

figures in the

BACK GROUND

Living With The Wait

Num 13:30
And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.

Num 13:1-2
And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Send thou men, that they may search the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel: of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man, every one a ruler among them.

- Ten are convinced the wandering ex-slaves can't take the land because of what they saw, instead of remembering what God promised.

- What we see, and how we interpret what we see, can have very direct personal consequences.

- Facing the "facts" without God's Word will always lead to interpretations that point away from God.
- We will sometimes face circumstances when faith conflicts with logic.

1. God has plans and we have a place in those plans.

2. We are both the object of the plans and means by which they are accomplished.

- How many times have we, in full knowledge that God wanted something new, different, and better for us, gone back to the things that were "safe"?

1. Refusing to grow spiritually because we didn't want the responsibility that came with it

2. Avoiding real intimacy with God because we weren't sure what He would ask from us

The Stand

- How we say something is as important as *what* we say.

- Caleb did not argue or insult the other ten spies for their lack of faith.

- He showed great character by courageously calling for action and trust in God.

- Disappointment surely settled in when he learned of the 40-year wait; however...

1. He had a strong sense of community.
2. He led by example and encouraged others, instead of starting a new movement.
3. There is not even a hint of an "I told you so."

- Caleb saw the best of times and worst of times.

1. He knew what slavery was like.

2. He witnessed the ten plagues.

3. He saw the sea open before Israel.

4. He saw Moses descend from the mountain with the law.

5. He spent the prime of his life wandering in the desert.

6. He watched all of his generation die off in the wilderness.

7. He entered the land of Canaan with faith and courage.

- Caleb was a leader who worked more behind the scenes than in front of an audience.

- His story and example is relevant to us today.

The Setting

- About fifteen months after Israel left Egypt, they are at the border to Canaan.

- Excitement is in the air as twelve explorers are chosen to conduct a fact-finding mission.

- For 40 days the pioneers are all exposed to the same facts, but come to different conclusions.

Num 13:31-32
But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we. And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched out to the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature.

The Promise Claimed

Joshua 15:13-14
And unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh he gave a part among the children of Judah, according to the commandment of the LORD to Joshua, even the city of Arba the father of Anak, which city is Hebron. And Caleb drove thence the three sons of Anak, Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmai, the children of Anak.

- Four decades later, the Israelites crossed over the Jordan into the Promised Land.
- Caleb steps forward to claim the promise given to him by God.
 1. Caleb did not claim the most lush areas of land.
 2. He chose the area inhabited by the sons of Anak - giants.
 3. He demonstrated his faith in God by choosing the most challenging territory.
- What had terrified a whole nation was conquered by one old man who trusted in God's power.

Passing On The Legacy

Psalms 92:12-14
The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing;

- Caleb gives a wonderful example of the positive use of one's old age.
 1. He does not allow himself to be intimidated by others because of his years.
 2. He does not use his age as an excuse for not being involved in his community.
- Caleb sees it as his duty to create an environment for the younger generation to take their first steps of faith.
 1. God has no grandchildren.
 2. Every generation must have its own experience with God.
 3. They could not live off the miracles of Egypt.