

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, איש 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

וַיָּבֹא כִּי יְהוּדָה אֶל יְהוֹשֻׁעַ לִבְגָּלָל וַיֹּאמֶר
came Then the children of Judah unto Joshua in Gilgal said
H5066 H1121 H3063 H413 H3091 H1537 H559

אֶת הַבְּנָנָה יְפָנֵה אֶל בְּנֵי יְהוּדָה
and Caleb Then the children of Jephunneh the Kenezite H859
H413 H3612 H1121 H3312 H7074

אֶל יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר בְּדָבָר יְדַבֵּר יְהוָה
unto him Thou knowest the thing said that the LORD H413
H3045 H853 H1697 H834 H1696 H3068

אֶל אַדְוֹת יְהֹוָה וְעַל אֶלְעָד אֶל מֹשֶׁה
unto Moses the man of God and thee and thee H182
H4872 H376 H430 H5921 H182 H182

בְּרֵנָא בְּקָדֵשׁ שְׁמַע
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.