

## The Inheritance of Judah.

Joshua 15:13-19.

Sunday evening, August 8, 2010.

### I. The cities of Judah.

- A. In vss 20-63 we have a long list of all the cities in the territory of the tribe of Judah. Judah inherited the South land. It was a large piece of land, but it was arid, largely consisting of the Negev desert today.
- B. Noteworthy in the long list of cities is the absence of the city of Bethlehem where the Lord Jesus would be born. Many days after the life of Joshua, the prophet Micah would speak of the city of Bethlehem as being “but little among the thousands of Judah;” Micha 5:2. Apparently the city of Bethlehem was so small, or non existent, at this time that it is not even mentioned.
- C. It shows us, historically speaking, at this early time the obscurity and relative unimportance of this little city. It also shows us the love and preference the Lord has for lowly, obscure and, humanly speaking, unimportant things. The life of the Lord Jesus would illustrate this truth, and happy are we if we learn to walk in His footsteps.

### II. The exploits of Caleb.

- A. At the end of Ch. 14 we saw how Joshua gave the city of Hebron and its surroundings to Caleb upon Caleb’s request, and according to the promise given him some 45 years earlier.
- B. In Ch. 15:13,14 we see how Caleb went out to Hebron and drove out the sons of Anak (the giants), and how he took the city for himself according to the word of the Lord.
- C. However Caleb did not stay at Hebron but he moved south to a neighboring city named Debir by the Hebrews, but Kirjath-Sepher by the natives, meaning “City of the Book;” perhaps indicating that records were being kept there.
- D. Here the next significant thing in the life of Caleb occurs. He hands over the reigns of his own leadership and his exploits in war (14:11), to the next generation.  
Caleb will not be the one to lead his men in the conquering of the city of Debir. His exploits would end with the conquering of Hebron (Fellowship), and driving out the giants from there. So Caleb enters into his rest, that is the rest of Canaan which was a type of the heavenly rest provided by the greater Joshua, the Lord Jesus Christ.
- E. Having brought his men to the gates of Kirjath Sepher he steps back, saying to his men: “He who takes Kirjath Sepher, to him I will give Achsah my daughter as wife.”

A few things are to be noted about this:

- 1. It was not uncommon for men (especially men of important positions and men with wealth) to have multiple wives, some much younger than themselves. So Abraham married Keturah after the death of Sarah, and Keturah bore six additional sons to Abraham. Genesis 25:1,2.  
As such it should not surprise us that Caleb had a teenage daughter at age 85.

2. Caleb, by putting the matter this way, was drawing out untested virtues like leadership and courage which had been hidden from sight as long as Caleb had been in charge, and his men had faithfully taken orders following him.
  3. So Othniel, the son of Caleb's youngest brother, rises to the occasion; he shows his courage and leadership and takes the city.  
Othniel would become a leader in Israel. He would become the first of the Judges Israel had after Joshua and the elders died. Judges 3:9,10
  4. In putting matters like this Caleb would secure a worthy husband for his daughter as well. A man of faith, courage and leadership would likely provide well for his daughter.
- F. Note the wisdom with which new graces and virtues are drawn out of the hearts of the upcoming generation. David would become the "Warrior King" of Israel. The Lord made him to encounter lion and bear before encountering Goliath, and whole enemy armies after that.  
So the Lord still forms His graces and virtues in our lives in the context of the providential circumstances He places us in. As such the whole of life is God's school.

### III. Achsah's request.

- A. It appears that Caleb gave Achsah a field as a wedding, or a parting, gift. The land however, being located in the Negev desert, was rather unproductive, not having access to water.
- B. Here Achsah shows her character. She was a woman of modesty, determination, and courage in her own right.
  1. She shows her modesty.  
She is not ungrateful for the land she receives as a gift; at the same time she is not satisfied with it. But there is a proper order to address that dissatisfaction. She does not go to her father, for she is now under the headship of her new husband; so she asks him to address the matter with her father.  
It appears that Othniel thought this too forward; after all he had already gotten a field and a wife from Caleb. He declines.
  2. Achsah's determination and courage will give her no rest. In all likelihood having secured permission from her husband, she determines to address the matter with her father herself. She mounts a donkey and rides to her father's house. She dismounts her donkey in her father's presence as Rebecca had done in Isaac's presence. It was a sign of respect and also a request for an audience.
  3. The audience being granted she states her request straightforwardly. "Give me a blessing," (and the nature of the blessing sought) "Since you have given me land in the south, give me also springs of water. So he gave her the upper and lower springs. (Perhaps located in a neighboring field.)

#### Application:

Happy is the soul who can approach his/her heavenly Father with the modesty, determination and courage of Achsah, for if earthly fathers can give upper and lower springs of life giving water in a dry land, how much more will our heavenly Father give us the springs of living water in the wilderness of this world.