Caleb

Intro: One of the usages of the Old Testament is to provide historical examples for man to learn about God’s dealings with man (Romans 15:4 “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.” 1 Cor. 10:11 “Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.”) The account of Caleb the son of Jephunneh, is briefly told in the Old Testament, but does provide us with some profitable lessons. It is recorded in Numbers 13-14; 32:10-13; Deuteronomy 1:19-40; Joshua 14:6-14; 15:13-15; and Judges 1:12-20. Caleb was a godly man. Let us learn some lessons from Caleb for our profit.

I. BACKGROUND.
   A. He was one of the twelve spies.
      1. Israel sent twelve spies to spy out the land of Canaan.
      2. After 40 days the spies returned.
      3. The report.
         a. Ten spies gave a report of doom and failure, they could not take and possess the land.
         b. Joshua and Caleb gave a report of courage to go into the land, that Jehovah would bring them into the land to possess it.
   B. After entering the land:
      1. Caleb asks Joshua for the land inheritance promised to him.
      2. At the age of 85 years old Caleb took the land, driving out the inhabitants thereof.

II. He was a Man of Great Faith.
   A. Faith.
      1. Heb. 11:1 “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”
      2. Proper evidence is given.
         a. Rom. 10:17 “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”
         b. This allows the person to place his trust and confidence in God.
   B. Caleb
      1. Caleb saw the wonders and power of God.
         a. In Egypt, the plagues God brought against Pharaoh.
         b. When Israel crossed the Red Sea.
         c. The wonders at Mt. Sinai as God gave the Ten Commandments.
      2. Because of the evidence Caleb was assured that God could and would keep his promise.
         a. 2 Pet. 3:9 “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”
         b. Gen. 12:1, 7 “Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will shew thee.... And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him.”
         c. Gen. 15:18 “In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.”
C. **We must be men of faith.**
   1. We must see the evidence presented for us in the Bible.
   2. We must realize what God says and obey those commands.
   3. We must realize that God will do what He says.
      a. To those who obey Him—the blessings of God.
      b. To those who do not obey Him—punishment.

III. **He Was A Man Of Foresight.**
A. **Caleb.**
   1. Caleb went with the 12 spies into the land of Canaan.
      a. Caleb had the exact assignment they had.
      b. Caleb saw the exact same things (the same walls, cities, people, etc.) they saw.
   2. The two reports:
      a. The ten spies brought back a report of discouragement, doom and failure; Num. 13:31-33 “But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we. And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. 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.”
      b. Caleb brought back a good report, Num. 13:30 “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.”
   3. The difference.
      a. Caleb saw God.
      b. He was able to overlook the walled cities, giants, and the land that eats the inhabitants; Num. 13:32 “And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature.”
      c. He realized that God was greater and He would be with them.
      d. Num. 14:7-9 “And they spake unto all the company of the children of Israel, saying, The land, which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land. If the Lord delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey. Only rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the Lord is with us: fear them not.”

B. **We must be men of foresight.**
   1. We often meet problems and difficulties within our lives.
   2. We must realize that God will be with us.
      a. Heb. 13:5-6 “Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.”
      b. 1 John 4:4 “Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.”
IV. HE WAS A MAN OF FORTITUDE.

A. Caleb.
   1. Caleb went against the majority.
      a. First the majority report, that they could not take the land.
      b. The people as a whole; Num. 14:10 "But all the congregation bade stone them with stones.
         And the glory of the Lord appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation before all the children of
         Israel."
   2. Caleb had the courage, fortitude to stand up for what was right.

B. We must be men of courage and fortitude.
   1. 2 Tim. 1:7 “For God hath not given us the spirit of fear [cowardice or timidity]; but of power, and of
      love, and of a sound mind.”
   2. We must be courageous with God’s Word.
      a. In preaching and teaching His Word:
         (1) Acts 4:29 “And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with
             all boldness they may speak thy word;”
         (2) 2 Tim. 1:8 “Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his
             prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;”
         (3) Phi. 1:14 “And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much
             more bold to speak the word without fear.”
      b. In standing against religious and doctrinal error.
         (1) Jude 3 “Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was
             needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith
             which was once delivered unto the saints.”
         (2) 2 Tim. 4:2-5 “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort
             with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound
             doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;
             And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch
             thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy
             ministry.”
   3. We must be courageous morally.
      a. In living according to His Word.
      b. By standing against immorality and immodesty.
   4. We will face opposition both from without and within.
      a. John 3:19-21 “And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved
darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the
light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh
to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.”
      b. John 15:18-20 “If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of
the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you
out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The
servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they
have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.”
      c. When we courageously expose sin and error, we will face opposition and be hated
from those engaged in it.
V. **HE WAS A MAN OF FORBEARANCE.**

A. Caleb.

1. When he returned from spying out the land God gave him a land promise.
   a. Num. 14:24, 30 “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... Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I swears to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.”
   b. Deut. 1:36 “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.”

2. Caleb’s forbearance, longsuffering, patience is seen as he waits for the fulfillment of the promise.
   a. After forty years he still had not received the land God promised him.
   b. Israel enters and takes the promise land.
   c. When he was 85 years old he comes to Joshua and asks for the land promised to him.

3. Jos. 14:10-13 “And now, behold, the Lord hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty and five years, even since the Lord spake this word unto Moses, while the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness: and now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old. 11As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in. 12Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the Lord spake in that day; for thou hearest 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. 13And Joshua blessed him, and gave unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh Hebron for an inheritance.”

B. **We must be steadfast and endure to the end to receive the promises of God.**

1. The need for steadfastness:
   a. 1 Cor. 15:58 “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”
   b. Mat. 10:22 “And ye shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.”
   c. Rev. 2:10 “Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”

2. The reward of heaven:
   a. Mat. 25:21 “His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.”
   b. Mat. 25:34 “Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:”
   c. 1 Pet. 1:4-5 “To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”

3. Heb. 12:1 “Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,” cf. 1 Cor. 9:24-25 “Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. 25And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.”

Conclusion: We need more men and women that have the characteristics of Caleb.