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The Bridge Bible Fellowship

L.G. Redekopp

Text: *Num. 13–14*

Deut. 1:19-46

Josh. 14:6-15

Caleb, the Whole-Hearted
(sub-title: A Man for all Life Seasons)

Reconnaissance

Num. 13:1-3, 6, 17-24; Deut. 1:19-25

Report

Num. 13:25-33

Reaction

Num. 14:1-25; Deut. 1:26-46

Reward

Josh. 14:6-15

End Note: Six texts speak to the truth that Caleb “followed Yahweh fully”; that is, he was a whole hearted follower of Yahweh and a whole-hearted believer in His promises.

Num. 32:13; 14:24; Deut. 1:36; Josh. 14:8, 9, 14

Points for Meditative Reflection, Discussion, and Application

1. Review and discuss some of the varied inputs Caleb experienced during the first 40 years of his life which could have provided foundational building blocks for his confident trust in God as sovereign, mighty in power, fearfully holy, and forever faithful to His Word of promise.
2. In your study and discussion, seek to identify the underlying source and substance leading to Caleb's "different spirit" (Num. 14:24). Noting that the 10 rebel spies almost surely had the same opportunity for awareness of Israel's history, and of the promises given to their forefathers, and were participating observers in the same mighty works of Yahweh along their pilgrim journey thus far, what was it in Caleb that differentiated him in his faith and courage? Might Ps. 111 (esp. vs. 2) provide a helpful clue to those possible disciplines in Caleb's life that fueled his "differentiated spirit"?
3. Discuss how Caleb sustained his committed devotion to "following Yahweh fully", especially after being overwhelmingly rejected in his strong and courageous appeal to the people to believe Yahweh's word and move forward with invasion plans, and then was destined to wander in the desert for another 38 years. Seek to understand something of the source and substance of his sustained positive attitude amidst such deep disappointment, and particularly so in the very prime of his life.
4. Consider how Caleb seems to have had a "generational understanding", even an exercised "generational responsibility", during the 38 years of wandering. Being at least 20 years older than all others who would be privileged to enter the land of promise, he knew that he had duty as a "patriarchal example" of steadfast faith to the following generation. Further to this point, he knew that this following generation would be his "associates in arms" in the eventual invasion and, as such, he would have understood that both his success and their success depended singularly on their being whole-hearted followers of Yahweh ... their need to be possessors of a decidedly "different spirit" compared to their elders who were now perishing in the wilderness because of their unbelief.
5. Read Josh. 14:13-14; 21:13-14; 24:14-18, and then, from the perspective of Caleb engaging a "backward glance" at 85+ years of age, consider what he might write in a "Christmas letter testimony" to be sent to his extended family and 'young' friends concerning both God's goodness and God's faithfulness through the many years of his life.