now we come to the division of the land among the twelve tribes. Besides the prescribed lesson it will be necessary to read Chron 14: 1-5, and a good part of chapters 15, 10, 17.

Vv. 1. *Shiloh*, for location see Judges 21: 19. It was situated in the centre or midst of the land. Convenient, therefore as a rallying-point, and selected apparently for that very reason.

The Tabernacle of the Congregation. Hitherto it had been at Gilgal, but now that the people had advanced into the country it was removed to a more suitable place. At Shiloh it remained till the days of Samuel.

V. 2.—Seven tribes had not yet received their inheritance, the other five, had, and as follows: (The tribe of Levi is not counted. It had no inheritance among the others, (Vv. 7) See also Joshua 13: 33.)

Two tribes and a half had their lot on the east of the Jordan, viz., Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh. For particulars concerning this consult Numbers 32nd chap. Of the the apportionment of the lots of the remaining two and a half tribes, viz., Ephraim, Judah, and the western half of Manasseh we have not so clear an account, and cannot exactly tell when and where the apportionment was made. For the lot of Judah see chapter 15: 1, 13; that of Ephraim see 15: 1-10, and the western half of Manasseh's lot was on the north of Ephraim. The tribes that had not yet received their inheritance were Benjamin, Simeon, Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and Dan.

Vv. 3—Joshua reproves these tribes for dilatoriness, and urges them to diligence in taking possession of the land.

Vv. 4-7.—Describe the way in which the work was to be done. Each tribe was to select seven men; and these chosen men, forty-one in all were to divide the land that was named into seven parts. Judah on the south and Ephraim and Manasseh on the north were not to be interfered with. After they had divided the land into seven parts, they brought the same—the divisions they had made—to Joshua at Shiloh, and apportioned them by lot.

Vv. 8, 9.—Joshua is obeyed, his commands are carried out, and afterwards at Shiloh apportionment is made by Joshua. (As) because it was a sacred place, and it had to be done before the Lord that it might be inviolably.

For the teaching of this lesson a map of Palestine is absolutely requisite.

LESSONS.

1. God provides for all his people an inheritance than Canaan was for the Israelites even an inheritance that is incorruptible. 1 Peter 1: 4.
2. He disposes of it as he will, to whom he will, for it is his.
3. But he gives to each a portion which is not overlooked or passed by.