

Joshua 14:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the LORD spake 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.

Analysis

Caleb's request demonstrates remarkable faith and courage. The phrase 'give me this mountain' (ten-li et-hahar hazeh, תֵּן־לִי אֶת־הָהָר הַזֶּה) asks for Hebron and its surrounding highlands, the very territory that terrified the other spies 45 years earlier (Numbers 13:22, 28, 33). The reference 'whereof the LORD spake in that day' grounds the request in divine promise. The clause 'for thou heardest in that day how the Anakims were there' acknowledges the challenge—the giants who intimidated Israel still occupied the region. The description 'cities were great and fenced' admits the military difficulty. Yet Caleb's faith shines in the conditional clause: 'if so be the LORD will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out.' The phrase ulay Yahweh iti (אִלַּי יְהוָה אִתִּי, 'if the LORD will be with me') expresses humble dependence, not presumption. Caleb recognizes that success requires divine presence, yet confidently claims God's promise. The final phrase 'as the LORD said' returns to divine promise as the foundation for courage. At 85, Caleb doesn't seek easy retirement but the hardest conquest, showing that faith grows stronger rather than weaker through testing.

Historical Context

Hebron, located in the Judean highlands about 19 miles south of Jerusalem at 3,000+ feet elevation, was among Canaan's oldest and most significant cities. It had been called Kirjath-arba, named after Arba, the greatest man among the Anakim (Joshua 14:15). The Anakim (descendants of Anak) were giants whose intimidating stature had terrified the spies (Numbers 13:33, 'we were in our own sight as grasshoppers'). These were the very opponents who caused Israel's generation of unbelief to refuse entering Canaan. Caleb's request to fight the Anakim at age 85 demonstrates that faith's courage doesn't diminish with age but may intensify through years of trusting God. Hebron held deep historical significance—Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob, and Leah were buried there in the cave of Machpelah (Genesis 23; 49:29-32). Claiming Hebron meant possessing territory laden with patriarchal history and promise. Caleb successfully conquered Hebron and drove out the three sons of Anak (Joshua 15:13-14), vindicating his faith. Hebron later became one of the cities of refuge (Joshua 20:7) and David's first capital (2 Samuel 2:11), demonstrating its ongoing significance.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. What 'mountain' with 'giants' is God calling you to conquer that seems too difficult for your current age or circumstances?
2. How does Caleb's willingness to take the hardest assignment challenge your tendency to seek comfort and ease?
3. What does Caleb's conditional confidence ('if the LORD will be with me') teach about balancing humble dependence with bold faith?

Interlinear Text

וְעַתָּה ה	תְּנֵה	אֶת לִי	הַהָר	אֲשֶׁר הִזָּה	
H6258	Now therefore give	H0	H853	me this mountain	H2088 H834
	H5414			H2022	
דָּבָר	יְהוָה:	בַּיּוֹם	הַהוּא	כִּי	אָתָּה
said	as the LORD	in that day	H1931	H3588	H859
H1696	H3068	H3117			for thou heardest
					H8085
וְעַתָּה	יְהוָה:	בַּיּוֹם	הַהוּא	כִּי	אָתָּה
in that day	H1931	H3588	how the Anakims	H8033	were there and that the cities
H3117			H6062		H5892
וְעַתָּה	יְהוָה:	בַּיּוֹם	הַהוּא	כִּי	אָתָּה
were great	and fenced	if so be	as the LORD	will be with	
H1419	H1219	H194	H3068	H854	
וְעַתָּה	יְהוָה:	בַּיּוֹם	הַהוּא	כִּי	אָתָּה
me then I shall be able to drive them out				said	as the LORD
H3423				H1696	H3068

Additional Cross-References

Hebrews 11:33 (Parallel theme): Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

Philippians 4:13 (Parallel theme): I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

Numbers 13:33 (Parallel theme): 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 13:28 (Parallel theme): 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.

Romans 8:31 (Parallel theme): What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

Joshua 15:14 (Parallel theme): And Caleb drove thence the three sons of Anak, Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmai, the children of Anak.

Psalms 60:12 (Parallel theme): Through God we shall do valiantly: for he it is that shall tread down our enemies.

Psalms 44:3 (Parallel theme): For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favour unto them.

2 Chronicles 14:11 (References Lord): And Asa cried unto the LORD his God, and said, LORD, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O LORD our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O LORD, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee.

Numbers 21:34 (References Lord): And the LORD said unto Moses, Fear him not: for I have delivered him into thy hand, and all his people, and his land; and thou shalt do to him as thou didst unto Sihon king of the Amorites, which dwelt at Heshbon.