

The God Concept!

Text: Numbers 13:17-33

“And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said unto them, Get you up this [way] southward, and go up into the mountain: And see the land, what it [is]; and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they [be] strong or weak, few or many; And what the land [is] that they dwell in, whether it [be] good or bad; and what cities [they be] that they dwell in, whether in tents, or in strong holds; And what the land [is], whether it [be] fat or lean, whether there be wood therein, or not. And be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land. Now the time [was] the time of the firstripe grapes. So they went up, and searched the land from the wilderness of Zin unto Rehob, as men come to Hamath. And they ascended by the south, and came unto Hebron; where Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmi, the children of Anak, [were]. (Now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.) And they came unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff; and [they brought] of the pomegranates, and of the figs. The place was called the brook Eshcol, because of the cluster of grapes which the children of Israel cut down from thence. And they returned from searching of the land after forty days. And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and shewed them the fruit of the land. And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this [is] the fruit of it. Nevertheless the people [be] strong that dwell in the land, and the cities [are] walled, [and] very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there. The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan. 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. 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 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.” (Numbers 13:17-33 KJV)

Introduction:

All across our globe, today, men and women are in passionate pursuit of their goals and happiness. They have a concepts and ideas about life, joy and happiness that is relative to their world or their sphere of influence. Their concepts are centered on their goals and aspirations of self-centered living. Many pursue and appropriate their goals with passion and perseverance and faith, **because it is their concept of what that goal can be or do.**

- The word concept refers to one’s conception or conceptions of something. The word conception has dual meaning; it can refer to the activity that occurs in a mother’s womb or to an idea or perception of something. Webster’s Dictionary defines a conception as the power of apprehending or forming an idea in the mind; the power of recalling a past sensation or perception. It is the formation in the mind of an image, idea, or notion, apprehension; it is the product of a rational belief or judgment.

Biblical Support:

- A. In our text, we read the well-known story of the Israelites as they are sent out to spy the Land of Canaan. They went to evaluate their enemy, to size up the competition whether they be great or small, strong or weak, few or many!
 - a. When the scouting party returned they were divided in their opinions! Caleb brings the good report, he proclaimed, “We are well able to possess the land!” however, the others said, “We are not able to go up and possess the land!” they go on to say, “We were in our own sight as grasshoppers!”
 - b. When we read this, we see most often that **their** concept or opinion of **themselves** is small and that THEY could not do the task laid before them.
 - c. However, there is another concept here, which is their **concept of God**. What they were saying is “Even though we are Gods Chosen People, He cannot perform this work...through us!” “God is not able to do another miracle for His people!” “This obstacle is too big for God!”
 - d. By their lack of faith, their concept of God was that God is not big enough to reward those who diligently seek Him. These men were the

- very ones who were not allowed to see the Promised Land, but were forced to wander in the wilderness.
- e. Because of their deficient concept of God, the affect was negative upon the other people of Israel and began to doubt and cry out against God.
 - f. Caleb and Joshua; however, had a different story. They proclaimed that we can take this city! Their Concept of God was that God is able to do and to perform for His Chosen People. God said this of Caleb, *“But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it.”* (Numbers 14:24 KJV) Caleb inherited Hebron and his seed became great and became part of the Tribe of Judah, all because of His Concept of God.

Further Biblical Support:

- A. As your concept of God grows more spiritual and positive, it molds and changes all other conceptions in our lives. Thus, what it means to belong to God in holiness or sanctification depends upon the nature of the God to whom man belongs.
 - a. The result of the women of Corinth is women of undisciplined/unrestrained shame because of the nature of the goddess Diana to whose temple they belonged.
 - b. The result of the people of Syria and Phoenicia was one of sexual impurity and erotic contrivances because of the nature of Ashtoreth the god to whom they belonged.
 - c. The result of the people of the Ammonites was accompanied by the burning of children offered as a sacrifice by their own parents because of the nature of Molech; the god to whom they belonged.
- B. Each of these people had a concept of their god and they exhibited that god's nature in their WORSHIP to that god.

Application:

- A. The Pentecostal church of the 21st Century needs to get a check-up on their God Concept. The concept that the doubters had in Numbers caused the whole nation of Israel to be deceived that God COULD NOT come through.
 - a. The God that revealed Himself in the flesh of Jesus Christ is not a weak God and neither is He out of supernatural ability.

- B. Paul wrote to the Church at Ephesus and said, *“That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what [is] the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him [be] glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.”* (Ephesians 3:17-21 KJV)
- C. The Amplified Bible says it like this, *“May Christ through your faith [actually] dwell (settle down, abide, make His permanent home) in your hearts! May you be rooted deep in love and founded securely on love, That you may have the power and be strong to apprehend and grasp with all the saints [God’s devoted people, the experience of that love] what is the breadth and length and height and depth [of it]; [That you may really come] to know [practically, through experience for yourselves] the love of Christ, which far surpasses mere knowledge [without experience]; that you may be filled [through all your being] unto all the fullness of God [may have the richest measure of the divine Presence, and become a body wholly filled and flooded with God Himself]! Now to Him Who, by (in consequence of) the [action of His] power that is at work within us, is able to [carry out His purpose and] do superabundantly, far over and above all that we [dare] ask or think [infinitely beyond our highest prayers, desires, thoughts, hopes, or dreams]— To Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations forever and ever. Amen (so be it).* (Ephesians 3:17-21 AB)
- a. The power that worketh in us is FAITH!
- D. The God we serve is the same God who took something with no form, void and full or darkness, and simply spoke and it became worlds of existence. He put the stars in space and placed the planets in their orbits.
- a. He breathed into man and man became a living soul.
 - b. He came to earth—manifest in the flesh and walked among us.
 - c. We have not a high priest or a God which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as [we are, yet] without sin. (Hebrews 4:15)
 - d. The same God COMMANDED light to come out of darkness.

- e. This same God put all our galaxies planets on their individual rotations and placed the sun exactly the right distance to warm earth.
 - i. This same God wants to be your LORD and SAVIOR!
 - ii. Not just a friend or a weekend companion, but He wants to do marvelous things with your life!

Conclusion:

- A. *“Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, [is] God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.”* (2 Corinthians 1:21-22 KJV)
 - a. The word earnest in the original Greek is *arrabon*, which means the first installment or down payment. This means there is more to come!
 - b. Salvation is ONLY the beginning or the down payment of what God has in store for our LIVES!
 - c. He has gifts and callings for our lives! (Administration or governments. Helps, gift of tongues, teachers, healings, etc)
- B. Dr. Elton Trueblood said this, “Faith is not belief without proof, but trust without reservation!”