

## Sabbath School Lesson #8 – Giants of Faith: Joshua and Caleb – 15-21 Nov 2025

**C**hrist is the invisible leader of the body of the faithful. Christ's ministers are shepherds of the flock, and leaders of the people in a subordinate sense. If faithful, they will receive a crown of unfading glory when the Chief Shepherd shall appear. Paul enjoins obedience and submission on the part of the church; but he does not require this in particular for himself, or for any other one. He pleads in behalf of all faithful ministers in these words: "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation" (Hebrews 13:7). Again he says, in verse 17 of the same chapter: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you." In Hebrews 12:1-2, the apostle exalts Christ as the great head of the church, and the only one to whom she should look for leadership. He would have the church benefited by the experiences of the heroes of faith mentioned in the eleventh chapter, called in the first verse of the twelfth a cloud of witnesses. But he faithfully guards the church against looking back to them with a spirit of idolatry, or accepting any man as their leader, or pattern of the Christian life, in these three words: "Looking unto Jesus." Paul says: "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, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." All true ministers are Christ's ambassadors. "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (2 Corinthians 5:20). In their ministry they are to represent the doctrine of Christ. They surrender their own judgment and will to Him who has sent them. No man can be Christ's ambassador until he has made a complete surrender of his right of private judgment to Christ. Neither can any man represent Christ who surrenders his judgment to his fellowman.

**Sunday: Faithfulness** – Read Numbers 13:6, 30–32 and Joshua 14:6, 14. Who was Caleb? What was his place among the people of Israel? Caleb was one of two of the twelve spies who gave a good report. We are told: "The Lord commanded Moses to send men to search the land of Canaan, which He would give unto the children of Israel. . . . After they had spoken of the fertility of the land, all but two spoke very discouragingly of their ability to possess it. . . . As the people listened to this report, they gave vent to their disappointment in bitter reproaches and wailing. They did not wait to reflect and reason that God, who had brought them out thus far, would certainly give them the land. . . ." {CC 106.2}. "Caleb urged his way to the front, and his clear, ringing voice was heard above all the clamor of the multitude. He opposed the cowardly views of his fellow spies, which had weakened the faith and courage of all Israel. He commanded the attention of the people, and they hushed their complaints for a moment to listen to him. . . . But as he spoke, the unfaithful spies interrupted him, crying: 'We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we.'" {CC 106.3}. "These men, starting upon a wrong course, set their hearts against God, against Moses and Aaron, and against Caleb and Joshua. Every step they advanced in this wrong direction made them firmer in their design to discourage every attempt to possess the land of Canaan. They distorted the truth in order to carry their baneful purpose. They represented the climate as being unhealthful and all the people of giant stature. . . ." {CC 106.4}.

**Monday: Give Me This Hill Country** – Read Joshua 14:6–14, Numbers 14:24, Numbers 32:12, Deuteronomy 1:36, and Luke 6:45. How would you describe Caleb and Joshua's attitude? What does it mean to follow the Lord fully? Caleb and Joshua were now in the promised land and dividing up the land among the children of Israel. Caleb reminded his brother Joshua, "Thou knowest the thing that the Lord said unto Moses the man of God concerning thee and me at Kadesh-barnea." This was simply to recall to Joshua's mind the reason for the request which he was about to make. Not always is faith so immediately and signally commended as was Caleb's. Yet, while God had blessed him with the assurance of His favour, Caleb's faith was tried by more than forty years of waiting for the fulfilment of the

promise. Caleb was in the country of his inheritance. He had only to ask, and the right would be granted to him to go up to possess the place where his feet had trodden. What gratitude must have welled up in his heart! He had seen the “fearful and the unbelieving,” a great host, fall in the wilderness, a prey to death as the result of their lack of faith in the God of Israel. But of himself he declares, “And now, behold, the Lord hath kept me alive, as he said.... And now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old. As 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.” While he had seen that “the way of the transgressor is hard,” he had realised that they that wait upon the Lord renew their strength. He had found that in keeping the commandments of the Lord there was “great reward.” He who wholly follows the Lord, as did Caleb, will have it to say that the “lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places, yea, I have a goodly heritage.” After this introduction, Caleb was bold to proffer his request, for it was evident that he was simply asking his right as a servant of the Lord. “Now therefore give me this mountain whereof the Lord spake in that day.” He then reminded Joshua of what had been said concerning Anakim, the race of giants that the spies had magnified before Israel, and “the cities great and fenced” that had seemed impregnable to the people of God forty years before; but the spirit of Caleb had not changed. He still had confidence in God, and he declared, “If so be the Lord will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out as the Lord hath said.” Forty years before, Caleb’s faith had said, “Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able.” And now the Lord had brought him to the test. There are many whose faith seems of the genuine order until some trial is brought upon them, and then faith weakens and fails on the very border of their inheritance. Caleb’s faith was not of this character. He was no more dismayed at the giants and the fenced cities when brought into actual contact with them, than when they were prospective enemies and hindrances.

**Tuesday: The Power of Example** – Read Joshua 15:16–19, Judges 1:13, and Judges 3:7–11. What does this story tell you about the power of example? How is Caleb’s attitude being reproduced in the younger generation? Caleb had challenged the young men, and as a result gave his daughter, Achsah, to be wife to Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb’s younger brother. This young man and son-in-law of Caleb, Othniel, later became Judge in Israel. Whilst the example of Caleb had a good impression on Othniel, his faithfulness was because the Spirit of the Lord rested upon him, and he judged Israel, and went out to war, and the Lord delivered the king of Mesopotamia into his hand. For forty years Othniel ruled in Israel. During this time the people remained faithful to the divine law and enjoyed peace. But when Othniel’s judicious control ceased with his death, the Israelites again relapsed into idolatry.

**Wednesday: Humble Hero** – Read Joshua 19:49–51. What are the implications of the fact that the great leader of Israel who apportioned the land receives his inheritance last? We read that it was after “they had made an end of dividing the land for inheritance by their coasts” that “the children of Israel gave an inheritance to Joshua” when all had been served, even though Joshua was a leader in Israel. Of Joshua’s example, we are told: “When they had made an end of dividing the land,” and all the tribes had been allotted their inheritance. Joshua presented his claim. To him, as to Caleb, a special promise of inheritance had been given; yet he asked for no extensive province, but only a single city. “They gave him the city which he asked, ... and he built the city, and dwelt therein.” The name given to the city was Timnath-serah, “the portion that remains”—a standing testimony to the noble character and unselfish spirit of the conqueror, who, instead of being the first to appropriate the spoils of conquest, deferred his claim until the humblest of his people had been served” {PP 515.1}.

**Thursday: Changed by Contemplation** – Read Romans 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20. How are we to glorify and serve God in our bodies? We are bound to eat and drink such things and to do this in such a manner, as will tend to keep our physical faculties strong and unimpaired. The spiritual faculties are, to a large extent, dependent upon the physical. The two are not separate or distinct, but closely joined together. And no one can fully exercise his spiritual faculties while his mind is beclouded and his physical faculties benumbed from any cause, as for example from improper eating and drinking. The fate of Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron is set before us as a terrible warning of the danger that lurks in this act, and an object lesson upon the relation between the physical nature and the spiritual perceptions.