

JOSHUA BIBLE STUDIES

CONQUERING: JOURNEYING WITH JOSHUA

LESSON #12

JOSHUA CHAPTER 14**“THE MAN WHO WANTED A MOUNTAIN”**

The Book of Joshua focuses upon the conquest of Canaan under the leadership of Joshua. However, when we come to chapter 14 there is a personal interest story that begs for our special attention. Inserted here in the chronicles of Israel’s national conquest of Canaan is a story of personal conquest. It is the story of Caleb and his remarkable faith and fighting spirit.

Joshua chapter 14 and verse 5 ends with these words: “and they divided the land.” It is in this context that the story of Caleb is presented. After the major battles for Canaan were over and the land was in possession of the Israelites, the land was parceled out to the various tribes. However, Caleb was not a tribe! He was an individual, even though he represents the tribe of Judah. (Num. 13:6)

The story of Caleb begins more than 40 years before the events in chapter 14 of Joshua take place. Numbers chapters 13 and 14 tell us that Joshua and Caleb were old buddies. They had been sent out as spies by Moses on that first spying expedition of Canaan many years before. They were the only two among the twelve who came back with a positive report. The negative reporters won the argument and Israel spent 40 years in the wilderness wandering around until the unbelieving generation died off.

Now fast forward to Joshua chapter 14 for the rest of the story: the conquest of Canaan was nearing completion and Caleb went to Joshua with a special request: "Give me this mountain". (Joshua 14:12) Caleb was an optimistic octogenarian – an 85 year old man who wanted a mountain! The inspiring story unfolds as follows:

I. CALEB’S REMINDER TO JOSHUA. 14:6-11

Josh. 14:5b-6 - “..... and they divided the land. Then the children of Judah came to Joshua in Gilgal. and Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him: ‘You know the word which the LORD said to Moses the man of God concerning you and me in Kadesh Barnea.’”

A. He Reviews His History.

Josh. 14:7-8a - “I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadesh Barnea to spy out the land, and I brought back word to him as it was in my heart. Nevertheless my brethren who went up with me made the heart of the people melt.....”

B. He Recites His Testimony.

Josh. 14:8b-9 - “but *I wholly followed* the LORD my God. So Moses swore on that day, saying, 'Surely the land where your foot has trodden shall be your inheritance and your children's forever, because you have wholly followed the LORD my God.'”
No braggart, just the facts! A total of 7 times, it is recorded that Caleb “wholly or

fully followed” – once Caleb said he had wholly followed and six other times it was stated by others. Here they are listed below:

- Num. 14:24 - “But My servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit in him and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land
- Num 32:11-12 (2 times) - “They have not wholly followed Me, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh, the Kenizzite, and Joshua the son of Nun, for they have wholly followed the LORD.”
- Deut. 1:36-37 “he wholly followed the LORD.” Josh. 14:9 “you have wholly followed the LORD my God.”
- Josh. 14:14 “he wholly followed the LORD God of Israel.”

The word “*wholly*” or “*fully*” as used in reference to Caleb, in Hebrew means “to be full”. It means literally “filled full to walk behind Jehovah” (It is translated “full” in Ps. 33:5; 65:9; 104:24; 119:64)

C. He Reveals His Longevity.

Josh. 14:10 - “And now, behold, the LORD has kept me alive, as He said, these forty-five years, ever since the LORD spoke this word to Moses while Israel wandered in the wilderness; and now, here I am this day, eighty-five years old.”

II. CALEB’S REQUEST OF JOSHUA. 14:11-12

Josh.14:11-12 - “As yet I am as strong this day as on the day that Moses sent me; just as my strength was then, so now is my strength for war, both for going out and for coming in. Now therefore, give me this mountain of which the LORD spoke in that day; for you heard in that day how the Anakim were there, and that the cities were great and fortified. It may be that the LORD will be with me, and I shall be able to drive them out as the LORD said.”

A. He Reasserts His Ability.

Josh.14:11 “As yet I am as strong this day as on the day that Moses sent me; just as my strength was then, so now is my strength for war, both for going out and for coming in.”

B. He Reports For Duty.

Josh.14:12a - “Now therefore, give me this mountain of which the LORD spoke in that day; for you heard in that day how the Anakim were there, and that the cities were great and fortified.”

C. He Relies Upon Sovereignty.

Josh.14:12b - “It may be that the LORD will be with me, and I shall be able to drive them out as the LORD said.”

III. CALEB’S REWARD BY JOSHUA.

“Josh.14:13-15 – “And Joshua blessed him, and gave Hebron to Caleb the son of Jephunneh as an inheritance. Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite to this day, because he wholly followed the LORD God of Israel. And the name of Hebron formerly was Kirjath Arba (Arba was the greatest man

among the Anakim). Then the land had rest from war.”

A. He Receives His Bounty.

Josh.14:13 - “And Joshua blessed him, and gave Hebron to Caleb the son of Jephunneh as an inheritance.” (Hebron means “fellowship”)

B. He Realizes His Destiny.

Josh. 14:14-15a - “Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite to this day, because he wholly followed the LORD God of Israel. And the name of Hebron formerly was Kirjath Arba (Arba was the greatest man among the Anakim).”

C. He Rests In Antiquity.

Josh.14:15b - “Then the land had rest from war.”

Caleb kept himself physically active, mentally alert and spiritually alive. He was:

- a brave man among cowards,
- a believing man among skeptics,
- a visionary among pragmatists,
- a positive man among negatives,
- a whole-hearted follower among half-hearted failures.

His favorite gospel song would have been,

*“I’m pressing on the upward way,
New heights I’m gaining every day;
Still praying as I onward bound,
‘Lord plant my feet on higher ground.’”*

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**CALEB’S CHALLENGES TO US**

A grey-haired man who wanted a mountain teaches us many lessons. Among them are these:

**1. Half-hearted following does not receive God’s blessing!**

The word that best describes Caleb is “wholehearted.” Seven times we are told that Caleb “wholly” or “fully” followed God. Caleb followed with his whole heart. Can we say that? Are we a Caleb? Does God have your whole heart without reservation.?

**2. Claim and cling to God’s promises.**

While others complained Caleb concentrated on God’s promise to him. “My servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit in him and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land where he went, and his descendants shall inherit it.” (Num. 14:24-25) For 40 years he lived among discontented and dying people, yet he was able to see beyond his present barren

wilderness of circumstances and stay focused upon God's promises..

**3. Patience is possible and profitable.**

For 45 years we hear practically nothing about Caleb. He was a behind the scenes fellow. He quietly and confidently served in a secondary capacity under Joshua, awaiting the fulfillment of God's promises to him.

**4. He models for us the true nature of faith.**

Caleb had faith while surrounded by faithless people.

- a) Faith is not just positive thinking.
- b) Faith is not just optimism.
- c) Faith is not just looking on the bright side.
- d) Faith is simply acting on what the Word of God says. It is more than saying that you believe; it is belief in action.

**5. you are never too old to dream and dare.**

"And now, behold, the LORD has kept me alive, as He said, these forty-five years, ever since the LORD spoke this word to Moses while Israel wandered in the wilderness; and now, here I am this day, eighty-five years old." (Josh.14:10)

For 45 years Caleb had been dreaming of this land that God promised to him. So now, 85 years old, it was time for his dream to come true.

**6. When we can't climb a literal mountain, we can conquer one on our knees!**

There are mountains that can only be climbed and conquered on our knees - the battles fought in prayer.

**7. God isn't finished with you until He calls you home.**

I believe that as long as God gives us breath, there is something He still wants for us.

- Maybe it is to know Him better;
- maybe it is to worship Him more;
- maybe it is to continue to use the gifts God has given you to serve Him.

Are you in your later years? So was Caleb! Caleb was used by the Lord at 85 because he believed that the Lord's promises were as good at 85 as they were at 40. We are never too old to believe God's promises! Mark Twain said, "Age is an issue of mind over matter. If you don't mind, it doesn't matter."

At age 85, when others were looking for a landing strip, Caleb was looking for a launching pad. He was:

- an old man with young courage;
- a senior citizen with fire in his eye,
- and hope in his heart. Instead of sitting back until he died, he took on his biggest challenge.

It doesn't matter how old you are as long as you have the life of God in you, God has

something for you. Age is no barrier to doing God's will. God keeps His people alive as long as they need to be in order to fulfill all that He has planned for them. God isn't finished with you until the moment He takes you home.

### Illustrations For Use With Caleb

#### Perseverance

Dr. Paul Brand, a well-known doctor and author, was raised in India. His parents were missionaries there. In his book, "In His Image," he writes about his mother. It is one of the most touching stories I've ever read.

He writes that when his mother was 75 years old, she was still walking miles every day, visiting the villages in the southern part of India, teaching the people about Jesus. One day, at age 75, she was traveling alone and fell, breaking her hip. After two days of just lying there in pain, some workers found her, put her on a makeshift cot, loaded her into their jeep and drove 150 miles over deep rutted roads to find a doctor who could set the broken bones.

But the very bumpy ride damaged her bones so badly that her hip never completely healed. He said, "I visited my mother in her mud-covered hut several weeks after all of this happened. I watched as she took two bamboo crutches that she had made herself, and moved from one place to another with her feet just dragging behind because she had lost all feeling in them." He said, "At age 75, with a broken hip, unable to stand on her own two legs, I thought that I made a pretty intelligent suggestion. I suggested that she retire." He said, "She turned around and looked at me and said, 'What value is that? If we try to preserve this body just a few more years and it is not being used for God, of what value is that?'

So she kept on working. She kept on riding her donkey to villages until she was 93 years old. At age 93 she couldn't stay on her donkey anymore. She kept falling off. But she didn't stop preaching. Indian men would carry her in hammocks from one village to another. And she continued to tell people about Jesus Christ until she died at age 95.

Paul Brand writes, "My most vivid memory of my mother is of her propped up against a stone wall as people are coming to her from their homes, schools, and places of work. I can still see the wrinkles in her face, and her skin so tanned by the weather and the heat.

"I saw her speaking to those people. I looked at them and saw the sparkle in their eyes, and the smiles on their faces. And I saw them deeply moved by the message of God's love, spoken by this old woman. I knew what they saw was not an old woman who had passed her prime, but a beautiful person bringing tidings of love straight from heaven."

Granny Brand, as she was affectionately called, was a female Caleb. You and I can also imitate their godly characteristics.

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#### OPTIONAL

### **12 Signs That You're Getting Old:**

1. You're asleep, but others worry that you're dead.
2. Your back goes out more often than you do.
3. You have quit trying to hold your stomach in, no matter who is around.
4. You buy a compass for the dash of your auto but forget where you are going.
5. You enjoy hearing about other people's operations.
6. You get tickets for driving too slowly.
7. People call at 8:00 p.m. and ask, "Did I wake you?"
8. The small end of your tie hangs down 10 inches below the large end.
9. Your ears are hairier than your head.
10. You walk around with your glasses on the top of your head and can't find them.
11. You enjoy watching the weather channel on TV.
12. You sit in the rocker but you can't make it go.
13. You've got a remote control but it is so remote you can't find it.
14. You buy a quart of milk and the cashier asks, "Do you want help in carrying that out?"
15. You think a "cell phone" is what prisoners behind bars use.
16. When asked for your zip code you say, A.A.R.P.

#### **ILLUST. Julie Andrews** Speaking of AARP .....

On her 69th birthday actress/vocalist, Julie Andrews made a special appearance at Manhattan's Radio City Music Hall for the benefit of the AARP. One of the musical numbers she performed was "My Favorite Things" from the legendary movie "Sound Of Music". Here are the lyrics she used:

"Maalox and nose drops and needles for knitting,  
Walkers and handrails and new dental fittings,  
Bundles of magazines tied up in string,  
These are a few of my favorite things.

Cadillacs and cataracts, and hearing aids and glasses,  
Polident and Fixodent and false teeth in glasses,  
Pacemakers, golf carts and porches with swings,  
These are a few of my favorite things.

When the pipes leak,  
When the bones creak,  
When the knees go bad,  
I simply remember my favorite things,  
And then I don't feel so bad.

Hot tea and crumpets and corn pads for bunions,  
No spicy hot food or food cooked with onions,  
Bathrobes and heating pads and hot meals they bring,  
These are a few of my favorite things.

Back pains, slow brains, and no interest in swimmin',  
Thin bones and fractures and hair that is thinnin',  
And we won't mention our short shrunken frames,  
When we remember our favorite things.

When the joints ache,  
When the hips break,  
When the eyes grow dim,  
Then I remember the great life I've had,  
And then I don't feel so bad.

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