

Abide in Me

John 15:4

*Bible studies for disciples
who make disciples*



Volume 7 - Number 4

The week of November 14, 2021

A New Beginning

Courage for a Lifetime

Joshua 14:6-15; Joshua 15:13-19

THE BIG PICTURE

Following the Israelites' victory over the coalition of kings at Gibeon, the book of Joshua shifts from the drama of combat to the division of the land among the twelve tribes. A long recitation of names and places continues for 11 chapters with few exceptions. One of those exceptions is the return of Caleb as a central personality in redemptive history.

READ THE STORY

As you read the following two vignettes about Caleb, tucked within the larger narrative of land allocation, you will want to discover what set Caleb apart from the rest of his generation. As you read these sections:

- Place brackets around each time Caleb and his ancestry is mentioned.
- In the left margin of 14:6-12 write, "Caleb's Speech."
- Circle each time Caleb mentions his own age.
- Underline the most notable quality of Caleb's faith in verses 8, 9, and 14.
- In the left margin of 14:13-15 write, "Joshua's Response."
- Set in parentheses every reference in both passages to Anak, Anakim, and Arba.

JOSHUA 14:6-15

⁶Then the people of Judah came to Joshua at Gilgal. And Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him, "You know what the Lord said to Moses the man of God in Kadesh-barnea concerning you and me. ⁷I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the Lord sent me from Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land, and I brought him word again as it was in my heart. ⁸But my brothers who went up with me made the heart of the people melt; yet I wholly followed the Lord my God. ⁹And Moses swore on that day, saying, 'Surely the land on which your foot has trodden shall be an inheritance for you and your children forever, because you have wholly followed the Lord my God.' ¹⁰And now, behold, the Lord has kept me alive, just as he said, these forty-five years since the time that the Lord spoke this word to Moses, while Israel walked in the wilderness. And now, behold, I am this day eighty-five years old. ¹¹I am still as strong today as I was in the day that Moses sent me; my strength now is as my strength was then, for war and for going and coming. ¹²So now give me this hill country of which the Lord spoke on that day, for you heard on that day how the Anakim were there, with great fortified cities. It may be that the Lord will be with me, and I shall drive them out just as the Lord said."

¹³Then Joshua blessed him, and he gave Hebron to Caleb the son of Jephunneh for an inheritance.

¹⁴Therefore Hebron became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite to this day, because he wholly followed the Lord, the God of Israel. ¹⁵Now the name of Hebron formerly was Kiriath-arba (Arba was the greatest man among the Anakim.) And the land had rest from war.

JOSHUA 15:13-19

¹³ According to the commandment of the Lord to Joshua, he gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh a portion among the people of Judah, Kiriath-arba, that is, Hebron (Arba was the father of Anak). ¹⁴ And Caleb drove out from there the three sons of Anak, Sheshai and Ahiman and Talmai, the descendants of Anak. ¹⁵ And he went up from there against the inhabitants of Debir. Now the name of Debir formerly was Kiriath-sepher. ¹⁶ And Caleb said, "Whoever strikes Kiriath-sepher and captures it, to him will I give Achsah my daughter as wife." ¹⁷ And Othniel the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, captured it. And he gave him Achsah his daughter as wife. ¹⁸ When she came to him, she urged him to ask her father for a field. And she got off her donkey, and Caleb said to her, "What do you want?" ¹⁹ She said to him, "Give me a blessing. Since you have given me the land of the Negeb, give me also springs of water." And he gave her the upper springs and the lower springs.

DISCUSSING THE STORY TOGETHER

1. Consider the parts you bracketed focusing on Caleb's ancestry. Pastor Paul stated in the message that while we cannot be dogmatic about Caleb's ancestry, it is possible that he was a Gentile whose family originally lived in the land of Canaan. Read Genesis 15:18-21.

- What does it suggest to consider the Kenizzites were at some point brought into the circle of Abraham's family?
- In what ways may Caleb's Gentile ancestry have formed and shaped him as a follower of the God of Israel?

2. Have someone in your group summarize what happened at Kadesh-Barnea in Numbers 13-14, one year after the Israelites were delivered from Egypt.

- Read Numbers 13:30-33. How did Caleb respond to the fear rooted in the majority report that affected the entire nation?
- Read Joshua 14:6-9. What does Caleb's speech reveal about the kind of man he was?

3. Several times in this passage we are told Caleb wholly followed the Lord (a total of six times in Scripture). Put into your own words what it means to wholly follow the Lord?

4. Place the sequence of Caleb's age at each critical juncture. How long did he have to wait for God to fulfill his promise?

5. Who are the Anakim and what kind of courage must it have taken for an eighty-five year-old man to fight against them and claim his land?

6. Review Joshua 15:13-19. What does this beautiful account reveal about both Caleb and his daughter?

APPLYING THE STORY CORPORATELY AND PERSONALLY

1. In what ways have you allowed your family history or background to keep you from believing God can use you?

2. Describe your own Kadesh-Barnea (a time when God was calling you to be courageous). In what ways was it a test for you? How did you respond?

3. Think of a time when you wondered if God would ever answer a specific prayer affirmatively. What did you learn from this experience?

4. If you are still waiting, how long are you willing to wait and what will such patience require?

5. How does Caleb's example help you see that you are never too old to take on a new challenge?

6. What might be the next challenge God wants you to take on? What will it take? Encourage one another to take the next step.

GLIMPING THE GOSPEL-STORY IN THIS STORY

All Scripture ultimately points to Jesus. How does Joshua 14 and 15 directly point us to Jesus?

