

# The Book of Joshua

## The Division of the Land

### “Give Me This Mountain”

Text: Joshua 13 - 15

#### I. Introduction (Joshua 13:1-6)

- A. Joshua was 85 when he began leading the people of Israel and he died 25 years later, at the age of 110 (cf. 24:29).
- B. There was still much land to be possessed, and Joshua had to prepare the people for that work.
- C. The first step was the dividing of the land among the 12 tribes.
- D. Also, there was a reminder of how much land they still lacked.
- E. God promised to continue to be with Israel and to drive out their enemies.



#### II. Division of the Land (Joshua 13:7 -15:63)

- A. 13:8-13 - Borders of the land to be divided
- B. 13:14, 33 - Inheritance of the Tribe of Levi
- C. 13:15-23 - Inheritance of the Tribe of Reuben
- D. 13:24-28 - Inheritance of the Tribe of Gad
- E. 13:29-32 - Inheritance of the Tribe of Manasseh (1/2)
- F. 14:1-5 - Review
- G. 14:6 - 15:63 - Inheritance of the Tribe of Judah
- H. Lessons:
  1. 13:13 - *Israel failed to drive out all the inhabitants of the land.*
  2. 13:22 - *Balaam died with the wicked, as an enemy of Israel.*
  3. 15:63 - *The men of Judah failed to take the city of Jerusalem.*
    - a. They were able to take the “lower city” but could not capture the “upper city” (cf. Judges 1:8, 21).
    - b. It would not be until the time of David that the city was finally conquered (2 Sam. 5:6-9; 1 Chron. 11:3-8).

#### IV. The Faith of Caleb (Joshua 14:6-15; 15:13-19)

- A. Caleb had been chosen as one of the spies to explore Canaan (Num. 13:6).
- B. He, along with Joshua, gave a good report and encouraged Israel to take the land (Num. 13:30).
- C. Because of this, he and Joshua were the only two men of their generation to survive the wilderness wandering and to enter into the Promised Land (Num. 14:24, 30, 38; 26:65; 32:12; Deut. 1:36).
  1. He had another (different) spirit than the 10 spies.
  2. He fully followed - was fully after - the Lord.
- D. He was promised by God that he would inherit land in Canaan for his posterity.

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- E. When the tribe of Judah came to Joshua to receive their land, Caleb reminded his friend of God's promise.
- F. Yet, Caleb did not wish for an easy gift of land - he wanted the mountain that was inhabited by the giant Anakims in great, fortified cities!
  - 1. Even though he was 85 years old, Caleb was still a man of great faith.
  - 2. He recognized God's blessings in his life.
  - 3. He trusted God's promise and presence for his victory.
- G. Thus, Caleb was given Hebron for his inheritance.
- H. From this land, Caleb drove three sons of Anak - Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmi.
- I. He then encouraged and led others in the defeat of Debir.
  - 1. The man who took Debir was Othniel, Caleb's younger brother.
  - 2. He would become the first Judge of Israel (Judges 3:9-11).
  - 3. He was given Caleb's daughter, Achsah, to be his wife.
- J. To his daughter, Caleb gave a piece of land with upper and lower springs of water.

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From this text, we get some insight into Caleb's thinking and character. What do we see in him? Caleb's **Heart** – He reminded his friend Joshua of the word that was in his heart and which he shared with Moses after he returned from spying the land of Canaan (14:7). While ten faithless, spineless spies said that Israel could not overcome Canaan and its inhabitants, courageous Caleb charged, *“Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it”* (Numbers 13:30). Thank God for people today who, like Caleb, will not allow the wavering faith of others to lower their enthusiasm or cause them to stumble.

Caleb further showed his heart when he said, *“. . . the LORD has kept me alive, as He said, these forty-five years”* (Joshua 14:10). From spying the land at age 40 to approaching death at age 85, Caleb wisely gave credit to God, realizing that he owed him everything, as Paul said, *“But by the grace of God I am what I am”* (1 Corinthians 15:10).

Caleb's mindset was, if he and God worked together, then they could get the job done – *“If may be that the LORD will be with me, and I shall be able to drive them out as the LORD said”* (14:12). Note one more thing about Caleb's heart: he was willing to let Joshua have the spotlight while he served more or less in the background. They were co-faithful spies and they both set a wonderful example, but Joshua was the God-appointed leader who replaced Moses. Joshua got most of “the headlines,” but Caleb continued to serve, too.

**Caleb's Commitment** – This is actually a demonstration of his heart and character, but we point to it separately because the Bible shows the *high level* of the man's commitment. Why was Caleb rewarded with the city of Hebron? *“Because he wholly followed the LORD God of Israel”* (14:13). In fact, three times in this passage it is stated plainly that the son of Jephunneh followed God with his whole heart (14:8,9,14). That set him apart from the ten weak spies, whose report *“made the heart of the people melt”* (14:8). It is easy to see why God praised Caleb, saying, *“But My servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit in him and has followed Me fully . . .”* (Numbers 14:24). God's man, Caleb, was willing to be different, and he was determined to do what was right, no matter what others did or said. Yes, that is what we call “commitment.” How committed was he to the Lord? “Wholly.” When you think about it, unless one is totally committed to God, then he is not really committed, is he? Our Lord wants us to love Him with our *whole* being (Mark 12:29,30) and forsake *all* for Him (Luke 14:33). Brothers and sisters, how high is the level of *our* commitment to the Lord?

**Caleb's Enduring Service** – He was faithful as a spy at age 40, and he was still going strong at age 85 (Joshua 14:10). He was not just alive at age 85; he was still laboring for the Lord then, too! We know that some “drop out” as time passes. Jesus said they “fall away” (Luke 8:13). Some stay in the Lord's army, but are walking out of line, no longer submitting to the Lord's instructions (Galatians 5:7). And, some semi-retire along the way, thinking that they have done their share of the work and so it is now time for someone else to do it. In fact, there is much for *each* child of God to do in the Kingdom, even those that have passed “the middle ages.” Do I need to remind you that Moses was 80 when he led Israel out of Egypt? Or that “young” Noah was 600 when he entered the ark which he built?

Through Moses, Jehovah had promised a land inheritance in Canaan for Caleb (Joshua 14:9). Caleb remembered God's promise, valued it (it stayed in his heart for 45 years; 14:10), claimed it, and did his part to obtain its fulfillment (14:12).

Caleb was not perfect. No mere human ever is. But, it is clear that he had some admirable qualities that God's people still should try and imitate today.

— Roger D. Campbell