

Numbers 32:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Save Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite, and Joshua the son of Nun: for they have wholly followed the LORD.

Analysis

Save Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite, and Joshua the son of Nun: for they have wholly followed the LORD—Only two men from the exodus generation survived to enter Canaan. The phrase "wholly followed" (male acharei, מַלְאָא אַחֲרֵי, literally "filled after") depicts complete, unreserved obedience—they followed God with full devotion, holding nothing back.

Caleb and Joshua exemplified faithful covenant loyalty when all others despaired. Their minority report (Numbers 13:30; 14:6-9) trusted God's power over apparent obstacles. The identification of Caleb as "the Kenezite" may indicate Edomite ancestry, showing God grafts faithful foreigners into His covenant people—a Gentile inclusion motif anticipating the Church. Joshua, Moses's successor, would lead the conquest. Their reward demonstrates that faithful obedience, even in opposition to the majority, secures God's promises.

Historical Context

Caleb was 40 when he spied out Canaan and 85 at the conquest's beginning (Joshua 14:7-10), remaining vigorous to claim Hebron. Joshua led Israel for approximately 25 years following Moses's death. Both men's faithfulness during the Kadesh crisis earned them entry into the land, while their contemporaries perished. The Kenezites were originally an Edomite clan (Genesis 36:11), suggesting Caleb's family had joined Israel, possibly during the wilderness period.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. What does Caleb and Joshua's minority faithfulness teach about standing against popular unbelief?
2. How does "wholly following" the LORD differ from partial or selective obedience?
3. What does Caleb's Kenezite heritage reveal about God's inclusion of faithful outsiders in His covenant purposes?

Interlinear Text

בָּלְתָּה	בְּלַת	כָּל	בְּ	יְפָנֵה	יְפָנֵה	כָּל	בְּלַת	יְהוֹשֻׁעַ	יְהוֹשֻׁעַ	בָּ	כָּל	בְּלַת	יְהוֹשֻׁעַ	יְהוֹשֻׁעַ	בָּ		
H1115	Save Caleb	the son	of Jephunneh	the Kenezite	and Joshua	the son	H1115	Save Caleb	the son	of Jephunneh	the Kenezite	and Joshua	the son	H1115	Save Caleb	the son	
H3612		H1121		H3312		H7074		H3091		H1121		H3091		H1121		H1121	
וְנָן	וְנָן	מְלָא	מְלָא	אָמַן	אָמַן	וְיָהּוּה	וְיָהּוּה	וְנָן	וְנָן	מְלָא	מְלָא	אָמַן	אָמַן	וְיָהּוּה	וְיָהּוּה	וְנָן	
of Nun	H3588	for they have wholly	followed	the LORD													
H5126		H4390	H310	H3068													

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 1:36 (Salvation): Save Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon, and to his children, because he hath wholly followed the LORD.

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 14:30 (Salvation): 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.

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