

## The Bible 20/20: “Claiming New Land” (3-15-20)

**Introduction:** Overview of Joshua

**Context:** Joshua and the people of Israel are moving into the promised land.

- They have sent in 2 spies - who are protected by Rahab and promise to save her and her family
- Israel crosses the Jordan River
- Joshua & the people conquer Jericho
- The failure of Achan
- General conquest in the new land

**This Week:** Caleb claims his land (Main Text: Joshua 14:6-15)

### Joshua 14:6-15 (ESV)

(6) Then the people of Judah came to Joshua at Gilgal. And Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him, “You know what the LORD said to Moses the man of God in Kadesh-barnea concerning you and me. (7) I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land, and I brought him word again as it was in my heart. (8) But my brothers who went up with me made the heart of the people melt; yet I wholly followed the LORD my God. (9) And Moses swore on that day, saying, ‘Surely the land on which your foot has trodden shall be an inheritance for you and your children forever, because you have wholly followed the LORD my God.’ (10) And now, behold, the LORD has kept me alive, just as he said, these forty-five years since the time that the LORD spoke this word to Moses, while Israel walked in the wilderness. And now, behold, I am this day eighty-five years old. (11) I am still as strong today as I was in the day that Moses sent me; my strength now is as my strength was then, for war and for going and coming. (12) So now give me this hill country of which the LORD spoke on that day, for you heard on that day how the Anakim were there, with great fortified cities. It may be that the LORD will be with me, and I shall drive them out just as the LORD said.” (13) Then Joshua blessed him, and he gave Hebron to Caleb the son of Jephunneh for an inheritance. (14) Therefore Hebron became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite to this day, because he wholly followed the LORD, the God of Israel. (15) Now the name of Hebron formerly was Kiriath-arba. (Arba was the greatest man among the Anakim.) And the land had rest from war.

**Notes:** Caleb, one of only 2 people left from the previous Generation, is now ready to claim his part of the promised land. His specific part is the land of Hebron.

### 1) The History of Hebron - a place of old promises

#### Genesis 13:18 (ESV)

So Abram moved his tent and came and settled by the oaks of Mamre, which are at Hebron, and there he built an altar to the LORD.

**Notes:** Hebron is the first place that Abraham settles in the promised land of Canaan

As Abraham is nearing the end of his life, he still doesn't own any property in Canaan. His wife Sarah dies in her old age, and Genesis 23 records the story of Abraham purchasing some land with a cave as a burial site for Sarah.

**Genesis 23:2-4 (ESV)**

(2) And Sarah died at Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan, and Abraham went in to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her. (3) And Abraham rose up from before his dead and said to the Hittites, (4) "I am a sojourner and foreigner among you; give me property among you for a burying place, that I may bury my dead out of my sight."

**Genesis 23:19-20 (ESV)**

(19) After this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah east of Mamre (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan. (20) The field and the cave that is in it were made over to Abraham as property for a burying place by the Hittites.

**Notes:** This portion of property in Hebron is the first and only property Abraham owns in the land of Canaan during his lifetime.

Hebron is a tangible reminder of the promise of God

However, it could easily be viewed as an old dead promise. The only thing there is a tomb, and hundreds of years later Abraham's descendants are not only living somewhere else, they are enslaved in Egypt.

Now we come back to Caleb's part of the story - After years in the wilderness, he has to choose to believe that God's promise to Abraham, and now to him, will still be fulfilled.

We all have to be careful - when the promises of God in our own lives are seemingly delayed, don't make the mistake of believing they are dead and gone.

Let's find some comfort from David as he shows us in Psalm 119 how to hold onto the promise of God through the ups and downs of life.

Read through these passages for some insight into how we can hold onto God's promise . . .

**Psalms 119:41 (ESV)**

Let your steadfast love come to me, O LORD, your salvation according to your promise

**Psalms 119:50 (ESV)**

This is my comfort in my affliction, that your promise gives me life.

**Psalms 119:82 (ESV)**

My eyes long for your promise; I ask, "When will you comfort me?"

**Psalms 119:115-116 (ESV)**

(115) Depart from me, you evildoers, that I may keep the commandments of my God. (116) Uphold me according to your promise, that I may live, and let me not be put to shame in my hope!

**Psalms 119:123 (ESV)**

My eyes long for your salvation and for the fulfillment of your righteous promise.

**Psalms 119:133 (ESV)**

Keep steady my steps according to your promise, and let no iniquity get dominion over me.

## 2) Current status of Hebron - a land of giants

Now in the time since Abraham was promised the land, and he purchased property in Hebron, giants have come in and taken over. They have even renamed the area after themselves “Kiriath-arba” (or City of Arba - who was the greatest man among the Anakim). (We see this in Joshua 14:12 & 15)

This is such a real potential problem in our lives. Giants come along and begin claiming territory in our lives that doesn't really belong to them. They can take root and because of their size and strength, and the amount of time that they have been around - it can feel impossible to ever see them gone and defeated.

Can you think of any examples of Giants in your life?

Past ones you have conquered? Current ones you are facing?

Possible giants can be:

fears or anxieties that we constantly face  
sins our addictions that we have battled with for years  
broken relationships that just can't seem to be mended

Take a few moments to consider what your giants might be. Have they been around so long that you feel weak or helpless to defeat them?

Let's take a look at Caleb's mentality in facing the giants that had set up camp in his land . . .

### Joshua 14:10-12 (ESV)

(10) And now, behold, the LORD has kept me alive, just as he said, these forty-five years since the time that the LORD spoke this word to Moses, while Israel walked in the wilderness. And now, behold, I am this day eighty-five years old. (11) I am still as strong today as I was in the day that Moses sent me; my strength now is as my strength was then, for war and for going and coming. (12) So now give me this hill country of which the LORD spoke on that day, for you heard on that day how the Anakim were there, with great fortified cities. It may be that the LORD will be with me, and I shall drive them out just as the LORD said.”

**Notes:** Even after years of waiting for the promise of God - Caleb finds strength in his old age, strength in the faithfulness of God even in a long wilderness season, and He dares to have faith to believe in the promise of God!

When we are facing giants, we have an important decision to make - will we surrender to their seemingly overwhelming size & strength and feel defeated because they have been around for so long.

Or will we find the courage & faith of Caleb - to trust God to give us strength to face the giants He wants to free us from so we can experience his promise and goodness in our life!

Caleb put his trust in God, and was thankful for the strength God had given him, and he successfully defeated his giants . . .

### Joshua 15:13-14 (ESV)

(13) According to the commandment of the LORD to Joshua, he gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh a portion among the people of Judah, Kiriath-arba, that is, Hebron (Arba was the father of Anak). (14) And Caleb drove out from there the three sons of Anak, Sheshai and Ahiman and Talmi, the descendants of Anak.

### 3) Hebron's future - a place of refuge

As Israel is completing their conquest of the promised land, and making plans for where everyone will settle, Josh chapter 20 lays out the plan for cities of refuge - places where those who have made a huge mistake - accidental murder, can flee to be protected. Joshua 20:7 identifies Hebron as one of these cities. We see a summary of the purpose of these cities in Joshua 20:9 . . .

#### **Joshua 20:9 (ESV)**

These were the cities designated for all the people of Israel and for the stranger sojourning among them, that anyone who killed a person without intent could flee there, so that he might not die by the hand of the avenger of blood, till he stood before the congregation.

**Notes:** The very place (Hebron) that had represented a long-unfulfilled promise, and a place that had been the residence of giants that had to be fought, now has become place of refuge for those in need!

It's important to recognize, that when God fulfills his promise our life, or when He helps us defeat giants, he is doing this for our rescue and benefit, but He also wants to now co-operate with us to be a source of refuge for others in need.

Pay attention to ways that God has rescued you over the course of your life, and consider how He may be inviting you to be a place of refuge for others!

**Conclusion:** Let's take some comfort and direction from the life of Caleb today. May we believe again for old promises that have been long delayed, may we find strength in the Lord to conquer giants, and may we be a place of refuge for others in need!

#### **Discussion Questions:**

- 1) Can you think of a time in your life when God fulfilled a promise you had waited along time for?
- 2) Is there a current promise you are waiting for now? What comfort can we find from David's words in Psalm 119 - is there a particular verse you can relate to right now?
- 3) Can you think of any examples of Giants in your life? Past ones you have conquered? Current ones you are facing?
- 4) Looking at Caleb's response to the giants he had to face (Joshua 14:10-12) are there any specific steps God is calling you to take in order to conquer them? Where do you need his help? What strength can you find in him for victory?
- 5) Have you experienced finding refuge in other people at times in your life? Why is it valuable to be with others who have experienced similar challenges and obstacles in life? How did that help you through your own battle?
- 6) Have you considered that God may want to use you to be a refuge for someone else? What could that look like? How could you partner with Jesus in your life right now to be a source of refuge?