

Joshua 14:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

Caleb's ongoing vitality: 'And now, behold, the LORD hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty and five years, even since the LORD spake 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.' Caleb, now eighty-five, attributes his longevity and vigor to God's faithfulness. The phrase 'kept me alive' (chayah, חָיָה—to live, preserve alive) emphasizes divine preservation through wilderness wandering and conquest wars. Despite his age, he claims continued strength (verse 11). This vitality isn't merely physical but represents sustained spiritual passion—Caleb's zeal for God's promises didn't diminish with age. The passage teaches that wholehearted devotion to God can sustain both physical and spiritual vitality beyond natural expectations. While not promising freedom from aging, it suggests faithful service produces enduring purpose and strength. Caleb models what Psalm 92:14 promises: 'They shall still bring forth fruit in old age.'

Historical Context

Eighty-five years old in ancient times represented advanced age—life expectancy was significantly shorter than today. Yet Caleb's claim of continued strength (verse 11) wasn't empty boast—he immediately proceeded to conquer Hebron and defeat the Anakim giants (verse 12, 15:14). This demonstrates remarkable vitality. The forty-five year span from spying mission to this moment included harsh wilderness wandering and seven years of conquest warfare. Caleb survived when entire

generation perished, actively participated in military campaigns, and now claimed ability to conquer difficult territory. This exceptional vigor validates his claim of God's special preservation. Ancient Near Eastern life was physically demanding—agriculture, warfare, and daily survival required strength. Caleb's ability to continue military action at eighty-five was extraordinary, testifying to divine enabling. The account encourages elderly believers: age doesn't disqualify from God's service; sustained calling can provide sustained strength.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does Caleb's sustained vitality at eighty-five encourage faithfulness throughout life's seasons?
2. What does continued spiritual passion across decades teach about maintaining first-love devotion to God?
3. How can elderly believers today embrace Caleb's spirit of ongoing kingdom contribution rather than passive retirement?

Interlinear Text

עוֹדִי נִי H5750	בִּי וּם as I was in the day H3117	חַזִּי ק As yet I am as strong H2389	כְּאַשֶׁר H834	בִּי וּם as I was in the day H3117	
שָׁלַח sent H7971	אוֹתִי H853	מֹשֶׁה ה that Moses H4872	וְכַח חִי me as my strength H3581	אֶז H227	וְכַח חִי me as my strength H3581
עַתָּה H6258	לְמִלְחָמָה ה now for war H4421	וְלָצֵאת אֵת both to go out H3318	וְלָבוֹא: and to come in H935		

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 34:7 (References Moses): And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.

Psalms 103:5 (Parallel theme): Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.