

Joshua 14:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

Caleb's approach to Joshua marks a significant moment in the land distribution. The phrase 'children of Judah came unto Joshua' indicates tribal representation, though Caleb speaks personally. His identification as 'son of Jephunneh the Kenezite' reveals he was technically not ethnically Israelite but an Edomite clan integrated into Judah (Genesis 36:11, 42). This makes Caleb's exemplary faith even more remarkable—a grafted-in Gentile showing greater faithfulness than native Israelites. The reference to 'the thing that the LORD said unto Moses the man of God concerning me and thee in Kadesh-barnea' recalls the spy mission 45 years earlier (Numbers 13-14). The title 'man of God' (ish haElohim, אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים) honors Moses as God's prophet and mediator. The phrase 'concerning me and thee' links Joshua and Caleb as the only adults from the exodus generation permitted to enter Canaan—faith's reward contrasting with unbelief's judgment. Caleb's bold claim on God's promise after four decades demonstrates persevering faith that outlasts circumstances and delays. His confidence rests not on personal merit but divine promise, exemplifying Romans 4:20-21—faith that doesn't waver at God's promise.

Historical Context

Kadesh-barnea was Israel's primary wilderness base, located in the Negev desert south of Canaan. From there, Moses sent twelve spies (one per tribe) to

reconnaissance Canaan (Numbers 13). Ten spies returned with fearful reports emphasizing giants and fortified cities, causing Israel to rebel and refuse to enter the land. Only Joshua and Caleb gave faithful reports trusting God's power (Numbers 14:6-9). God's judgment prohibited that entire generation from entering Canaan, condemning them to 40 years wilderness wandering until they died (Numbers 14:26-35). Yet God specifically exempted Caleb and Joshua, promising them inheritance in the land (Numbers 14:30). Caleb was 40 years old during the spying mission (Joshua 14:7) and now 85 (verse 10), making him one of the oldest Israelites. The Kenizzites were an Edomite clan descended from Esau (Genesis 36:11, 42), yet Caleb fully integrated into Judah, demonstrating that faith rather than ethnicity determined covenant membership. This foreshadows the grafting of Gentiles into Israel's olive tree (Romans 11:17-24).

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What promises has God made to you that require decades of patient faithfulness before fulfillment?
2. How does Caleb's status as a Gentile outsider with exemplary faith challenge ethnic or religious pride among those who consider themselves insiders?
3. In what areas do you need to follow Caleb's example of boldly claiming God's promises despite long delays or difficult circumstances?

Interlinear Text

וַיָּשׁוּב	בְּנֵי	יְהוּדָה	אֶל	יְהוֹשֻׁעַ	בְּגִלְגָּל	וַיֹּאמֶר
came	Then the children	of Judah	H413	unto Joshua	in Gilgal	said
H5066	H1121	H3063		H3091	H1537	H559
אֶל יוֹ	כָּל בְּ	בְּנֵי	יִפְנֵה	הַקִּנְזִי	אֶת הַ	
H413	and Caleb	Then the children	of Jephunneh	the Kenezite	H859	
	H3612	H1121	H3312	H7074		
יְדָעָתָּ	אֵת	הַדָּבָר	אֲשֶׁר	דָּבָר	יְהוָה	אֶל
unto him Thou knowest	H853	the thing	H834	said	that the LORD	H413
H3045		H1697		H1696	H3068	
מֹשֶׁה	אִישׁ	הָאֱלֹהִים	עַל	אֲדֹתַי	וְעַל	אֲדֹתַי
unto Moses	the man	of God	H5921	and thee	H5921	and thee
H4872	H376	H430		H182		H182
בְּקֶדֶשׁ	בְּרִנְעָה:					
H0	in Kadeshbarnea					
	H6947					

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 14:30 (Parallel theme): Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I sware to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.

Numbers 14:24 (Parallel theme): 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 13:6 (Parallel theme): Of the tribe of Judah, Caleb the son of Jephunneh.

Joshua 14:14 (References God): 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.

Numbers 14:6 (Parallel theme): And Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of them that searched the land, rent their clothes:

Joshua 15:17 (Parallel theme): And Othniel the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, took it: and he gave him Achsah his daughter to wife.

Numbers 32:12 (References Lord): Save Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite, and Joshua the son of Nun: for they have wholly followed the LORD.

Numbers 13:26 (References Moses): 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.

Psalms 90:1 (References Lord): Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations.