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Study Questions

A Scout's Report

Seek God's Word for Truth

Read the following passage:

The Lord now said to Moses, "Send men to explore the land of Canaan, the land I am giving to Israel. Send one leader from each of the twelve ancestral tribes." So Moses did as the Lord commanded him. He sent out twelve men, all tribal leaders of Israel, from their camp in the wilderness of Paran. These were the tribes and the names of the leaders:

Tribe	Leader
Reuben	Shammua son of Zaccur
Simeon	Shaphat son of Hori
Judah	Caleb son of Jephunneh
Issachar	Igal son of Joseph
Ephraim	Hoshea son of Nun
Benjamin	Palti son of Raphu
Zebulun	Gaddiel son of Sodi
Manasseh son of Joseph	Gaddi son of Susi
Dan	Ammiel son of Gemalli
Asher	Sethur son of Michael
Naphtali	Nahbi son of Vophsi

Gad

Geuel son of Maki

These are the names of the men Moses sent to explore the land. By this time Moses had changed Hoshea's name to Joshua.

NUMBERS 13:1-16

The very first mention of Caleb in Scripture is found in this passage. Who was Caleb? What position did he hold?

What would it take to acquire and maintain this position?

Read the following passage:

Moses gave the men these instructions as he sent them out to explore the land: "Go northward through the Negev into the hill country. See what the land is like and find out whether the people living there are strong or weak, few or many. What kind of land do they live in? Is it good or bad? Do their towns have walls or are they unprotected? How is the soil? Is it fertile or poor? Are there many trees? Enter the land boldly, and bring back samples of the crops you see." (It happened to be the season for harvesting the first ripe grapes.)

So they went up and explored the land from the wilderness of Zin as far as Rehob, near Lebo-hamath. Going northward, they passed first through the Negev and arrived at Hebron, where Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmi—all descendants of Anak—lived. (The ancient town of Hebron was founded seven years before the Egyptian city of

Zoan.) When they came to what is now known as the valley of Eshcol, they cut down a cluster of grapes so large that it took two of them to carry it on a pole between them! They also took samples of the pomegranates and figs. At that time the Israelites renamed the valley Eshcol—"cluster"—because of the cluster of grapes they had cut there.

After exploring the land for forty days, the men returned to Moses, Aaron, and the people of Israel at Kadesh in the wilderness of Paran. They reported to the whole community what they had seen and showed them the fruit they had taken from the land. This was their report to Moses: "We arrived in the land you sent us to see, and it is indeed a magnificent country—a land flowing with milk and honey. Here is some of its fruit as proof. But the people living there are powerful, and their cities and towns are fortified and very large. We also saw the descendants of Anak who are living there! The Amalekites live in the Negev, and the Hittites, Jebusites, and Amorites live in the hill country. The Canaanites live along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea and along the Jordan Valley."

But Caleb tried to encourage the people as they stood before Moses. "Let's go at once to take the land," he said. "We can certainly conquer it!"

But the other men who had explored the land with him answered, "We can't go up against them! They are stronger than we are!" So they spread discouraging reports about the land among the Israelites: "The land we explored will swallow up any who go to live there. All the people we saw were huge. We even saw giants there, the descendants of Anak. We felt like grasshoppers next to them, and that's what we looked like to them!"

NUMBERS 13:17-33

What instructions were given to the twelve men? How much time did they have to complete their mission?

What did the men find? What evidence did they bring back with them?

What was the nature of the scouts' report? What was their attitude like?

What was Caleb's report? How was his attitude different?

Find God's Ways for You

Describe a time you followed the crowd. What was the result? What did you learn?

Describe a time you stood alone. What was the outcome? How did you feel?

O Lord, you are my refuge; never let me be disgraced. Rescue me! Save me from my enemies, for you are just. Turn your ear to listen and set me free. Be to me a protecting rock of safety, where I am always welcome.

PSALM 71:1-3

What are some reasons why we need not fear standing alone?

Stop and Ponder

For I can do everything with the help of Christ who gives me the strength I need.

PHILIPPIANS 4:13

Wise Counsel

Seek God's Word for Truth

Read the following passage:

Then all the people began weeping aloud, and they cried all night. Their voices rose in a great chorus of complaint against Moses and Aaron. "We wish we had died in Egypt, or even here in the wilderness!" they wailed. "Why is the Lord taking us to this country only to have us die in battle? Our wives and little ones will be carried off as slaves! Let's get out of here and return to Egypt!" Then they plotted among themselves, "Let's choose a leader and go back to Egypt!"

Then Moses and Aaron fell face down on the ground before the people of Israel. Two of the men who had explored the land, Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh, tore their clothing. They said to the community of Israel, "The land we explored is a wonderful land! And if the Lord is pleased with us, he will bring us safely into that land and give it to us. It is a rich land flowing with milk and honey, and he will give it to us! Do not rebel against the Lord, and don't be afraid of the people of the land. They are only helpless prey to us! They have no protection, but the Lord is with us! Don't be afraid of them!"

But the whole community began to talk about stoning Joshua and Caleb. Then the glorious presence of the Lord appeared to all the Israelites from above the Tabernacle. And the Lord said to Moses, "How long will these people reject me? Will they never believe me, even after all the miraculous signs I have done among them? I will disown them and destroy them with a plague. Then I will make you into a nation far greater and mightier than they are!"

"But what will the Egyptians think when they hear about it?" Moses pleaded with the Lord. "They know full well the power you displayed in rescuing these people from Egypt. They will tell this to the inhabitants of this land, who are well aware that you are with this people. They know, Lord, that you have appeared in full view of your people in the pillar of cloud that hovers over them. They know that you go before them in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. Now if you

slaughter all these people, the nations that have heard of your fame will say, ‘The Lord was not able to bring them into the land he swore to give them, so he killed them in the wilderness.’”

NUMBERS 14:1-16

Describe the camp atmosphere after the scouting reports. What plans did the people propose?

When Moses and Aaron fell facedown on the ground, what words of comfort did Caleb and Joshua offer? What warning did they give?

What specifically demonstrated the faith of Caleb and Joshua?

How did the people respond to the warnings?

Describe God's response to the people's behavior.

Find God's Ways for You

Discuss a time when you were a mediator. Why is this event memorable?

What advice did you offer? What was the outcome?

People who despise advice will find themselves in trouble; those who respect it will succeed. The advice of the wise is like a life-giving fountain; those who accept it avoid the snares of death.

PROVERBS 13:13-14

Apply these verses to Caleb and the Israelites. Apply them to yourself.

Stop and Ponder

Whoever walks with the wise will become wise; whoever walks with fools will suffer harm.

PROVERBS 13:20

God Sees

Seek God's Word for Truth

Read the following passage:

[Moses said,] “Please, Lord, prove that your power is as great as you have claimed it to be. For you said, ‘The Lord is slow to anger and rich in unfailing love, forgiving every kind of sin and rebellion. Even so he does not leave sin unpunished, but he punishes the children for the sins of their parents to the third and fourth generations.’ Please pardon the sins of this people because of your magnificent, unfailing love, just as you have forgiven them ever since they left Egypt.”

Then the Lord said, “I will pardon them as you have requested. But as surely as I live, and as surely as the earth is filled with the Lord’s glory, not one of these people will ever enter that land. They have seen my glorious presence and the miraculous signs I performed both in Egypt and in the wilderness, but again and again they tested me by refusing to listen. They will never even see the land I swore to give their ancestors. None of those who have treated me with contempt will enter it. But my servant Caleb is different from the others. He has remained loyal to me, and I will bring him into the land he explored. His descendants will receive their full share of that land. Now turn around and don’t go on toward the land where the Amalekites and Canaanites live. Tomorrow you must set out for the wilderness in the direction of the Red Sea. ”

NUMBERS 14:17-25

List all you learn about God’s character from Moses’ prayer.

What does this prayer tell you about Moses?

What is God's plan for the people now? Why?

What new instruction was given to the people?

How does God describe Caleb?

What is God's plan for Caleb and his family?

Seek God's Ways for You

To whom do you turn in crises? Why?

What does this reveal about you?

How do you think God would describe you?

Stop and Ponder

Dear brothers and sisters, whenever trouble comes your way, let it be an opportunity for joy. For when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be strong in character and ready for anything.

JAMES 1:2-4

The Fallout

Seek God's Word for Truth

Read the following passage:

Then the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, “How long will this wicked nation complain about me? I have heard everything the Israelites have been saying. Now tell them this: ‘As surely as I live, I will do to you the very things I heard you say. I, the Lord, have spoken! You will all die here in this wilderness! Because you complained against me, none of you who are twenty years old or older and were counted in the census will enter the land I swore to give you. The only exceptions will be Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun.

“ ‘You said your children would be taken captive. Well, I will bring them safely into the land, and they will enjoy what you have despised. But as for you, your dead bodies will fall in this wilderness. And your children will be like shepherds, wandering in the wilderness forty years. In this way, they will pay for your faithlessness, until the last of you lies dead in the wilderness.

“ ‘Because the men who explored the land were there for forty days, you must wander in the wilderness for forty years—a year for each day, suffering the consequences of your sins. You will discover what it is like to have me for an enemy.’ I, the Lord, have spoken! I will do these things to every member of the community who has conspired against me. They will all die here in this wilderness!”

Then the ten scouts who had incited the rebellion against the Lord by spreading discouraging reports about the land were struck dead with a plague before the Lord. Of the twelve who had explored the land, only Joshua and Caleb remained alive.

When Moses reported the Lord's words to the Israelites, there was much sorrow among the people. So they got up early the next morning and set out for the hill country of Canaan. “Let's go,” they said. “We realize that we have sinned, but now we are ready to enter the land the Lord has promised us.”

But Moses said, “Why are you now disobeying the Lord's orders to return to the wilderness? It won't work. Do not go into the land now. You will only be crushed by

your enemies because the Lord is not with you. When you face the Amalekites and Canaanites in battle, you will be slaughtered. The Lord will abandon you because you have abandoned the Lord.”

But the people pushed ahead toward the hill country of Canaan, despite the fact that neither Moses nor the Ark of the Lord’s covenant left the camp.

NUMBERS 14:26-44

Discuss the camp from God’s perspective.

What do you learn about the people at this point?

What consequences befell the twelve scouts? What exceptions were made?

What consequences were exacted on the entire camp without exceptions?

What warnings did Moses give to the people? How did they react?

What did this reveal about the Israelites' relationship with Moses and with God?

Find God's Ways for You

Discuss a time you had to live with the consequences of what someone else did. How did you feel?

Share a time when you were spared consequences you deserved. How did that feel?

No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it is painful! But afterward there will be a quiet harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way.

HEBREWS 12:11

What do we learn about discipline from this verse? What are the conditions for “harvest”?

Stop and Ponder

Dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will accept. When you think of what he has done for you, is this too much to ask? Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will know what God wants you to do, and you will know how good and pleasing and perfect his will really is.

ROMANS 12:1-2

The Promise Kept

Seek God's Word for Truth

Read the following passage:

After the death of Moses the Lord's servant, the Lord spoke to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' assistant. He said, "Now that my servant Moses is dead, you must lead my people across the Jordan River into the land I am giving them. I promise you what I promised Moses: 'Everywhere you go, you will be on land I have given you—from the Negev Desert in the south to the Lebanon mountains in the north, from the Euphrates River on the east to the Mediterranean Sea on the west, and all the land of the Hittites.' No one will be able to stand their ground against you as long as you live. For I will be with you as I was with Moses. I will not fail you or abandon you.

JOSHUA 1:1-5

Who succeeded Moses as camp leader? What is significant of this?

Read the following passage:

When Joshua was an old man, the Lord said to him, "You are growing old, and much land remains to be conquered. The people still need to occupy the land of the Philistines and the Geshurites—territory that belongs to the Canaanites.

"I will drive these people out of the land for the Israelites. So be sure to give this land to Israel as a special possession, just as I have commanded you. Include all this territory as Israel's inheritance when you divide the land among the nine tribes and the half-tribe of Manasseh."

A delegation from the tribe of Judah, led by Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite, came to Joshua at Gilgal. Caleb said to Joshua, “Remember what the Lord said to Moses, the man of God, about you and me when we were at Kadesh-barnea. I was forty years old when Moses, the servant of the Lord, sent me from Kadesh-barnea to explore the land of Canaan. I returned and gave from my heart a good report, but my brothers who went with me frightened the people and discouraged them from entering the Promised Land. For my part, I followed the Lord my God completely. So that day Moses promised me, ‘The land of Canaan on which you were just walking will be your special possession and that of your descendants forever, because you wholeheartedly followed the Lord my God.’

“Now, as you can see, the Lord has kept me alive and well as he promised for all these forty-five years since Moses made this promise—even while Israel wandered in the wilderness. Today I am eighty-five years old. I am as strong now as I was when Moses sent me on that journey, and I can still travel and fight as well as I could then. So I’m asking you to give me the hill country that the Lord promised me. You will remember that as scouts we found the Anakites living there in great, walled cities. But if the Lord is with me, I will drive them out of the land, just as the Lord said.”

So Joshua blessed Caleb son of Jephunneh and gave Hebron to him as an inheritance. Hebron still belongs to the descendants of Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite because he wholeheartedly followed the Lord, the God of Israel. (Previously Hebron had been called Kiriath-arba. It had been named after Arba, a great hero of the Anakites.)

And the land had rest from war.

JOSHUA 13:1-3, 6-7; 14:6-15

How did Caleb approach Joshua about Moses’ promise?

As Caleb laid out his case, what did he offer as past, present, and future evidence?

How did Joshua respond to Caleb's request?

What proclamation about God does Caleb make that is like Moses?

What reason is given for Caleb's inheritance? What does this tell you about his relationship with God?

Find God's Ways for You

How do you approach people when reminding them of a promise? How has it worked out?

How have you responded when someone has approached you about a promise you made?

If you need wisdom—if you want to know what God wants you to do—ask him, and he will gladly tell you. He will not resent your asking.

JAMES 1:5

What advice does this verse offer?

Stop and Ponder

God blesses the people who patiently endure testing. Afterward they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.

JAMES 1:12

The Legacy

Seek God's Word for Truth

Read the following passage:

After Joshua died, the Israelites asked the Lord, "Which tribe should attack the Canaanites first?"

The Lord answered, "Judah, for I have given them victory over the land."

Judah marched against the Canaanites in Hebron (formerly called Kiriath-arba), defeating the forces of Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmi. From there they marched against the people living in the town of Debir (formerly called Kiriath-sepher).

Then Caleb said, "I will give my daughter Acsah in marriage to the one who attacks and captures Kiriath-sepher." Othniel, the son of Caleb's younger brother Kenaz, was the one who conquered it, so Acsah became Othniel's wife.

When Acsah married Othniel, she urged him to ask her father for an additional field. As she got down off her donkey, Caleb asked her, "What is it? What can I do for you?"

She said, "Give me a further blessing. You have been kind enough to give me land in the Negev; please give me springs as well." So Caleb gave her the upper and lower springs.

JUDGES 1:1-2, 10-15

After Joshua died, the tribe of Judah was selected to lead the taking of the Caananite land. Who was the tribal leader? What significance do you find in this?

What incentive does Caleb offer the man who will secure the area of Kiriath-sepher?

Who accomplishes this feat? How does Caleb keep his word?

How would you describe Caleb's relationship with his daughter? What similarities do you see between the two of them?

Read the following passage:

After that generation died, another generation grew up who did not acknowledge the Lord or remember the mighty things he had done for Israel. Then the Israelites did what was evil in the Lord's sight and worshiped the images of Baal. They abandoned the Lord, the God of their ancestors, who had brought them out of Egypt. They chased after other gods, worshiping the gods of the people around them. And they angered the Lord. They abandoned the Lord to serve Baal and the images of Ashtoreth.

Then the Lord raised up judges to rescue the Israelites from their enemies.

The Israelites did what was evil in the Lord's sight. They forgot about the Lord their God, and they worshiped the images of Baal and the Asherah poles. Then the Lord burned with anger against Israel, and he handed them over to King Cushan-

rishathaim of Aram-naharaim. And the Israelites were subject to Cushan-rishathaim for eight years.

But when Israel cried out to the Lord for help, the Lord raised up a man to rescue them. His name was Othniel, the son of Caleb's younger brother, Kenaz. The Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he became Israel's judge. He went to war against King Cushan-rishathaim of Aram, and the Lord gave Othniel victory over him. So there was peace in the land for forty years. Then Othniel son of Kenaz died.

JUDGES 2:10-13, 16; 3:7-11

What happened after Joshua and Caleb's generation died? What did God do to help the people?

Who was Israel's first judge and how did he become a judge? What, if any, similarities to Caleb do you find in him?

Find God's Ways for You

What is Caleb's most outstanding trait? Why do you think so?

In what ways do you identify with Caleb? What have you learned about yourself from this study?

What have you learned about God from Caleb's experiences?

Stop and Ponder

Dear brothers and sisters, let me say one more thing as I close this letter. Fix your thoughts on what is true and honorable and right. Think about things that are pure and lovely and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. Keep putting into practice all you learned from me and heard from me and saw me doing, and the God of peace will be with you.

PHILIPPIANS 4:8-9

Caleb the Warrior

Caleb often despaired because of his inability to follow the law that God had given to His people. Hundreds of years later, the apostle Paul would speak of this same struggle: “I love God’s law with all my heart. But there is another law at work within me that is at war with my mind. This law wins the fight and makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me. Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin? Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 7:22-25).

Interestingly, there are parallels between the lives of Caleb and Jesus:

Caleb

- Questionable birthright
- Of the tribe of Judah
- Endured unfair consequences as a result of others' actions
- War hero of Judah
- Committed to completing his mission—clearing the land of enemies so God's people might live in it
- Commander of Israel's army, fighting for God and for his family
- Believed and relied on the Word of God
- A prayer warrior armed for battle

Jesus

- Questionable birthright
- Of the tribe of Judah (Rev. 5:5)
- Endured unfair execution as a result of our actions (2 Cor. 5:21)
- Lion of Judah (Rev. 5:5)
- Committed to completing His mission—clearing our lives of sin so God Himself might live in us (John 6:56)
- Commander of the armies of heaven, fighting our spiritual battles (Rev. 19:11-16)
- Is the Word of God (John 1:1)
- Is our armor and intercedes for us (Eph. 6:10-18; Heb. 7:24-25)

The same armor that covered Caleb spiritually is available to us today. In his letter to the Christians at Ephesus, the apostle Paul wrote:

A final word: Be strong with the Lord's mighty power. Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies and tricks of the Devil. For we are not fighting against people made of flesh and blood, but against the evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against those mighty powers of darkness who rule this world, and against wicked spirits in the heavenly realms. Use every piece of God's armor to resist the enemy in the time of evil, so that after the battle you will still be standing firm. Stand your ground, putting on the sturdy belt of truth and the body armor of God's righteousness. For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the Good News, so that you will be fully prepared. In every battle you will need faith as your shield to stop the fiery arrows aimed at you by Satan. Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Pray at all times and on every occasion in the power of the Holy Spirit. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all Christians everywhere.

EPHESIANS 6:10-18