

Journey Through The Cities of Refuge

Lesson #17

Caleb: Man Of Extraordinary Faith

May 13, 2026

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 where he went, and his descendants shall inherit it.

Hebron, the 3rd City of Refuge, is often considered the birthplace of the Jewish people.

- It is where Abraham first settled and made a covenant with God.
- It was one of the cities visited by the spies sent by Moses to scout the Promised Land.

The land around Hebron was part of the allotment Joshua gave to Caleb when Israel took the Promised Land [Joshua 14:13].

God's Words at Mt. Sinai: Ex. 19:4-6 Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings and brought you unto Myself.

⁵ Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people: for all the earth is Mine:

⁶ And ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. We Will! We Do!

God promised to fight for Israel to secure the Promised Land.

Deut.3:22 The LORD your God himself will fight for you.

Joshua 10:14 The LORD fought for Israel, assuring them victory against stronger, established nations. He instructed them not to fear or hold back, emphasizing that the battles were not won by their own strength, but by His Divine Intervention.

Belief: Israel's Promised Land is a picture of the Abundant Life that God has for Every born-again believer. There are many lessons for us to glean in this study.

Caleb, specifically in his 85th year in Joshua 14, is a model for finishing life well, refusing to retire from serving God and maintaining a youthful spirit.

Caleb pictures the Christian who is willing to pay the price, fight the battles and win the victory that God has waiting for him.

Caleb Was Not Defeated or Discouraged by What Others Thought of Him

^{1st} Mention: Choosing the 12 spies Num. 13:6 Of the tribe of Judah, Caleb the son of Jephunneh. Caleb was 40 years old when chosen as one of the 12 spies.

Num. 32:12 Caleb was the son of Jephunneh who was a Kenezite.

Caleb's relation to the Kenizzites demonstrates how believing Gentiles were at times integrated into Israel and, in the case of Jephunneh, into the tribe of Judah [Num. 13:6.]

Caleb literally means "dog." One scholar says it means "raging with canine madness, like a pit bull." He became a "pit bull" for God.

- No giant, no negative Hebrew could stop his zeal for serving the Lord.

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 where he went, and his descendants shall inherit it.

- This is said about Caleb 6 times in the Old Testament

"wholly" or "fully" - 2 Hebrew words: ahar > the hind part, behind

mala - to be filled up

It means "To close the gap between yourself and God.

Caleb was filled up with the hind part of God. He kept so close. He "was filled with pursuing."

His heart was so set on following God that it didn't have room for any competing choice.

- To be filled with the Spirit of God > you are so dependent upon Him, He can't shake you!
Caleb, a man of Extraordinary Faith, represents man in the FULLNESS of God's Strength, man unhindered by the world, by Satan, because Caleb WHOLLY FOLLOWED GOD!

Return to the scene 45 years earlier recorded in Num. 13 & 14.

The children of Israel reached Kadesh-barnea on the very border of the Promised Land.

Problem: The UNBELIEF which had plagued them during their early wilderness journey demanded > We must send in spies to survey the land. So, 12 men [1 per tribe] were sent in. After a 40-day tour of inspection they brought back 2 reports.

A. Majority Report: Evil Report [Num. 13:32]

Num. 13:27-28 Then they told him and said: "We went to the land where you sent us.

It truly flows with milk and honey, and this *is* its fruit.

²⁸ NEVERTHELESS the people who dwell in the land *are* strong; the cities *are* fortified *and* very large; moreover, we saw the descendants of Anak [GIANTS] there.

Num. 13:33 There we saw the giants [the descendants of Anak]);

and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight.

Conclusion: We ARE NOT ABLE to go up against them.

What the other ten spies said actually wasn't an exaggeration - it was all accurate, but they left God out of the picture!

When Caleb was 40, he toured and inspected the land. One place captured his heart.

He desired Hebron situated on a rugged mountain.

It was the most powerful stronghold of the enemy and was guarded by the strongest of giants.

- Gen. 10 tells us that Abraham pitched his tent here.

God spoke to him here and gave him the promise of the land. [Unconditional Covenant]

Hebron's meaning: Fellowship, love and communion. This was the place that Caleb cherished.

This is the place we all must seek and find. Caleb wanted to PROVE the POWER of GOD.

Caleb Refused to Be Influenced by the Negative Majority

b. Minority Report > Caleb & Joshua > It is true there are giants, but we BELIEVE GOD.

Num. 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.

Num. 14:8 If the Lord delights in us, He will bring us safely into this land and give it to us, a rich land flowing with milk and honey.

"IF" - There was an "if" in Caleb's belief. It was NOT an "if" of unbelief.

It was an "if" of humility. > If the Lord delights in us.

Do not rebel against the Lord, and don't be afraid of the inhabitants.

They are only helpless prey to us! They have no protection, but the LORD is with us!

Conclusion: We are well able to overcome it. Caleb had SEEN & TASTED

Imagine Caleb's reaction to the bounties of the Promised Land - the grapes that exploded with sweetness in his mouth after 2 years of manna and quail. He wanted this so very much! He & Joshua took samples of the fruit back to the people so they could experience it. Surely the people will be excited about this wonderful Promised Land! He could hardly believe his ears as the people listened intently to the descriptions of the giants and walled cities. People - can't you see these grapes! Taste! Can't you see that God is with us?

Cry of the People: "Let us go back to Egypt." Discouragement spread through the people.

Doubt > Unbelief [challenges the character of God] > Rebellion - They FORGOT the bondage.

In their desire to avoid further peril and trouble, they dishonored God.

J. I. Packer: We dishonor God if we proclaim a Savior who satisfies and then we go around discontent.

Truth: A complaining spirit is evidence of an ungrateful heart and an unsundered will.

Difference: The majority measured the giants against their own strength.

Caleb & Joshua measured the giants against God's strength.

➤ The majority trembled; the minority triumphed.

The majority had great giants and a little God.

Caleb & Joshua had a great God and little giants. "One with God is a majority."

Ps. 3:1-4 Lord, how are they increased that trouble me! Many are they that rise up against me.

² Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God. Selah.

³ But thou, O Lord, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.

⁴ I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and He heard me out of His holy hill. Selah.

Num. 14:23-24 God's Decision: The land of blessing can ONLY be inherited by faith and obedience. Therefore, the Promised Land will be refused to a whole generation of His people except Caleb & Joshua.

God himself shut down their return to Egypt, but he slammed the door to Canaan too!

The formal command to possess the land occurred shortly after the Exodus, specifically at Mount Sinai before their first attempted entry in Numbers 14. After receiving the law, God told them to move from Sinai to take possession of the land He promised.

When Israel was at Kadesh-barnea, God instructed them to go up and possess the land, but they did not believe God's promise which resulted in a 40-year delay.

Heb. 3:19 So we see that they were not able to enter in because of UNBELIEF.

Unbelief & The Christian Walk

- Unbelief is not an intellectual attitude, or state, caused by a want of sufficient evidence.
- Unbelief is not a state of blank ignorance of God and of His Truth.
- Unbelief is at the heart of our lack of commitment to God.

Unbelief is calling God a liar!

I John 5:10 Whoever does not believe God has made Him a liar.

Heb. 6:18 It is impossible for God to lie.

I. Caleb Possessed a Carrying Faith

Joshua 14:6-11 ⁶ 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. ⁷ 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. ⁸ Nevertheless my brethren who went up with me made the heart of the people melt, but I wholly followed the LORD my God. ⁹ So Moses swore on that day, saying, 'Surely the land where your foot has trodden [darak > warfare] shall be your inheritance and your children's forever, because you have wholly followed the LORD my God.' 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. 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.

Caleb, age 85, interrupted the apportionment of the land among the people of Israel when he stepped out of the ranks to claim the portion which God had promised him 45 years before.

Characteristics of Caleb:

1. The Faith of his youth was not dimmed in his old age.
2. The vision of the Lord was clearer as he grew older.
3. He was not content merely to survey his past.
He was ready and eager for fresh battles with the enemy.
4. Caleb possessed an unwavering faith.

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 where he went, and his descendants shall inherit it.

Caleb surely treasured that promise from God during 45 years of weary wandering, toil and ceaseless conflict and unfulfilled hopes. As the people continued to murmur, Caleb retained the fixed purpose to wholly follow the LORD; his faith carried him.

Like Abraham in Rom. 4:20-21 He did not waver at the promise of God through UNBELIEF. He was Strengthened In Faith, Giving Glory To God,²¹ and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform.

Consider: Caleb was NEVER found among the grumblers, the skeptics and unbelievers. He was NEVER found among the people who yearned for the leeks and garlic of Egypt. He was NEVER found among those who disobeyed God or turned to idolatry.

Why? Caleb had caught a glimpse of the reward of obedience. That Hope Was Sufficient to keep Caleb true until God brought him to the place He had promised him.

Consider: If I am lacking in a "carrying" faith, I need to abide in Him, His Word and His Promises. The basis for abiding in Him is obedience to His commands. If I am not abiding in Him, I will not have the faith to carry me through the storms of life. Instead of feasting on the "monster fruit" of God, I am starving on Gerber's processed baby food.

II. Caleb had a Climbing Faith

Joshua 14:12 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." Biblehub.org When Scripture says "perhaps," it does not question God's faithfulness; it invites human hearts to submit, seek, and hope in the One whose purposes are certain and whose mercies are new every morning.

What a moment when Caleb, at 85, in all the maturity of godly character and in all the authority of one who believed God, stepped out of the ranks alone. He had gone through many difficulties and succeeded in the struggle to overcome those who would have done most anything to dissuade him from his conviction. Can you imagine hearing him:

"Now, after 45 years of waiting, after many an agony of soul, after having been tempted by the crowd to pull back - NOW, give me this mountain whereof the Lord spoke in that day!"

Note: Caleb's strength never weakened.

Joshua 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.

Divine Sustenance: Caleb's vitality at 85 demonstrates that God sustains those who wholly follow Him, even through long seasons of waiting.

Unwavering Faith & Boldness: Despite the daunting presence of giants (Anakim) in the promised hill country, Caleb's strength is matched by his unwavering courage.

Perseverance: The verse represents a 45-year pause between promise and fulfillment, showing that faith can survive long delays.

"All Heart": Caleb's name reflects his total commitment, showing that spiritual, mental, and physical strength often go together when one is devoted to God.

Truth: A faith that NEVER wavered enabled him to lay hold on a strength that never weakened - the very power of God Himself.

Caleb had every reason to be bitter, having spent 45 years wandering due to the disobedience of others, yet he remained positive and focused.

➤ He suffered the same hardships and trials as those who had disobeyed God.

Caleb fully followed the Lord while everyone around him was dropping dead, complaining, getting bitten by snakes, swallowed by the earth. Yet, his zeal to serve the Lord had not waned. At age 85 Caleb was asking Joshua for permission to *climb* and *conquer* a mountain that was still filled with entrenched Anakim warriors who dwelt securely behind the protective walls of their "fenced" cities.

Caleb was thinking about mountain climbing. He was pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus. Caleb kept on drinking from the Rock, thinking about the grapes, his inheritance and climbing the mountain.

Truth: You are either running a winning race or falling down in the wilderness.

No human energy could suffice for all the trials of the way. Caleb could toil, fight and exhaust himself and still be full of the strength of God. This is a great example of

II Cor. 4:16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.

III. Caleb had a Conquering Faith

II Tim. 4:7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Caleb's reward was complete victory.

Joshua 14:13-15 And Joshua [type of Jesus Christ] blessed him and gave Hebron to Caleb the son of Jephunneh as an inheritance. ¹⁴ 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.

¹⁵ And the name of Hebron formerly was Kirjath Arba. *Arba* was the greatest man among the Anakim. Caleb drove out the three sons of Anak from there: Sheshai Ahiman, and Talmi, the children of Anak.

The others made poor headway. The last part of Joshua makes sad reading. Over and over: "They were not able to drive them out." Caleb was able to drive out ALL the enemy even though there were 3 giants in the portion allotted to him.

Consider: The man who wholly followed the LORD was the only one who was wholly victorious in the battle.

Fulfillment of Divine Promise: The expulsion of Sheshai and his brothers by Caleb illustrates the certainty of God's oath to give the land to Israel [Genesis 15:18-21; Deuteronomy 1:36]. What appeared humanly impossible—overcoming giants—proved entirely possible when the LORD fought for His people.

They were the giants, Anakim, whose reputation for strength and height terrified the Israelite spies, leading to a fear-driven delay in entering the Promised Land.

They represent the severe obstacles the Israelites faced.

Their defeat symbolizes the triumph of faith and God's promise over fear.

Their defeat testifies that God keeps His promises, rewards steadfast trust, and empowers His people to inherit all He has pledged.

Typology of Spiritual Warfare: The Anakim prefigure formidable spiritual strongholds that confront believers. Caleb's victory models persevering faith, reliance on God's word, and patient endurance [Heb. 6:12].

Giants Still Fall: Obstacles that appear insurmountable cannot thwart God's commission.

Go in and possess the land I have given you.

"Giants Still Fall" is a powerful spiritual theme highlighting that no obstacle—

fear, debt, sickness, or opposition, your prodigal—is too great for God to overcome today.

It teaches that victories come not by human strength but by faith and divine power.

Zech. 4:6 Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the LORD of hosts.

Giants Must Be Confronted: Challenges rarely vanish on their own.

They require active, faith-based confrontation.

Divine Empowerment: The battle belongs to the Lord.

His power is sufficient to win when you feel exhausted or overwhelmed.

Reoccurring Battles: Like David's men who fought later giants [II Samuel 21:15],

believers may face repeated challenges, requiring ongoing spiritual vigilance.

Perspective Shift: Instead of viewing obstacles as insurmountable threats,

view them as opportunities for God to show His power.

The "David" Approach: Defeat giants by going forward in faith.

Focus on God's power rather than the problem taking the next godly step.

I Sam. 17:45 Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee

in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.

I Sam. 17: 46a,d, 47b This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand;...

that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.

For the battle is the Lord's, and He will give you into our hands.

I Sam. 17:48 And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came, and drew nigh

to meet David, that David hastened, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine.

Truth: The enemy knows the weak points in my armor. Failure to drive out the enemy in my life is due to my failure to wholly follow the Lord. God knows the leakage in my consecration, the flaw in my obedience which has led to failure to exterminate the foe and not victory.

- Absolute triumph is achieved only in response to utter obedience.

Do we desire to serve the Lord wholeheartedly? Maybe it would help us to think of the opposite of whole-hearted: half-hearted, apathetic, indifferent - lukewarm.

Jesus used lukewarm to describe the church at Laodicea in Rev 3:16.

So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.

- Being half-hearted is a dangerous place for any of us to be.

Truth: Faith filters every giant through the Power of God.

Redpath: "There is a place guarded by powerful forces, a rugged stronghold which Satan attempts to keep from God's people at all costs. He is prepared to barter portions of the land to the children of God. He will give them the plains and the valleys. He will give them the milk and honey. But when Satan sees a soul pressing toward the mountain of Hebron - the soul that is going to be satisfied with nothing in his life other than love, fellowship and communion with God - Satan is stirred to a last-ditch battle."

"Here was the secret of Caleb's patience, of his faith and of his complete victory -

In Hebron he had caught a glimpse of the reward of discipleship - the greatest reward of all.

Caleb saw the place of communion, of fellowship, of God's infinite blessing.

Regardless of the cost and the hardship, he pressed on until Hebron was his."