

Joshua 14:1-15
“The best is yet to come”

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I. Intro

Chapters 13-21 we will be given the specific geographical regions allotted for each tribe. In a sense these boundaries revealed just what they had coming from God with regards to His blessed promises. It always seems a bit trite to say that “*God has a wonderful plan for your life*”, but with the giving of the land these tribes and families could see God’s wonderful plan. Here in this section we shall examine one man’s quest for that inheritance which was promised to him 45 years earlier, Caleb. As glorious a chapter as this is **it is also a sad reminder as we examine the greatness of this man’s faith that such a person should stand out when we all should reflect God’s greatness equally.** The truth of the matter is that Caleb didn’t possess anything that we all don’t have at our disposal he just chose to live that way.

We are far to apt to take the path of least resistance and as such become content with things as they are rather than being courageous in our faith and going forward by His Spirit to lay hold of that which God has for us, no matter how large the mountain and how inhabited with giants it may be. ***Friends, no matter what things lie ahead nothing can keep us from that which God has for us but US!*** Through the energy of faith and not the flesh we are called to take possession of what is already ours in Christ. We will never inherit the blessings of God in the energy of the flesh but neither will we inherit them apart from faith.

II. Vs. 1-5 Areas of inheritance

Vs. 1-2 Now notice that when it came to the distribution of the lots that God had the heads of the 9 ½ tribes plus Eleazar the head of all spiritual things with Joshua the head of all Civil things. **For 9 ½ tribes their inheritance was by lot but for the other 2 ½ tribes their inheritance was by choice and which one was better?** Well we know that 9 ½ tribes allowed the Lord to choose for them instead of what we are told in Numbers 32:4 that those 2 ½ tribes told Moses that “*the country which the Lord defeated before the congregation of Israel, is a land for livestock, and your servants have livestock.*” Those 9 ½ tribes were prior to the out pouring of the Holy Spirit so they allowed the Lord to direct them but it is interesting to note that Eleazar the priest name means “*God is our helper*”. **How much better for you and me to learn to be guided by the Spirit not bound by casting our lots or choosing what we think is best for us?**

Hey saints God too has given you and me a road map of what He has in store for us as well it’s called the BIBLE. It is here that we get a glimpse of just what that plan is, verse like, Jeremiah 29:11 where the Lord promises that “*I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.*” God has a place for you in His body as well it is interesting to note in Paul’s pastoral letters of 1st and 2nd Timothy and Titus the topic of doing “*good works*” comes up eight times. My thought is Paul is encouraging young pastor’s in the area of encouraging the bodies they pastor to be rich in “*good works*”.

Vs. 3-5 Joshua reminds us that there will be an exclusion for the distribution of land for two groups:

- A. The two ½ tribes who chose to dwell outside the land of promise to which we are further told that they didn’t have any of the Levites dwelling among them as well. **Wow, not only were they outside of the blessings they were clearly outside of fellowship as well.** Friends we need to take into consideration that the choices we make the decisions we choose will have consequences with regards to our relationship with the Lord and our enjoyment of what the Lord has for us.
- B. Further more we are told that again the Levites were not given land only cites to dwell in the land of promises. Hey saints this to is a good reminder as it tells us we may live

in this world but it's not our home land. We like our spiritual father Abraham in Hebrews 11:10 are waiting "*for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.*"

Ephraim and Manasseh were the sons of Joseph, whom Jacob "*adopted*" and especially blessed according to Gen. 48:15-22. Since the tribe of Levi wasn't given any territory, these two tribes made up the difference so that there were still twelve tribes in Israel. The birth order was "*Manasseh and Ephraim*" but Jacob reversed it. Perhaps you have noticed a pattern over and over again in scripture how God rejects the first born and accepts the 2nd born? You may recall He rejected Cain but accepted Abel; He rejected Ishmael and accepted Isaac, Abraham's second-born son; He rejected Esau and accepted Jacob. Hum, that is a picture of our own lives as God rejects our first birth but gives us an opportunity for second birth which He accepts. What this speaks to me is that there are many of us who have made some pretty substantial mistakes in our lives we have some offspring born to us during our stay in Egypt but don't be discouraged my friend as God included them in the inheritance as well.

III. Vs. 6-15 Tackling tough places

Vs. 6-9 The rest of this chapter concerns its self with Joshua's buddy Caleb who is the first to come to Joshua and request his land. Forty five years has passed and the area that caused 10 of his fellow spies to come back with a bad report is the land that Caleb requests. In 6th verse we are told that Caleb was "*the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite*" what makes this a remarkable statement is that we know that the **Kenizzite's** were descendant's of Esau and as such Caleb's father was a foreigner in fact he was from the land of promise. At some point Caleb's father became a believer in the God of Jacob and left with Caleb from Egypt. Is that not cool? **Here was a fellow who had been grafted into the inheritance by faith in the living God and was promised what ever his heart desired.**

Caleb was the first to receive his inheritance because of the promise of God to him and we are told in chapter 19 that Joshua will be the last to receive his inheritance. For 38 years of wondering and waiting Caleb had held onto the promise from the Lord and now seven years after entering the land of promise he approached his friend and the only other man in the nation who could understand his heart on this was Joshua. The ten other spies you will recall admitted the fruitfulness of the land, it was all God had said it would be but they viewed the obstacles of obtaining the inheritance as insurmountable in their own strength and failed to see what Joshua and Caleb saw and that was that weren't being asked to obtain the promised land in their strength they were to do so in God's who was far more than able to keep what He had promised. In Numbers 13:30 "*Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, "Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it."* These 45 years later he hadn't changed his mind, his physical capabilities may have been lessened but his faith had grown not weakened. Because of Caleb's faith in God's ability to perform what He promised God promised to give him what his heart desired. Now what I love about this is that what his heart desired was none other than what caused the hearts of others to faint the mountain of the giants!

Not one of those spies disagreed on the value of the land, neither did they disagree on their description of the people and their cities. Not what Joshua and Caleb saw that the other 10 spies didn't was God!!! **Friends that is always the antidote to fear seeing God above the situation and the circumstance instead of the seeing the situation and circumstances above us.** The majority had great giants and a little God but Caleb had a great God and little giants. Three times we are told that Caleb "*wholly followed the Lord*" there in is the key to all that ails us as we step into wholly following the Lord we will walk into victorious Christian living. Far too many believer want to be "*saved, safe and satisfied*" and two of those things are right on the money "*saved and satisfied*" but God forbid that we should ever be satisfied.

Caleb reminds Joshua of the words of the Lord through Moses 45 years earlier in Deut. 1:35-36 where He said, "*Surely not one of these men of this evil generation shall see that good land of which I swore to give to your fathers, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him and his children I am giving the land on which he walked, because he wholly followed the Lord.*" "*Hey, Josh I'm here to collect what was promised to me by the Lord*". For 45 years Caleb waited for the opportunity to live out what he believed that God was greater than any Giant upon any hill now that would be further tested as a testimony to the nation that 45 years later at 85 years of age God is still all you need. And why was he able to collect what was promised? Well the answer is what the Lord said about him 45 years earlier namely that he

promised. From the moment that the Lord said about him 15 years earlier namely that he “wholly follows the Lord”. That being said than the opposite would also be true with us in appropriating the promised blessings in our lives; “We simple do not wholly follow the Lord”.

Folks it is amazing to realize that professionally those that are the most successful people are those who “give themselves wholly to something” and it is true spiritually as well if you want to be a successful Christian and possess all of what the Lord has for you than “give yourself wholly to Him”. Oh saints how many of you would request the most difficult areas to conquer especially when you are 85? “Uh, Lord I want a beach front condo with no yard work please!” So often I hear my self think, “Man I’m getting up there in years Lord it’s time to kick back and take it easy” but you know what Caleb realized? That when he was kicking back he was in more danger than when he was going after giants. That’s what Hebrews 4:16 admonishes us to “*come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*” James also reminds us in James 4:3 “*You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.*”

Vs. 10-15 Finally we are told in verse that Caleb said in verse “*give me this mountain where you heard that the Anakim and the cities were great and fortified.*” Don’t you love that; give me the hardest attainable area with the biggest obstacles? Arba whose name means “four” (probably his I-Q) was the greatest among the giants of old but the city changed its name to Hebron (society of friendship). The Lord wanted Caleb to occupy a city that at one time was dominated by a fellow who had no name just a number and transform it into a society of friendship. So what is the area of areas of your life that’s so bad it’s just a number are you willing to say, “Hey Lord I want to tackle that area of my life so that it will be a place of fellowship and peace”? I’m afraid that far too often we aren’t much like Caleb who doesn’t want to dwell on easy street He wants to live in the High places and doesn’t mind kicking out a few giant’s so that he can live there. Friends those obstacles in your life, those areas where the past giants still haunt you aren’t there to intimidate you they are there to make you stronger so go to your Joshua and say, “Hey I want to go back after those areas that were around 45 years ago, for I’m as strong to day as I was then.” You say, “Well that might have been easy for Caleb seeing Mr. 4 was gone”. Look with me at verse 14 of chapter 15 and you will see that Caleb had to three sons of the giants, Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai.

Why was Caleb so confident? Well nothing had changed with him in 45 years as his strength and confidence was still in the Lord as he says, “*It may be that the Lord will be with me, and I shall be able to drive them out as the Lord said.*” Caleb may have grown weaker physically in 45 years but he had grown spiritually stronger and that is what we ought to be like as well. Caleb wants the fight, he could have asked for Club Med-iterranean the all inclusive resort but he knows that there are giants to be faced and he may as well be the one to do it. He doesn’t leave the work to someone else, though he could have, especially at his age. Why does Caleb insist upon Hebron to be his inheritance? Several clues come to mind:

- A. As a recent convert when he first entered the land he may have wanted to discover the roots of his faith and Hebron was the city where Abraham, Sarah, Isaac and Jacob were buried but it was also the city of the giants.
- B. Hebron was the city of the giants to whom Caleb and Joshua still trusted in God where as the 10 other spies didn’t. To the ten spies they were as grasshoppers in their sight but to Caleb the giants were the grasshoppers in the sight of the Lord.

F.B. Meyer comments on Caleb’s 45 years of waiting saying, “*Amid the marching’s and innumerable deaths, the murmurings and rebellions of the people, Caleb retained a steadfast purpose to do only God’s will, to please Him, to know no other leader, and to heed no other voice.*” What was the secret to Caleb’s life? Well we are told in verse 8 “*I wholly followed the Lord my God*”. Friends don’t move by that fact to swiftly as the “wholly following” **is made only after one has settled who is LORD and one sees this LORD as their God.**

Hey saints, we have a glorious inheritance before us (1 Peter 1:3-6), keep looking up! **The best is yet to come!** Caleb was eighty-five years old, but he didn’t look for an easy task, suited to an “old man.” **He asked Joshua for mountains to climb and giants to conquer!** His strength was in the Lord, and he knew that God would never fail him. We are never too old to make new conquests of faith in the power of the Lord. Like Caleb, we can capture mountains and conquer giants if we wholly follow the Lord. No matter how old we become, we must never retire from trusting and serving the Lord.

Turn with me to the 15th chapter verses 13-19 where we see Caleb's example reached the next generation. You see some of Caleb rubbed off on his son-in-law *Othniel* (verse 17), who later became a judge in the land according to Judges 3:7-11. Then we see that Caleb's faith also touched his daughter, for she had the faith to ask her father for a field and then for springs of water to irrigate the land. He saint's the next generation is watching how us old geezers trust the Lord to climb mountains and tackle giant's as **Caleb's example of faith was more valuable to his family than the property he claimed for them.** So what are you leaving as an inheritance for the next generation. Caleb drove out those three giants and changed the name of the city to Hebron which means "*fellowship or communion*" it's no wonder that Caleb's name means "*wholehearted*"! Later on the city of "fellowship" became a Levitical city and a city of refuge. **There is no mountain high enough and no giant big enough that withstand a man or woman of faith who will press after the promises of God in the Spirit of God, through obedience to the Word of God.**