

## Rich in Faith

*Book of Joshua*

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If you will look with me in your Bibles in Joshua 15 and I want to read for you from verse 13 down to verse 19 and talk with you about Caleb, a man who was rich in faith. It might surprise you that this is the second time in the last two chapters that Caleb has been mentioned. You remember, we saw what the Spirit directed Joshua to write in chapter 14 concerning Caleb beginning in verse 12, “Now therefore,” Caleb said, “give me this mountain,” Mount Hebron, “whereof the Lord spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakims were there.” Anakim were strong men, some consider perhaps giants for that day. Goliath would’ve been of that number. “And that the cities were great and fenced.” And he said, “if so be the Lord will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the Lord said.”

Many professors today, will talk about being able to do this or that but never give the Lord the glory. We notice the very first thing Caleb did was give the Lord the glory. “If the Lord will be with me. If the Lord will, I will do this or that.” And that ought to be something that is very much a part of our vocabulary in anything we say or do. And it says there in verse 13, of Joshua 14, that “Joshua blessed him, and gave unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh Hebron for an inheritance.” So, we saw this already. And, again, how Joshua, being a type of our Lord Jesus Christ, Joshua meaning “Jesus” in Hebrew, “the deliverer.” He blessed him and so it is all spiritually blessing comes to those that are the Lord’s today through the hand of Christ.

Now, as I’ve often said, if there were nothing but one reference to something in Scripture, it would be sufficient to teach us, but here we have an example, again, given of Caleb and this matter of him requesting the mountain, but also conquering it and going forth. Not only here, but when we get to the Book of Judges, in the first chapter, we find it repeated again. So, that shows its significance that there’s something here that the Spirit of God has purposed that as you read through the Scriptures you come back to again and again and again. And it’s much like teachers reinforce. You don’t just say it one time, you tell the students what you’re going to tell them, then you tell them, then you tell them what you told them and that’s what I see in this particular portion.

So, the Spirit told us what he would say and now he tells us again through Joshua and then when you get to the Book of Judges, chapter 1, you’ll see where he told, again, what he had already said.

Let's read this is Joshua 15:13, "And unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh he gave a part among the children of Judah, according to the commandment of the Lord to Joshua, even the city of Arba the father of Anak, which city is Hebron. And Caleb drove thence the three sons of Anak, Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmi, the children of Anak. And he went up thence to the inhabitants of Debir: and the name of Debir before was Kirjathsepher. And Caleb said, He that smiteth Kirjathsepher, and taketh it, to him will I give Achsah my daughter to wife. And Othniel the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, took it: and he gave him Achsah his daughter to wife. And it came to pass, as she came unto him, that she moved him to ask of her father a field: and she lighted off her ass; and Caleb said unto her, What wouldest thou? Who answered, Give me a blessing; for thou hast given me a south land; give me also springs of water. And he gave her the upper springs, and the nether springs."

Now, we can see Caleb's particular interest in conquering this land and doing so, according to the commandment of the Lord. Notice in verse 13 how that parallels chapter 14:12 where it says, "If so be the Lord will be with me." Here, Caleb requests this according to the commandment of the Lord to Joshua. So, it teaches us a little something of prayer and seeking and asking for what God has purposed. I don't believe there's any true prayer that is stated against what God has purposed or what he's revealed in his Word.

James wrote that you ask but you ask amiss. Amiss, in the sense that, God's not going to grant you anything that is contrary to what he's already purposed. Some people have a problem with that. They consider prayer to be changing God's mind or directing God. No, our prayer directs us. But, when God is pleased to burden the soul of one of his to pray, to seek him, it's aligning our will with his, that's what's taking place. You've heard that saying, I think, sometimes tritely put, there's always an answer to prayer that God gives. It's either "yes" or "no" or "not now." When we are called to seek the Lord, it is always with this in mind, that his will be done..

So, we find Caleb based upon what had already been commanded of the Lord to Joshua, requesting and seeking his part, so it is in prayer. That's why I've entitled this message "Caleb, Rich in Faith." Where does faith originate? Well, it's with the Spirit. Will the Spirit ever direct one to pray that is contrary to the glory of Christ? No. Don't call it prayer if it is. Now, there's been many a time that I have addressed words to God that he has later caused me to see that was nothing but my flesh that was asking it. And brought me in time to bow and to say, "Not my will but thine be done." There have been times in my life where I have thought this is a particular direction the Lord would have me to go and every door was closed. The Lord was directing all the while but as long as my focus was on that closed door, I wasn't seeing the hand of the Lord in what he was doing but that still didn't thwart the Lord.

There are people that think, "Well, if you don't see the hand of the Lord, you're thwarting the Lord." No. A classic example is that of Jonah. He was going headstrong, if you look on a map, the opposite way of the direction that the Lord had directed him to go

and yet he still arrived at Nineveh not one minute too late from what the Lord purposed. Exactly at the time that the Lord purposed. That's the glory of seeing God's sovereignty in how he directs our lives. Even our wanderings are in his purpose, to direct us and to teach us. And yet, the blessing is that he never takes his hand off of us. You think about 40 years of wandering of the children of Israel and I've heard messages just "what if" and all this. You know what? Caleb was brought to this mountain exactly at the time that the Lord purposed. Not one second later than what the Lord purposed and it was all along purposed that he would take it and that he would give it to his seed after him.

So, we see this particular message here in Caleb as a man of faith, rich in faith. You look at what he asked, a mountain. You know, this wasn't a palace. When you look on the map, even, and take a look at this place and we know that it was in a wilderness because when he gave his daughter a portion of the land, she also came and requested there in verse 19, "give me also springs of water." When it says there, "Give me a blessing for thou hast given me a south land," if you look on the map, the south land was all desert.

So, it was a portion and yet, without the water it was nothing. And I think about how many times we ask for temporal blessings but without the water, as you've heard some preachers say, without Christ a palace is a prison, but with Christ, even a prison is a palace. And so, as we look even at the daughter's request I see a picture of prayer, of faith that the Lord was pleased to grant her to beseech her father for that one thing needful. Just like Mary. That one thing needful. What is this land, this south land, even as vast as it is, unless you give me water to irrigate it and to water it and to cause it to bring forth fruit.

Many people today, especially in religion, the one thing they can think of is just health, wealth and prosperity. That's about all that you hear and preachers willing to lead those types of people on in their ignorance. Many who work spend their lifetime working for earthly, temporal inheritance and gaining the land but even with all of this, it still wasn't Caleb's. It was an inheritance that the Lord had purposed to give to him and to his seed.

You notice there in verse 13 of Joshua 15 his part among the children of Judah. What was so vital even for Caleb? Well, as we saw last time, this particular mountain was where Abraham and Sarah and the patriarchs were buried. And so, his one desire was to be in that place of history, if you will, where Abraham had laid claim to this land according to God's promise, not far from Jerusalem. I believe when I mention that Caleb was a man rich in faith, much like Abraham, who the Lord said, "Saw my day and rejoiced."

Caleb was looking much further than just this mountain and the temporal blessings of it. His eye, that eye of faith, always looks to Christ. It always looks to the cross and the significance of this being among the children of Judah, what that would've been to him knowing the promises that were given to Jacob that "the scepter would not depart from Judah." We saw that last time, "until Shiloh come." Until Christ come and fulfill it. So, that was his desire. That's where the Lord directed him to settle and to lay claim there where Abraham himself was buried. And so, we can see that there's a lot here that is significant.

What I want us to do is just consider, in this particular portion, how this request, not only of Caleb but even of his daughter, is an example of how it is we are to approach unto the Lord and to seek his glory and honor as a people of faith. In other words, ones that Christ has redeemed by his shed blood and in whom the Spirit of God has granted that heart to see him and to know him.

If you look in Hebrews 11, this is the verse or portion that I read that brought to mind this particular title. This is the Hall of Faith chapter. It goes all the way back to Abraham, this very place where Caleb desired to put his name and the Lord strengthened him to conquer it. In other words, a place of promise as it says there in Hebrews 11:17, “By faith Abraham when he was tried offered up Isaac and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son.” And you can read on down through here, Isaac and Jacob and Joseph and Moses. All of this, even Rahab, the harlot that we read about in Joshua and then it mentions the Judges.

“What more shall I say?” in verse 32, “for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets.” But here it is, verse 33. This is where I see Caleb as a type of one who is rich in faith. Maybe not rich in this worldly goods, but rich in faith. It says, “Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions.” In Caleb’s case, who through faith subdued that kingdom, this wasn’t a walk-in, it was a matter of chasing out these strongmen, the Anakim, walled cities. And yet, the Lord strengthened him so to do and also his nephew, Othniel, who later became a judge in Israel. He is one that is mentioned as one of the Judges later. So, one that the Lord particularly used to strengthen the hand of his people. And wrought righteousness, established justice, is what that means. But, obtained promises. This comes back, again, to him not asking one thing more or less than what the Lord had already commanded Joshua to give unto him. Would that he would grant us that Spirit of faith not to ask one thing more than what God has purposed to give us in his Son the Lord Jesus Christ.

That makes knowing how to pray somewhat simple. All of this other is peripheral, the things that our minds are taken up with. And it’s nothing but the flesh, the fears and the worries. Christ said that, “Fret not yourselves of tomorrow. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.” When your mind and my mind gets spinning that way, that’s not prayer. That’s just this flesh that would take us down another way. Prayer is being brought, no matter what the circumstance, to ask of the Lord nothing more, nothing less than what he’s purposed to give his own in his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. And we stop and think about that, what has he given us? As one speaks here of obtaining promises, what has he promised everyone for whom Christ has paid the debt? Well, you can think about forgiveness, pardon, peace, grace.

In fact, if you look in Ephesians 1, this is what it is to be rich in faith. Faith is not a feeling. It’s not an emotion. Too many people that describe it that way. Faith is a persuasion. Of what? Well, like it said of Abraham, he believed God. The writer to the Hebrews said that that’s what faith is, it’s believing that he is and that he is the rewarder

of those that diligently seek him. Again, seek him now. Not for any selfish reason or purpose, fleshy, but to the glory and honor of Christ. And I can truly, in praying that whatever the situation is, Lord, if your Son gets the glory, then give me the grace to bow. And that is a prayer that will always be answered.

Here in Ephesians 1, what promises have already been obtained? Verse 3, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." It doesn't say "shall bless us." See, that's conditionalism, that's work. If you do this, then God will do this. Well, guess what? You're too late. Here it says, "hath blessed us." And the sense of that word is a once for all blessing. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." What could be a greater blessing than that? Being one of that number that he has chosen from eternity and before the foundation of the world.

It's like one lady that struggled with this asked the preacher, "I don't understand how God could choose somebody before the foundation of the world." And the preacher responded, "I sure am glad he chose before the foundation of the world because if he'd of waited until afterward, there wouldn't have been anything to chose." If it's a matter of who we are and based on anything in us, no, he chose before the foundation of the world knowing and seeing what we would be as fallen creatures. And yet, he chose, it says, "that we should be holy and without blame before him."

Now, there wasn't any punctuation in the original and the editors chose to put a verse division here, verses 4-5, but in the original it's just all one sentence. But, if I were to put a punctuation, it would be right after "before him." A comma. "That we should be holy and without blame before him." That's the ultimate goal for which God chose and purpose for which he chose sinners that they should be as he is, holy and without blame. Now, the rest explains it, "in love having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ." That's how that ought to be read.

I've had people challenge me, "Look, if you believe in election, predestination then you don't believe in God's love." No, wait a minute. Here, the very foundation of his choosing is his love. "In love having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself." Don't leave out, "by Jesus Christ." And every one of these blessings that are cited here when we sing, "Count your many blessings, name them one by one," it has to be named in Jesus Christ. In him, by him, to himself.

Notice, in verse 5, "according to the good pleasure," not of our will but "of his will." And "to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." There again, "hath made us." We're not fighting and striving for acceptance. If God has chosen you and Christ has paid your debt when he gives his Spirit that you might know Christ, it's not in order to make you accepted in the beloved it is because you have already been made accepted in the beloved.

I like what one preacher friend of mine said in a message one time, I read it and it stuck with me and that is that when the Lord gives you eyes to see Christ, it's not then that

you're saved, you just find out that you've been saved. God saved you all along. And the fruit of that work of the Lord Jesus Christ was just made manifest to you at that time. That's why it seemed like you were saved then, but when Christ shed his blood, that's when everyone that the Father has chosen and given to him were made accepted in the beloved. And you say, "Well, how do you know that?" Well, look at verse 7, just keep reading, "In whom we have redemption through his blood." The one explains the other, the latter the former. "The forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace, wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he had purposed," notice, "in himself. That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ," in that administration. When you see the word "fulness of times" we think of Galatians 4:4, "in the fullness of the time, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law."

You say, "Well, what had to be gathered and won?" Well, the Book of Hebrews says all those of the Old Testament and everybody since the cross. Made one in this one act, this one obedience unto death, this one justification. If didn't take place in eternity and it doesn't place at faith, it took place at this one time when God was pleased in Christ, verse 10, to "gather together in one both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him." You see, there are saints in glory today as a result of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. And there are still saints that are alive and living on this earth but one, there's one church and that's what's being described here. "Even in him in whom also we have obtained an inheritance." Didn't Caleb obtain an inheritance? It was a temporal inheritance but it was a picture of that inheritance. And in this he was rich in faith, typical of the inheritance that Christ would come and purchase for his people.

Being predestinated, that fits what we saw back there in Joshua 15, "according to the commandment of the Lord to Joshua." That word "commandment" is the predetermining "according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will that we should be, to the praise of his glory who first trusted in Christ in whom ye also trusted after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom also after that ye believed ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession and to the praise of his glory."

You see, Caleb saw that Hebron as an earnest of what would be accomplished when Christ would actually come and walk that earth as a man and pay his sin debt. Hebron was within proximity of Jerusalem where Christ would come and lay down his life. And here we are now, all that we have in Christ is also an earnest, the Spirit given to us says, "a down payment." Christ paid the debt. The earnest is the Spirit until the redemption of the purchased possession. What redemption is he talking about there? That's the redemption of this body. When Christ died, we were delivered from the penalty of sin and its curse. When the Spirit regenerates us, we're delivered from the power of sin, the darkness of it, the ignorance. There is light that is given. But, here it's talking about that redemption of the purchased possession. That's when we will be delivered from the very

presence of sin. In other words, to know sin no more. I can't fathom that. Nothing in this world compares. You think about how we suffer even in this flesh as a consequence of sin. We can't imagine what it is to live in a sinless body. To never have a sinless thought ever again. Well, that is the promised redemption that still awaits everyone for whom Christ paid the debt. And it's unto the praise of his glory, nothing in us, unto the praise of his glory.

So, when I read that and I think about what it is to be rich in faith, everything else pales. Every other problem becomes miniscule. If the Lord would just give us eyes to see what we have already in Christ and not focus on these things that are temporal, passing in this world and soon will be no more. We often say to our kids, "Within 5-10 years you won't even be worried about that." For however long the Lord gives us, nothing that we fret about is going to be an issue because to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. I can't think of a greater blessing than that.

Now, come back here to Joshua 15. There's a lot here in this one little portion but I wanted to just take a look in light of this matter of prayer and what is being requested. I wanted to come back to the request of Caleb's daughter, Achsah, that he gave to Othniel, to wife. And it says in verses 18-19, here's where I want us to focus just for a few minutes before we finish. Notice, the nature of this request. First, "it came to pass, as she came unto him, that she moved him to ask of her father a field." So, even here, you see representation that she had been given to Othniel and even though this was her father, yet, she moved him. There was a representative that came and made the request on her behalf. I see that as a picture of how it is that we come to our Father. Think of yourself as this daughter of Caleb's, even as the bride of Christ, and the request that we make unto the Father are through our representative, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The second thing that I would point out here. You say, "What characteristic of prayer is that?" The importunity to be importunate is a persistence in prayer that the Lord gives to his own to request of the Father those things that are needful. The Scripture portion that comes to mind is in Luke 18. Our Lord when he was on earth commended this manner of coming unto the Father. Our kids aren't timid. They will ask and they will ask again and they will ask. You're their Dad. But, in it there's a lesson and we see that here in Luke 18:1-8. It says, "And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: and there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"

Such faith? That's an example of what it is to be rich in faith is to importune God for those things that are necessary and vital for our souls. And God will be sought of his people. Now, don't misinterpret the parable. The parable is showing a contrast. The point

is, if an unjust judge, a wicked judge can give to such a widow what she requested, how much more so your heavenly Father give unto you those things that are necessary. Not for anything in you, but for his Son's sake. And certainly, we see that.

In Luke 11, that I read for you to begin our time of worship, it parallels this very thought. The disciples asked the Lord in verse 1 to teach them to pray and he gave them this model. But, then he gave them an example in verse 5, "Which of you shall have a friend and shall go unto him at midnight and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity," his persistence is what that word means, "he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

Such was the relationship that Caleb's daughter had with him. And knowing of his love, it wasn't conditional, it was that relationship that when she moved her husband, Othniel, to ask this of the father it was based upon the character of that father to give. Let's not forget that. Why would our Father in heaven withhold anything from us that is necessary for our good and his glory? You can come to him asking much as a little child that is persistent, much as this person here in need because he is his friend. You talk about Christ being a friend of sinners, we beat ourselves to death and in so doing we act as unbelievers whenever we think what God's giving to us his conditional upon us being right and doing right first. Those are the old grave clothes of this flesh and that denies the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Either Christ paid the debt or he didn't. And based upon that debt paid, "Lord, here is my need. You've given me all of this, but give me Christ or I die." Like she requested, "Give me the upper and lower springs else what good is this south land which is nothing but desert without it. Give me that water of life or I die."

Here's the promise, "If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?" You say, "Well, that's the same thing, meat is meat, protein is protein." No. He's going to give him an egg. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" What does the Holy Spirit do? Well, he gives wisdom, direction. "If any man lacks wisdom, let him ask of God that gives..." What? "Liberally." It might not be what you first thought he would give, but one thing is for sure, he's never going to give you a scorpion. Any one of those can harm you. He's not going to give you a stone and he's not going to give you a serpent. There's no ill in anything that the Lord gives his own.

So, we see a beautiful picture there of how the daughter importuned the father. There's an interesting word and our time is about gone. Come back here to Joshua 15. When it says that "she lighted off her ass." That word "lighted" there actually in the original is with the



idea of crying and sighing. Such was the burden of this need that she expressed her grief and concern. Here, again, I see how it is to ask in faith. It's the cry of the heart, it's the cry of a needy heart. When you read the Psalms, you know, David said that in Psalm 130, "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord." Many times the Lord will bring us low to that point to where all we can do is cry unto him.

Thirdly, we see that she calls it a blessing, in verse 19. "Who answered, Give me a blessing." That was her request, "Bless me in this matter." And it was all she asked. A blessing is a grace, that's what we ask of the Lord.

The fourth point, there, is that she asked one thing. What? Water. "Give me also springs of water." And, again, there, the one thing needful. It was the one thing needful for our souls. It's the water of life. "Give me Christ or I die."

There's a lot more there that could be underscored but I pray the Lord will use that to strengthen our hearts and to, again, point us to the Lord Jesus Christ.