

PERSONAL APPLICATION

CALEB

Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as you examine the passages in Numbers and in Joshua that pertain to the life of Caleb.

Review:

1. From your notes on the life of Joshua, what impressed you about this man? What was essential in his preparation for the big task God assigned him?

Numbers 13:

2. From which tribe did Caleb come? _____
 What was important about the destiny of this tribe? _____
 For what responsibility was Caleb chosen? _____

3. Beginning at verse 27, detail the report of the spies when they returned.
 What were the positives?

What were the negatives?

How would you define the impression the reports left on the people?

4. What was Caleb's immediate reaction? (From our last lesson, we know Joshua stood with him.)
5. Examine a few Bible passages to show why we could stand with Caleb too, note what you learn from each one.
 1 Peter 5:7 _____ Psalm 50:15 _____
 Psalm 37:5 _____ Matthew 19:26 _____
 Hebrews 1:3 _____
6. Beginning at Numbers 14:8–9, note the words of Caleb and Joshua. What did they recognize as important if they were to succeed in taking the land?
7. List some of the things you think would be very essential to succeed in an "important venture."
8. What was the punishment for Israel because they failed to trust the Lord? (Num. 14:26–30):

What about Caleb and Joshua?

9. From Numbers 14:24, give God's estimate of Caleb and tell what you think He meant by having "another" or "different" spirit.

10. What important time had come for Israel? (Num. 34:13–5:3)
Give Caleb's role: _____
Who did not receive an inheritance? _____
What concession was made to the tribe of Levi? _____
11. Using Joshua 14:6–15, what words of the Lord does Caleb remind Joshua?
How many years have passed since that time? _____
How old is Caleb at the writing of this narrative? _____
Give the name and description of the area Caleb requests. (Numbers 13:28 & 33)

12. Caleb's land was a mighty stronghold and many important events happened there. Identify a few of these from the following references:
Joshua 20:7–9

2 Samuel 2:3–4

2 Samuel 15:9–10

13. In Joshua 15:13–15, substantiate what we have already discovered about Caleb. How would you describe him?

14. List ways we might develop God-pleasing qualities in our lives by reviewing Romans 8:26–39. Specify one area in your life you would like to grow.



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If you truly believe that Jesus Christ is your Savior, then live in that faith, show your faith in the manner in which you perform your daily tasks, in how you react to the people around you.

CALEB – COURAGE TO DARE

As we study the life of Caleb, there is something that attracts us to him. He had the COURAGE TO DARE. It takes courage to be a Christian today. To bear witness for Christ takes courage, coupled with a winsome love that only the Lord Jesus can awaken in us. Courage employed with prayer draws upon God's powerhouse so that great things can be accomplished. Courage does not look at the size or the power of the enemy, but rather at the necessity for victory over that enemy. Surely, we desire the kind of courage only God can give us. It is the courage not only to die decently, but to live bravely.

"What is courage?" asked a little boy of his mother. "Is it like our cat when she arches her back and spits when she is afraid?" The mother did not answer at once, but her answer came later as they walked together past a field that had been charred by fire. In the middle of the field, they saw a lone small flower. The mother explained, "There is courage, son, to stand alone when all around you there is destruction – a fragile red flower growing in a fire-swept land."

Caleb was a man of courage. One might think of him as a "little old warhorse." We have known people like that who, though advanced in years, were ready for any challenge, and we can't help but admire them. So looking at Caleb, we want to learn about the COURAGE TO DARE.

CALEB AS A SPY

NUMBERS 13:2-16

The children of Israel approached the land of promise from the South. After their dramatic escape from Egypt, Moses, at the behest of God, decided to send spies to appraise the land the Lord had promised to give them for a permanent home. A man was chosen from each of the twelve tribes to be such a spy.

Joshua was chosen from the tribe of Ephraim, and Caleb was chosen from the important tribe of Judah. This is our first introduction to Caleb (Numbers 13:6). He was about forty years old, no stripling, but a man of maturity. No doubt he had a family that was dependent upon him, but he willingly accepted this assignment.

Think of the courage it takes to be a spy. It means going into enemy territory, not knowing what you might encounter, and also knowing that, if you are caught, it will most likely mean your death. You have to be very brave and surpassingly clever. Would you have that kind of courage?

CALEB AND THE SPIES

GIVE THEIR REPORT

NUMBERS 13:27-33, 14:6-9

Caleb and the other spies went into the land of promise, and after passing through most of it, they returned to report on what they found. They were unanimous in their report that it was a wonderful land, a land “flowing with milk and honey” (Num. 13:27). They liked what they saw (Num. 14:7). Perhaps you recall from Bible story books the picture of these spies returning, carrying in their hands the produce of the land with a huge cluster of grapes suspended from a pole. Everyone was impressed with the richness of this land in contrast to the terrible desert they had traversed.

However, this is not the end of the report. The spies went on to declare that the land was inhabited by mighty nations who had been trained in warfare for generations, and who lived in great fortified cities. Their conclusion was that it would be impossible for a peace-loving people like themselves, who had languished in slavery all these years, to capture the land (Num. 13:28-29, 33). They said they were like grasshoppers in the presence of these armed people. Their report was discouraging!

But there was a minority report given by Caleb and Joshua. It was Caleb who dared to speak up against the majority. What the other spies had said was true, he acknowledged, but the people should remember that they had a great resource who would make it possible for them to conquer this land. That resource was their God who had seen them through everything thus far. He would fight for them (Num. 14:7-9).

What a powerful lesson for us! At times, the Lord places before us challenges which demand special effort on our part. We may be inclined to look at them from our point of view and think, “This is impossible.” We forget we have the Lord as our resource and with Him nothing is impossible (Luke 1:37). If God has convinced us that a certain thing needs to be done, then we should also have the faith in His name to go forward, knowing He will help us do it.

CALEB HELPS JOSHUA

DIVIDE THE LAND

NUMBERS 34:17-19

With great assistance from God, Joshua had succeeded in conquering the land. We are not told if Caleb played an active part along with Joshua in the conquest of Canaan. Now the time had come when the land would be divided among the various tribes.

Joshua summoned Caleb (a man 85 years old) to serve on the committee that would divide the land. Caleb's name is mentioned first which might indicate that he headed the group.

We are never too old to render valuable service to the Lord. Moses was 80 years old when he was summoned to lead his people out of Egypt. Joshua was a man advanced in years when he led the victorious armies of Israel. It is for us to find those areas where we can best use the talents and experiences the Lord has given us to make our declining years of life a real joy.

CALEB CLAIMS HIS POSSESSION

JOSHUA 14:6-12

The Lord promised Caleb he would have a special portion of the land (Num. 14:24), and now the time had come for him to claim it. There was one section that everyone had shied away from because it was inhabited by the Anakim. They were the most powerful among the enemies, people who were indeed giants in stature, and had great walled cities high in the mountains.

Now comes this 85-year-old man who says, "I 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" (Joshua 14:11). It is recorded that Caleb outlived six wives and had 47 children. What a man!

How can we help but love this old warhorse? He is not ready to take it easy, he wants a challenge. We all should want such a challenge. There is such a challenge. It is the major one in the life of a Christian. In 1 John

2:4-6, John says, "Whoever says 'I know him' but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this, we may know that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked." He has reminded us that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all our sins, and when we sin, we have an advocate with the Father. It is this same Jesus, the Righteous One, who has made payment for all of our sins. John has pleaded with us to believe in Jesus, to put our complete trust in Him, and Him alone.

Do you want a big challenge? Here it is: If you truly believe that Jesus Christ is your Savior, then live in that faith, show your faith in the manner in which you perform your daily tasks, in how you react to the people around you. As the love of Jesus was a complete love, a sacrificing love, an overwhelming love, an all-embracing love, let us learn to walk in the same way that He walked. That is the challenge. Are you willing to accept it? Do you have THE COURAGE TO DARE?

CALEB SUCCEEDS IN CONQUERING HIS LAND

JOSHUA 14:13-15

Not only did Caleb want a big challenge. He had no fear when the challenge was put before him. This old man knew exactly what he was getting into. He had been there; he had spied the land; he knew what giants the people were who inhabited this land. He also knew they far outnumbered his people, but he was not afraid. He said, "So 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” (Joshua 14:12).

God had promised His people they would win the victory over all of their enemies, and Caleb knew there was no enemy too mighty for the Lord to conquer. It was a lesson Israel should have learned a long time ago, and one they would certainly learn in the years to come. Gideon would defeat the Midianites with 300 men, armed with trumpets, pitchers and torches; the lone warrior, Samson, would defeat the mighty Philistines; and young David would slay the giant Goliath. Read the Psalms and you will be impressed with the trust David had in his God.

For God there are no enemies that cannot be defeated. Do you believe this? Who are your enemies? Let’s think of your real enemies – the secret sins within that so often defeat you. These are the potent enemies. We have no power within ourselves to defeat them and to cope with the misery and pain they cause us. But when Jesus, as our Savior, becomes our Champion, we can deal with these sins, for “though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool” (Isaiah 1:18). Even our secret sins cannot destroy us, because in Jesus they can be forgiven, and from Him we can receive the strength to overcome them (Eph. 3:16).

Nor can our sins known to other people destroy us, the sins we willfully commit against our neighbor because of anger or hatred, lust or greed. They may indeed bring a punishment or a chastisement upon us because of the hurt we have done to others, but they cannot destroy us because Jesus has also earned forgiveness for these sins.

Nor can death destroy us, and it, too, is a terrible enemy each one of us is going to have to deal with. But Jesus has also overcome death for us by His own death and resurrection. Death is indeed swallowed up in victory through our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 15:55–57). Actually, our death now becomes a glorious triumph; it is the gateway to heaven. It is true as Jesus promised, “Because I live, you also will live” (John 14:19).

Nor can the mighty power of the devil destroy us because Jesus has also defeated this terrible enemy. Through Jesus, we receive the strength to resist the temptations that Satan is constantly directing our way. And should we fall, Jesus is right there to pick us up again. With His strength, we can again stand on our feet and start over.

In short, none of our enemies should cause us fear, even as the enemies of Caleb caused him no fear. Because of our faith in Jesus Christ, and our complete trust in the love of our God, we are assured that we shall be more than conquerors through Him who loved us and gave Himself for us (Romans 8:37). It makes it possible for us to be a Caleb with the COURAGE TO DARE. When we know that our enemies cannot defeat us, then we can go forward for the Lord with every confidence.

THE CONCLUSION

JOSHUA 14:15

The story of Caleb ends with these words, “And the land had rest from war.” What a marvelous story. What COURAGE TO DARE! Do you have rest from war when you simply run away from conflict? Or, do you have rest when, with God’s help, you are able to overcome your enemies in a God-pleasing way? Behind our effort to win should be the desire to win the enemy for the Lord and His Kingdom, not to destroy, but to save. We need such COURAGE TO DARE.