

The Cry of the Mountain

Joshua 14:6-14

Joshua 14:6-14 Then the children of Judah came unto Joshua in Gilgal: and Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite said unto him, Thou knowest the thing that the LORD said unto Moses the man of God concerning me and thee in Kadesh-barnea. **[7]** Forty years old was I when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadesh-barnea to espy out the land; and I brought him word again as it was in mine heart. **[8]** Nevertheless my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt: but I wholly followed the LORD my God. **[9]** And Moses swore on that day, saying, Surely the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance, and thy children's forever, because thou hast wholly followed the LORD my God. **[10]** And now, behold, the LORD hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty and five years, even since the LORD spoke this word unto Moses, while the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness: and now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old. **[11]** As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in. **[12]** Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the LORD spoke in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakims were there, and that the cities were great and fenced: if so be the LORD will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the LORD said. **[13]** And Joshua blessed him, and gave unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh Hebron for an inheritance. **[14]** Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite unto this day, because that he wholly followed the LORD God of Israel.

I. THE SIZE OF THE SOUL

-The size of a man's soul is often determined when it is under pressure. He betrays himself when the chips are down. The depth of his character will be found out in the deepest trials of life. It is by trouble that the heart of a man is purified.

-On the other hand, prosperity has the tendency to intoxicate the conscience, it causes the hopes and dreams to become lethargic, it will fix the mind on the present and therefore, it will cause the future to perish. Prosperity destroys the

imagination of the thinker and wilts the affections of the dreamer.

Lord Byron -- Adversity is the path of truth.

Tacitus -- Adversity has no friends.

-But I would choose to differ with the sentiments of Tacitus. One of the greatest friends of the church and of our lives is adversity and discontentment. I am content but not satisfied!

II. CALEB'S STORY

-Caleb and Joshua were two men out of twelve who said that God would empower the children of Israel to take the land of Jericho. The other ten, were losers, men who said that the walls were too large and the giants were too big.

A. The Danger of Hesitation

-Israel had left the land of Egyptian captivity. After being captured for a little over 400 years, they came to a place called Kadesh-barnea.

-The name "Kadesh" means "holiness." Often we associate the word "holiness" with all the "do's" and "don't's", but holiness in its real sense means a separation to God. Here was Israel's opportunity to separate herself from the tentacles of Egypt. When they got to the point of separation they found their faith and their patience being tested.

-This is always going to be the principle when one really starts stretching himself Godward. Faith and patience are both going to be tested. You will have to listen to the bad report of the ten spies and then you will have to swim against the tide of the majority who do not want to press to go any further. But I believe that this year is going to be one of the greatest years we have ever experienced in this place.

-Kadesh-barnea should have been a place of conquest but instead it became a place of hesitation. They hesitated at the edge of greatness.

-The Bible is full of people who hesitated at the edge of greatness:

- 1 **Lot's Wife** -- A look back changed her into a pillar of salt.
- 1 **Demas** -- He hesitated too long with a lasting look at this present world.
- 1 **Agrippa** -- Almost persuaded and allowed his soul to slip out of that conviction.
- 1 **The Rich Young Ruler** -- He stopped short of the greatest commandment.
- 1 **Absalom** -- The man who died gambling with the final decision.
- 1 **Balaam** -- The man who grew confident in his backslidden state.

There is a small flower called the Sun-dew that has a tiny but very beautiful crimson bloom. The delicate buds are clustered in a network of small branches. They will climb a wall or fence and wait for only twelve hours on a single day to bloom. If there is no sun on that day and the skies are overcast and the weather rainy, then the uppermost bud will wither and die. If the next climbing bud finds the same conditions it too withers and dies. The human heart is often in the same mode. When it comes to the intents and purposes of life, one by one they come to a point of blossoming. If the warmth of confidence and hope glows in the heart at the right moment, much is set into motion. But the chill of hesitation or delay will wither it.

-One must always remember that in spiritual concepts, to hesitate is to backslide. To refuse to listen to the calling of the Lord, is to back trace steps that you have already taken. Spiritual life can never afford to be static, it has to be dynamic.

Opportunity is like catching the wind in the sails. If the sails are set, the ship will be jettied on toward the port. If the sailors are asleep or ashore, the wind can die and when they want to progress on, they are unable to do so. Their vessel stands as a painted ship on a painted ocean.

B. The Spies

-The twelve spies went to the land of Canaan. They admired the fruit that grew in great abundance. They admired the land and how comfortable that a home there would be. Yet, the fenced cities and the giants who inhabited them, terrorized their hearts.

-Listen to their words:

Numbers 13:32 33 -- “And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto 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.” “And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.”

When men get out of sync with God:

- 1 Molehills will look like mountains.
- 1 Prayer rooms become silent.
- 1 The soul begins to soften up.
- 1 The dreams began to die.

-This is exactly what happened to the children of Israel. Listen to what else they said:

Numbers 14:1-10 And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night. [2] And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness! [3] And wherefore hath the LORD brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return into Egypt? [4] And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt. [5] Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel. [6] And Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of them that searched the land, rent their clothes: [7] And they spoke unto all the company of the children of Israel, saying, The land, which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land. [8] If the LORD delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey. [9] Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defense is departed from them, and the LORD is with us: fear them not. [10] But all the congregation bade stone them with stones. And the glory of the LORD appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation before all the children of

Israel.

-Previously in Numbers 13:1-16, one finds the names of those selected to scout out the Land of Canaan. We find the ten dissenters and the two proclaimers. When we look to the names of those ten who could not find it within themselves to press on, there is something that is noted in the meaning of their names.

1. Shammua

-The English connotation of his name means “fame.” Now you understand why that man did not go into the land of Canaan. His very nature, the key to his whole life, was woven around fame.

- † Love of praise.
- † Love of notoriety.
- † He longed for greatness in the eyes of others.
- † He wanted a great show.
- † He wanted to see his name in print.

-But this is opposed to the thoughts in the Word of God.

Matthew 23:11-12 *But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. [12] And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.*

James 4:10 *Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.*

-There is only one problem with being famous, you cannot get much work completed because of the preening required to be famous. It’s hard to get dirty when you are in the business of being famous.

2. Igal

-Another of the spies was named Igal. The English connotation of his name means “God will avenge.” That is a very good name to have until you get a little deeper into it.

-This man harbored a spirit of resentment and retaliation. He is one of those who goes around thinking that God has a huge club and in his heart he wants God to take someone entirely out of the picture.

3. Palti

-Another of the spies was named Palti. The English connotation of his name means “deliverance of Jehovah.” The meaning of this man’s name forms the key to his conduct; it means in his case *orthodox indifference* and so the man said, “The Lord will deliver us.”

-There is no hurry about going up to Canaan, it is the Lord’s work and He will accomplish it. There was a spirit of indifference within him.

-Indifference is one of the worst things that the Word of God has to contend with. There are thousands who are willing to say, “Amen” to the cause and to revival. Just don’t ask any of their time, their energy, their money, expend any of their time out of their schedule, or their zeal.

-We could go on with the rest of each one and the meanings of their names are a sermon within themselves.

C. Choices Matter

-Our choices of who we spend our time with and with whom we share our thoughts and dreams with are of utmost importance. I have a feeling that had there been two more spies who would have sided with Caleb and Joshua that there is a good possibility that things would have perhaps changed up a bit.

-C. S. Lewis wrote in *Mere Christianity*:

Every time you make a choice you are turning the central part of you, the part of you that chooses, into something a little different from what it was before. And taking your life as a whole, with all your innumerable choices, all your life long you are slowly turning this central thing either into a heavenly creature or into a hellish creature: either into a creature that is in harmony with God, and with other creatures, and with itself, or else into one that is in a state of war and

hatred with God, and with its fellow creatures, and with itself. To be the one kind of creature is heaven: that is, it is joy and peace and knowledge and power. To be the other means madness, horror, idiocy, rage, and eternal loneliness. Each of us at each moment is progressing to the one state or the other.

One man may be so placed that his anger sheds the blood of thousands, and another so placed that however angry he gets he will only be laughed at. But the little mark on the soul may be much the same in both. Each has done something to himself which, unless he repents, will make it harder for him to keep out of the rage next time he is tempted, and will make the rage worse when he does fall into it. Each of them, if he seriously turns to God, can have that twist in the central man straightened out again: each is, in the long run, doomed if he will not.

-In what direction are the choices you make taking you right now? How deep are the marks of your choices leaving on you? That is the greatest question of life!!!

III. THE CRY OF THE MOUNTAIN

-But there was something different about Caleb and Joshua. It was the cry of the mountain. Caleb's soul was:

- † Strong in the face of doubt.
- † Strong in the face of time.
- † Strong in the presence of his peers.

-That same spirit that Caleb had needs to be heard and felt in the turn of the new year. Our voices must be heard. Our prayers must be felt. Our worship must be alive. Our spirits must be disciplined.

-If our voices are loud and strong, the careless and the thoughtless will have to respect the strong spirit. This world needs to see men who know where they are going. This world needs to see a church that knows where it is going.

-In our Scriptural text there are some keys that give us some clues as to what made Caleb successful.

A. The Word In His Heart

Joshua 14:7 -- *“Forty years old was I when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadesh_barnea to espy out the land; and I brought him word again as it was in mine heart.”*

-Caleb’s words were not meant to please the crowd. They were received from his devotion to God and an understanding of the promises of God.

-When Caleb walked into the Promised Land for the first time, his eyes saw something that reached in and became part of his heart. It was in his heart that God would give them the land, that those huge Amorites in their chariots of iron were nothing to God. Caleb was strong in his faith.

-The Bible indicates that David also *“found it in his heart to build the house of the Lord.”* Nehemiah declared (Neh. 2:12) *“neither told I any man what my God had put in my heart to do at Jersusalem.”* Little did Nehemiah realize at a time in the future that his vision from God would sustain him through the deepest and darkest of trials.

Psalm 57:7 -- *“My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise.”*

-Notice the differing meanings of the word “fixed” from other references in the Word of God:

- To be firm, to be stable, to be firmly established;
- To be set up; to be secure, to be enduring;
- To be fixed, to be securely determined;
- To be directed; to be steadfast;
- To be ready; to be arranged;
- To be settled; to set up;
- To accomplish; to make firm; to furnish; to be restored.

-Caleb held that picture in his heart for 45 years before it ever really was accomplished. No doubt there were people all around him who questioned his vision, laughed at his dreams, slandered him in private, and rejected him in public, but in his heart, Caleb knew that one of those days, what God had shown to him

would literally come to pass.

-His heart was set on the Promised Land, his treasure was there, and so was his heart. His affections were set on things above even though he was confined to wandering in the wilderness.

-That same lesson is further brought home to us, where our treasure is, is where our heart will be. The great apostle Paul told the church at Colosse to set their affections on things above not on those below.

B. He Wholly Followed The Lord

***Joshua 14:8** -- "Nevertheless my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt: but I wholly followed the LORD my God."*

-The other ten spies walked by sight instead of faith, consequently they were too occupied with all of the obstacles that stood in the way. Full of distrust, they infected the whole congregation with the same, intimidating and discouraging them so far that their own spirits sank.

-But Caleb refused to be silenced by the critics. Remember this: *The sanction of the multitude is never a good justification for an evil course. Truth and right are often with the minority.*

***Matthew 7:13 14** -- "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:" "Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."*

-Caleb stood alone with Joshua during a time of national panic. Fear is often more easily fostered than hope. It is easier to depress than it is to cheer. It is easier to be negative than it is to be positive.

IV. CALEB'S CHALLENGE

-Caleb did not want to have any part of the land, there was the drive in his soul, that desired that mountain that he had saw in his earlier years. He would claim

Hebron for his own. Yet, there was a distinguishing mark about Hebron. It was infested with Anakims. The cities were walled. There were secret pathways in the hills that the warriors could run throughout and ambush any enemy.

-But Caleb realized that some of the highest blessings are fenced with the greatest difficulties. No earthly inheritance will ever exist without some disadvantage. The same pattern holds true for the spiritual patterns of our lives, it is by duress and pressure on the soul that saints are made.

-Sometimes the hindrances to spiritual growth are on the inside of men. There is laziness, fear, and carnality. Sometimes it is the temptations of the world that hinders our progress. The temptations come from what we feed into our minds. It may be bad examples or distracting pleasures. Sometimes there may be persecution that comes from the world's ignorance, prejudice, and their envy. But I am going to have my mountain.

-Difficulties:

- 1 Try our faith and courage.
- 1 Give drive to the energy and devotion.
- 1 Makes the final peace more blessed.

V. CONCLUSION -- YOU CAN START OVER

-What was it in this past year that hindered you from your vision? What was it that stopped you from gaining the things of God that you so desired?

-Every year on the Day of Atonement, the blowing of the ram's horn signaled a release from debt and a freeing of slaves. The people in the Old Testament were a lot like us. Great starters and then something would happen along the way to muddle up their progress. But there was something more to it at the Jubilee which came at the end of every 49th year.

-In that day, if an Israelite got so far in debt that he could not pay his creditors, he might sell his land that his ancestors had passed on to him. If he still could not pay his debts, he could be forced to sell himself and his family into slavery to pay off the debts. There were no bankruptcy laws, if you could not pay you lost your

property and your freedom.

-But every half century, in the year of the Jubilee, all the land reverted back to the original owner. If they were not alive it was given to their families and all the families who had been sold into slavery would be freed.

-That is what I am preaching about right now. It's time to quit thinking about last year, about the last decade, about mid-life crisis, about job problems, and about debt, and every other worry that comes with life. God has put something within every one of us that He desires to use.

-You have to accept the oceans of God's mercy and continue on toward heaven.