

LESSON 10



FAITHFUL CALEB'S INHERITANCE

Scripture Text: Joshua 14:1-15

After Joshua, with God's help, had destroyed the nations in the south of Canaan, the kings in the north and in surrounding areas banded together to attack Israel. As before, God gave Israel victory. The strength of the enemy was broken, the main kingdoms were destroyed. While there was yet much land to be possessed (13:1), still, God said to divide the land to the tribes (13:7). Each could then conquer the enemy in his territory. Moses had allotted land east of the Jordan to Reuben, Gad, and half tribe of Manasseh. Now nine and one-half tribes received theirs west of the river.

In the opening verses of our lesson text today, we find Caleb approaching Joshua and reminding him of a long-standing obligation. Moses had promised Caleb that he might have his choice of land as an inheritance to him and his children because he had wholly followed his God.

MEMORY VERSE: *The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?* —Psalm 27:1

DAILY READINGS:

- Mon.—Numbers 13** Spies sent into Canaan.
- Tue.—Numbers 14:1-39** Result of spies' report.
- Wed.—Joshua 15:13-19** Caleb handles his possession.
- Thu.—Joshua 14:1-5; 18:1-10; 19:49-51** Dividing the land.
- Fri.—1 Corinthians 12** God has a place for each one.
- Devotional Reading: 1 Peter 1:1-21** Inheritance in Christ.

Caleb Recalls the Lord's Promise

Joshua 14:1-9 **The children of Judah came . . . and Caleb . . .** It was Judah's turn to receive their inheritance and representatives of the tribe came to Joshua. Caleb was of the tribe of Judah (Numbers 13:6). He had a request that he brought before Joshua. The Lord had promised it (Numbers 14:24; Deuteronomy 1:35-36). It was a reward for faithfulness in encouraging faith and obedience to God after spying in Canaan (Numbers 13:30; 14:6-9). He had **wholly followed the Lord** and was then promised the land he had walked on in Canaan—Hebron (Numbers 13:22).

Note that even the faithful Caleb was to possess his inheritance subject to a definite condition. He was to have the land whereon his foot had trodden. The fertile territory was not open to him unconditionally. He was not told to come in and help himself, free of any responsibility. He was to possess what he **WON**, but his own winning of it was essential. His feet must march across the territory to victory before he could call it his.

Two lessons we learn from Caleb here: (1) He was faithful and received his reward. (2) Caleb was willing to work for what he got. In our day, the welfare state promises much for little effort, encourages laziness. More and more wages for less and less work, easy money for doing nothing. This is the attitude of people who wish to possess promised lands without winning them. Those who have created jobs and draw high salaries, those who live on inherited

wealth and have no object in life but comfort and pleasure, are to be numbered among the undesirables who would get but not give.

The Law of God is that we can have anything for which we will pay the required price. The gifts of God must be acquired at a price. Caleb believed and obeyed God. He will give us blessings and a place in His church.

Caleb Tells of His Strength

Joshua 14:10-11 The Lord hath kept me alive. This was really a testimony to God's faithfulness to His promise. **I am as strong this day (at 85) as I was (at 40) in the day that Moses sent me.** How many times in those 45 years did Caleb ponder God's promise, thinking of beautiful Hebron, and long for the fulfillment? He did not run ahead of God. He believed God would handle it best. What if he had lost faith after 44 years? How many have cut themselves off from God and His reward by letting go of the rope of faith just before victory was to be gained?

In Deuteronomy 33:25, God promised Israel strength as the day required. Saints can claim it now. Remember Israel is a type of the Church of God. The land would have been of no good to Caleb had his strength failed so he could not conquer and use it.

Caleb's Request

Joshua 14:12 Give me this mountain. Caleb knew the Anakims were there and that great fences were around the city. Caleb could have a city much easier taken, but he wanted Hebron. He knew giants lived there. "Let me at them," said Caleb. "This is just the kind of challenge I enjoy. Let others take the easy valleys; give me the rugged mountain where men can keep their independence and be free." He wanted the mountain because it would be hard to get. Joshua had destroyed the Anakims dwelling in the lowlands (Joshua 11:21-22). He had cut them off from those dwelling in the hill country. Now Caleb was ready to conquer the rest of them and rid the land of their menace. Caleb knew that life at its best is a conflict. So it is true in the Christian life.

Joshua Grants the Request

Joshua 14:13-15 Joshua understood the request. He was a fellow spy with Caleb 45 years before. **Joshua blessed him**—praised his trueness and faithfulness, and spoke of God's favor and presence. He gave Caleb **Hebron for an inheritance**. He acknowledged Caleb's claim (15:13) and made it final before the leaders of Judah. Hebron had been called Kirjath-arba— the city of Arba, father of Anak. Thus Caleb's family became permanent possessors of Hebron **unto this day**—the time the Book of Joshua was written—and after.

What makes this story so great is that it is an example of great courage, faith, and zeal, accomplished because they were anchored in an Almighty God. From Him came the promise, the vision, the strength, and the fulfillment. This account spotlights the eternal faithfulness of a never-failing God.

Caleb is the picture of a man who had the chance to settle down into an easy, comfortable life, but who chose instead the challenge of a hard situation. "Give me this mountain," he said. "Give me the giants to wrestle with." Caleb is the rebuker of everyone who wants to slide through life as easily as possible and the inspirer of those who are thrilled by the challenge of difficulty. The Calebs continue to this day to make a glorious name for themselves in the Kingdom of God. The physical challenges that faced Israel are types of the spiritual challenges facing the church. As faith and obedience were necessary to Caleb's success, so are they necessary to our spiritual success. God has a work for each of us. Much depends upon our faithful doing of it.

JUST A THOUGHT

**If more sought the WILL of God, more would
be able to do the WORK of God.**