

THE SPIRIT OF CALEB

“Now give me this hill country the Lord promised me on that day, because you heard then that the Anakim are there, as well as large fortified cities. Perhaps the Lord will be with me and I will drive them out as the Lord promised.” — Joshua 14:12

A sociological study was conducted of 50 people over age 95. Admittedly, that is a small sample group for a scientific study, but people over 95 don't run in huge herds. They were all asked the question, “If could live your life over again, what would you do differently?” Though the answers varied from person to person, three basic themes emerged:

- If I had it to do over again, I would reflect more
- If I had it to do over again, I would risk more
- If I had it to do over again, I would do more thing that would live on after I'm dead.

Caleb wasn't as old as this group; he was only 85. But he has been reflecting on a promise God had given him 45 years before. Caleb had been part of the search committee to spy out Canaan. The majority of the committee had reported that the land was beyond their wildest expectations, but also that it was beyond their ability to take it. Caleb and Joshua issued a minority report urging the people to believe God for victory. The congregation voted to accept the majority report and reject the minority report of Joshua and Caleb. So the Lord sentenced an entire generation to die in the wilderness. Only two of that generation survived: Joshua and Caleb. As this event takes place their sentence is up and the children of Israel are taking Canaan. Caleb comes to Joshua to claim the promise that all the land that he had personally scouted would belong to him and to his descendants.

Caleb is willing to risk his life in combat. He tells Joshua, “I am still as strong today as I was the day Moses sent me out. My strength for battle and for daily tasks is now as it was then” (verse 11). It was the toughest of the tough places: descendants of the giants lived there, they held the high ground, and the cities were fortified. Caleb didn't blink. To his way of thinking those of faith should relish the toughest challenges as they are the ones most in touch with the God of all power.

Joshua honored the Lord's promise and assigned Caleb the land. And Caleb led his people in taking it. Verse 14 concludes, “Therefore, Hebron has belonged to Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite as an inheritance to this day.” His descendants would live there. His accomplishment in the Lord lived on after his death. Do you have the spirit of Caleb?

Today's Scripture Reading: Joshua 14:6-14

Today's Prayer Guidance: *God of Caleb, help me never have to look back and wish I had claimed Your promises. Help me to claim them now. Give me the courage to take risks and to do things that will live on after I've gone home to be with you. Give me the daring to take on the tough challenges for Your name's sake.*