

Spying Out the Land



Caleb: Lessons from a Dog's Life (Part 1)
by Derek Prince

Now, this is a remarkable thing, usually, not always, if I get an invitation and God wants me to go and I feel prompted to accept, He will give me immediately the theme I am to deal with, even though it may a year ahead or six months ahead. He won't give me the whole outline, but He will give me the theme. Well, I was invited to Charlotte, North Carolina, and I felt that God wanted me to go. I kind of said, "Lord, what am I to speak about." And I felt, and this is all subjective, I felt He said, "Caleb." Well I know enough about the Bible to know basically who Caleb was, but I'd never given any real thought to Caleb. They said, "Will you send us the title of your message?" So I said, "Caleb: Lessons From A Dog's Life." Now some of you will know, most of you probably don't know, why I said that. Because the Hebrew name "Caleb" is the Hebrew word for "A Dog."

Now in the Old Testament the names always have meanings and they always have a significance. So why call a person "Dog?" Well, my message is the answer to that question.

First of all, let me say that in the Middle East, generally speaking, dogs are not very highly esteemed. They were never properly fed, they were never taken indoors, and people used to throw stones at them. So it wasn't a very honorable title. And yet that's the title given to Caleb.

Now I want to just take a little glimpse at his life experience and then explain why he was called Dog. If you turn to the book of Numbers, there's a whole lot about Caleb there. Numbers 13:6, it lists the 12 spies who were sent into the Promised Land to see what it was like. Then it goes on to describe how the spies went in and how they came back. And the report that they brought back is in Numbers 13, beginning at verse 27. They brought their report back to Moses.

> "Then they told him, and said, "We went to the land where you sent us. It truly flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. [And they showed him the grapes of Eschol.] Nevertheless, the people who dwell in the land are strong; the cities are fortified ad very large; moreover we saw the descendants of Anak there. [In modern Hebrew Anak is the word for a giant.] 'The

> Amalekites dwell in the land of the South [that's the Negev] the Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the mountains; and the Canaanites dwell by the sea and along the banks of the Jordan.' [There must have been some protest even then because it says:] Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, 'Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it.' But the men who had gone up with him said, 'We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we.' [Notice there's two exactly opposite statements, 'we are well able' and 'we are not able.'] And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, 'The land through which we have gone as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great stature.' 'There we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight.' [So they all began to say, 'We'll never make it.' Chapter 14 goes on with the results of these two reports in the first ten verses. So all the congregation lifted up their voices and cries, and the people wept all night. And all the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron, [I don't know whether you've ever noticed that when people are against God they are usually against the leaders of God's people too. Sometimes those of us who are leaders can take comfort in that.] and the whole congregation said to them, 'If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had died in this wilderness!' Why has the Lord brought us to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and children should become victims? Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt? So they said to one another, 'Let us select a leader and return to Egypt.' Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel. But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes; [which is a sign of mourning or great distress.] and they spoke to all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying: 'The land we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land.' If the Lord delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, 'a land which flows with milk and honey. Only do not rebel against the Lord, nor fear the people of the land for they are our bread; their protection has departed from them, and the Lord is with us. Do not fear them. And the congregation said to stone them with stones. Now the glory of the Lord appeared in the tabernacle of meeting before all the children of Israel."

And then we read the Lord's response to this situation in Numbers 14:26–38, and all these have a very important lesson for us today. They are not just remote historical facts.

> "And the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, 'How long shall I bear with this evil congregation who complain against Me? I have heard the complaints which the children of Israel make against Me. Say to them, 'As I live,' says the Lord, 'just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will do to you: The carcasses of you who have complained against Me shall fall in this wilderness, all of you who were numbered, according to your entire number, from twenty years old and above." Except for Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun, you shall by no means enter the land which I swore I would make you dwell in. But your little ones, whom you said would be victims, I will bring in, and they shall know the land which you have despised. But as for you, your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness. And your sons shall be shepherds in the wilderness forty years, and bear the brunt of your infidelity, until your carcasses are consumed in the wilderness. According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, forty days, for each day you shall bear your guilt one year, namely forty years, and you shall know My rejection."

That's a very solemn thought. I wonder how many of you today, this evening, would be happy if God said to you, "Just as you have spoken in my ear, so I will do to you." It says later on in the book of Proverbs, "Death and life are in the power of the tongue." Basically we settle our own destiny by the words we speak. All of those twelve settled their destiny. The people who responded with a negative response settled their destiny. God didn't settle their destiny. They settled it themself. Think back of the words you've been speaking the past 48 hours. Would you be happy if God said, "I'll do to you exactly what you've been saying." I noticed that Jesus said to some people when they came to prayer, "According to your faith, be it unto you." I think He was very selective to whom He said that to. Let me ask you tonight if He were to ask you, "According to your faith, be it unto you," would it be a

blessing or a curse? How are you thinking? How are you speaking to yourself? What are the things that go on in your mind? What are the words that come out of your lips? Are they negative or are they positive? Do you uplift Jesus? Do you proclaim the scripture? Do you talk in faith or are you a negative thinker, a negative talker? How would it be if God said to you, "Just as you've been speaking to me for the last five years, I'll do to you." Would it be a blessing? I've lived in this land long enough to know there's a great deal of negative talk that goes on and some of it is in the assemblies of believers. They settled their destinies by the words they spoke.

Another thought occurs to me. They had already committed a heinous sin. They had made a golden calf and worshiped it. And God didn't say, "Because you have made the golden calf I will not bring you into the land." He punished them, but that was not the punishment. So when they said, "We can't enter the land, we can't take the land," God cut them off. And I think that this applies to contemporary Israel. The thing that angers God most is when we don't believe what He said He will do. I've made a little observation of this theme and I found the thing that angers God most is not people who sin. That's bad enough. But it's people who despise God's grace.

Radio Program

Transcript: TS-R194-101-ENG
Last Updated: 12 Apr 2023
Website: derekprince.com

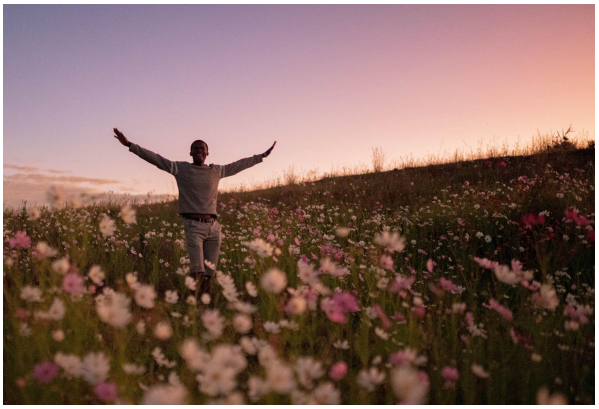


Bible Teaching Resources



Books

Illuminate and expand your understanding of the Bible with the Derek Prince collection of Christian books.



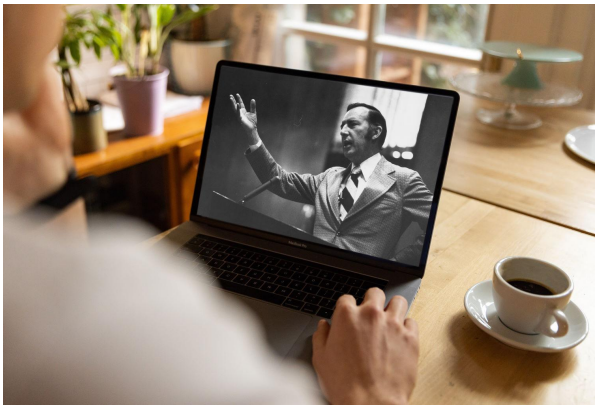
Daily Devotionals

Browse free biblically inspired daily devotionals by Derek Prince for practical teachings to uplift your Christian faith.



Legacy Radio

Listen to inspiring 10-minute messages and connect faith to life with the Derek Prince Legacy Radio podcast.



Sermons

Watch original and digitally remastered sermons by Derek Prince. Includes full message transcripts (free download).



Official App

Available free, download the official Derek Prince Ministries app and equip your faith, anywhere, anytime.



Proclamations

Declare life and experience the transformative power of God's Word with our bible-based Proclamations.

Copyright © Derek Prince Ministries