

Numbers 13:30

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

Caleb's bold declaration stands in stark contrast to the fearful report of the other spies. The phrase 'stilled the people' uses the Hebrew 'has' (סַלֵּת), meaning to silence or hush—Caleb had to quiet the panic spreading through Israel. His emphatic command—'Let us go up at once, and possess it'—expresses urgent faith. The Hebrew 'aloh na'aleh' (עַלְהָ נָאָלֶה) literally means 'going up, let us go up,' an emphatic construction conveying determined resolve. The phrase 'possess it' uses 'yarash' (יָרַשׁ), meaning to inherit, dispossess, or take possession—the technical term for Israel inheriting the Promised Land. Caleb's confidence—'we are well able to overcome it'—translates 'yakol nukhal' (יָכֹל נָעַל), literally 'being able, we are able,' another emphatic form stressing capability. This isn't presumption but faith-filled obedience based on God's promise. Caleb's minority report demonstrates that spiritual courage sometimes means standing against popular opinion. His faith rested not on military strength or strategic advantage but on God's faithfulness to His promises.

Historical Context

Numbers 13 records Israel's tragic failure at Kadesh-barnea when twelve spies explored Canaan for forty days. Ten spies brought a faithless report emphasizing the land's fortifications and inhabitants' strength (13:31-33), while only Caleb and Joshua urged immediate conquest (13:30, 14:6-9). This crisis occurred in the second year after the Exodus (approximately 1445 BC). The congregation's rebellion led to God's judgment: forty years of wilderness wandering until that

unbelieving generation died (14:26-35). Caleb's faithful stand earned him special commendation—he and Joshua alone of their generation would enter Canaan (14:30). Forty-five years later, at age 85, Caleb claimed his inheritance (Joshua 14:6-15), demonstrating that delayed fulfillment doesn't negate God's promises.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does Caleb's faith-filled boldness challenge our tendency toward fear-based decision-making?
2. What enabled Caleb to see the same situation as the other spies yet reach opposite conclusions?
3. How can we distinguish between biblical faith (trusting God's promises) and presumption (claiming what God hasn't promised)?
4. What does God's preservation of Caleb and Joshua teach about the eternal rewards of faithfulness?
5. In what current situation might God be calling you to 'go up at once' despite apparent obstacles?

Interlinear Text

נִעְלָה	לֵאמֹר	מֵשֶׁה	אֶל	בְּעֵד	אֶת	כֹּל	בְּ	וְיַהֲסֵּה
stilled	And Caleb	H853	the people	H413	before Moses	H4872	and said	Let us go up
H2013	H3612		H5971			H559		H5927
נִעְלָה	לֵאמֹר	מֵשֶׁה	אֶל	בְּעֵד	אֶת	כֹּל	בְּ	וְיַהֲסֵּה
Let us go up	and possess	H3423	H853	H3588	it for we are well able	H3201		
לֵאמֹר	לֵאמֹר							
it for we are well able	H3201							

Additional Cross-References

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.

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

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

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

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

Romans 8:37 (Parallel theme): Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.