

Joshua Series #5

“Aged Faith” — Joshua 14:6-15

I. INTRODUCTION

A. RR

1. Prayer
2. Sit down; turn to Joshua 14

B. Numbers 14:6-9 [Read it]

1. 12 spies sent out
 - a. all said a good land
 - b. 10 said it was too tough to take
 - strong cities
 - mighty armies
 - giants
 - c. 2 spies, Joshua and Caleb, said they could take it with God’s help
2. What a difference of viewpoints
 - a. the majority opinion was one of unbelief
 - the result was that they wandered in the wilderness for the next 38 years
 - b. the minority opinion was the view of faith
 - these two men, Joshua & Caleb, were the only two of the whole generation who made it into the PL
 - and all the time that they had to wander in the wilderness with the rest of Israel, they never stopped believing

C. Setting

1. As we come to Joshua 14, 45 years have passed
2. Israel has entered PL
3. They have conquered Jericho & Ai, the 2 eastern fortresses
 - a. cut Canaan in ½
 - b. took major cities to the south
 - c. then went north
4. Time has come to divide up the land between the tribes
 - a. each tribe would come to Joshua & elders for their allotment
 - b. while the major cities & kings had been conquered
 - c. there were still many smaller cities and villages of Canaanites that needed to be dealt with
5. Later in Joshua and Judges, we learn that Israel never did complete the job of conquest
 - a. rather than ousting the last groups of pagans
 - b. they settled down among them

- c. eventually became corrupted by them and adopted their horrible abominations
- 6. But such was not the story of Caleb
- 7. We've already noted how Joshua present a picture of the victorious Christian life
- 8. No where do we see that more clearly portrayed than in the life of Caleb . . .

II. TEXT

A. Vs. 6-9

6 Then the children of Judah came to Joshua in Gilgal.

- 1. The tribe of Judah was the first to come for its portion of the land
- 2. But even before they get their assignment in the land, one of their tribe, Caleb, comes before Joshua with a special request

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 shall be your inheritance and your children's forever, because you have wholly followed the LORD my God.'

- 3. When God pronounced the judgment of wandering in the wilderness upon Israel for their unbelief —
- 4. He also said that because Joshua & Caleb had believed & brought a good report, they alone would enter the PL
- 5. Even more, God promised that Caleb would take possession of the very place he had spied out

B. Vs. 10-12

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.

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.”

1. You gotta' love this guy!
2. Here he is, 85 years old, 45 years have passed since he first spied out the land of Canaan
3. But the things he saw are still fresh in his mind and heart
4. And the same passion and desire of moving in and taking possession of the land are still there
5. The region Caleb claimed was called Hebron
 - a. it was one of the regions he had checked out when he was a spy
 - b. for some reason, it stuck in his heart as the place he wanted to live
 - c. never mind that there was a fortress there
 - d. never mind that there were giants who lived there
 - e. of all the regions in Canaan, Hebron was the toughest to conquer
 - f. so, Caleb says, “I want it!”
6. Caleb wanted to prove to Israel the faith he had had 45 years before
7. That faith had only grown and increased over the years so that now, he wanted to take Hebron himself
8. I find it interesting that Caleb uses the very same description of Hebron that the 10 spies did to discourage the people
 - a. fortress city
 - b. great armies
 - c. giants
9. 45 years earlier he had not been put off by these things; He still would not be put off by them
10. Alan Redpath wrote, “The majority measured the giants against their own strength; Caleb & Joshua measured the giants against God. The majority trembled; the two triumphed. The majority had great giants and a little God. Caleb had a great God and little giants.”
11. The 10 spies had said that they were as *grasshoppers*, both . . .
 - a. in their own sight
 - b. and in the sight of the Canaanites
12. But Caleb had said that the Canaanites were *bread* for Israel
13. The difference between the 10 spies and Caleb was faith
 - a. he had it
 - b. they didn't
14. So they saw themselves as insects, as mere pests, to the Canaanites —

15. While Caleb saw the enemy, not as a giant ready to squash him but as a bread to make him strong
16. Caleb understood a principle of faith you and I must understand as well
 - a. faith is not a comfort laden highway to riches
 - b. faith is a difficult testing track meant to conform us to the image of Christ
 - c. faith isn't for lining our earthly nests with luxury
 - d. faith is a weapon of warfare with which we subdue those things that resist God
 - e. contrary to what some faith teachers are saying,
 - faith does not mean exemption from trouble
 - rather, it means a path through it
17. James 1:2 “My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.”
18. 1 Pet 1:6-7 “In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”
19. God allows trials into our lives, not to crush us, but to strengthen us
 - a. if we meet those trials by faith
 - b. we are strengthened, and we grow
20. Caleb knew this, so he said that at 85 he was as strong as he was at 40
 - a. his physical body may be older and somewhat weaker
 - b. but the lessons he had learned about the faithfulness of God over the last 45 years more than made up for it
21. At the time when most people would have retired and settled down to let their kids take care of them, Caleb wanted to be the point man for taking the toughest region in all Canaan!
 - a. rather than kick back in a nice quiet corner of Judah's region
 - b. he was hungry to grow more in his relationship with the Lord
 - c. and he saw Hebron as bread to scarf down and get strong
22. The lesson we learn from this is that no matter how far we've gone with the Lord, no matter how mature we are, or how many things we have done for the Lord, there is always more ground to take, more room to grow, more mountains to take from the enemy.
23. For many Christians, the glory days are all in the past
 - a. sit around and talk about the good old days
 - when they used to go to bible study all the time
 - knew all the songs

- were winning their friends to the Lord
 - were involved in this ministry or that work
- b. but it's all ancient history!
24. Let's be like Caleb!
- a. let's not rest on our laurels
 - b. let's take that next mountain!
 - c. let's dare to trust God to give us that high place where giants live
 - d. the view is great from there and it's only fitting that it should be won for the kingdom of God
25. What other option do we have?
- a. either we will be like unbelieving Israel, destined to wander in the wilderness
 - b. or we will be like Caleb, daring to trust God
26. One final thing before we move on: Caleb also teaches us how faith in God effects our self-concept
- a. as the 10 spies looked OUT at the Canaanites, they said they felt like grasshoppers
 - b. but as Caleb looked UP to God, he saw the Canaanites like bread; in other words, Caleb saw himself as the focal point of what God was doing
 - c. the Canaanites were not a problem but an opportunity because God would only use them as a way to feed His servants
 - d. there is much talk today about self-concept, self-esteem, self-image
 - it is thought that the root of most people's problems lies in their poor self image
 - many methods have been developed for helping people build up their self-esteem and to gain a better concept of themselves
 - e. any attempt to understand yourself apart from your relationship to God is ultimately pointless
 - f. we were not created to live for ourselves or unto ourselves
 - g. man's reference point is God
 - h. any attempt to try to understand yourself that does not first recognize why you exist is going to end up way of track
 - i. we were created to have relationship with God
 - j. and everything that happens in life is part of God's plan to —
 - 1st, bring you into rel. with Him
 - 2nd, deepen your rel. with Him.
 - k. you are the focus of God's attention; you are the apple of His eye
 - l. you are not some grown up germ, as evolution says, some grasshopper on two legs
 - m. you are the beloved of the Creator; and if you are a Christian, you are the betrothed of the King

- n. and just as Esther was put through several beauty treatments and a special diet to prepare her for marriage to the King of Persia,
 - o. so, God has you on a special diet and beauty therapy called walking by faith
 - p. Eph 5:25-27 “Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.”
27. This is why you and I must press on in faith — because we are awaiting the day when Jesus comes again and takes us in to the bridal chamber — we want to be a beautiful bride!

C. Vs. 13-15

13 And Joshua 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). Then the land had rest from war.

- 1. The Anakim were the giants, and here we read that the greatest of all the giants lived there at Hebron
- 2. Look over to 15:13-14

14 Now to Caleb the son of Jephunneh he gave a share among the children of Judah, according to the commandment of the LORD to Joshua, namely, Kirjath Arba, which is Hebron (Arba was the father of Anak).

14 Caleb drove out the three sons of Anak from there: Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai, the children of Anak.

- 3. Caleb received the land he wanted
- 4. Then he went up and took it
- 5. This is faith friends; this isn't merely talk — this is faith
- 6. [Ex. of giving a dollar bill]
 - a. I will give this to you
 - b. how will you show me your faith in my offer

D. The 2 Keys To Caleb's Faith

FIRST:

- 1. 5 times in these verses, Caleb referred to the promise of God

2. God had promised him the region of Hebron and Caleb took God at his word
3. This is what we must do
 - a. we turn the promises of God into prayers
 - b. and then we step out and trust them

SECOND:

4. 3 times were read that Caleb “wholly followed the Lord.”
5. He didn’t have his own agenda
6. God was not a means to Caleb’s ends
7. Caleb was wholly and solely devoted to one thing - serving the Lord

III. CONCLUSION

A. *Modern Calebs*

1. DL Moody;
 - a. shoe salesman
 - b. customer - “The world is just waiting to see what God can do through one man who is totally devoted to Him.”
 - c. that one spark landed in the tinder of Moody’s heart and started a flame that saw hundreds of thousands of people won to Christ
2. Moody is gone, Caleb is buried in his land
3. But the way of faith they lived is still wide open
4. Our day has yet to see what God can do through those who wholly follow Him and trust in His promises

B.